

27th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all managing to keep safe and well during these unprecedented times. Whilst school is closed, I am very conscious that there is a lot of communication from school, much of which we would usually pass on through the students, but clearly can't at the moment.

There will be plenty more coming from the school about the concept of LSA as a temporary Virtual School. Our approach seems to be working well for many families, with excellent levels of engagement. However, as we always say, this period is about much more than school work and there will be many challenges in each and every household. In order to provide as much support as possible, our safeguarding lead, Tracy Lawson has put together an excellent set of resources on the website signposting many areas of child safety and mental wellbeing. Please take a look at <https://www.lythamhigh.lancs.sch.uk/parents/support-for-parents-carers-and-students-during-coronavirus>

Lisa Fitzpatrick, our Head of Business and Computing has also put together some thoughts about the concerns many of us will have about e-learning as well as pointing us towards a number of really useful websites.

Undoubtedly the concept of acceptable screen time limits will have changed in your household, given your child is more than likely using some form of technology both as a portal to their education, and as their primary communication tool. We understand this may be a concern for a variety of issues, but experts are universally advising that the actual increase in screen time isn't something to worry about. There are many accessible articles online such as <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20200414-do-screen-time-rules-still-apply-in-lockdown> outlining that families will currently have enough stress to deal with and counting screen minutes should be low on the priority list.

Additionally, in these times of isolation, connectivity is so important for well-being and increased screen-time will support with this. However we feel it is wise to encourage regular breaks from screens to prevent eye strain and some focus on posture, ensuring they are not hunching over devices.

Increased screen time may bring with it an increased risk of online safety incidents. Pupils are regularly reminded of the need to stay safe online with stimulus activities in form and lessons in KS3 computing. (Year 7 have just done a unit on selecting online friends and dealing with online bullying, with their first Computing Retrieval piece being linked to this).

It can be hard to get young people to engage with the concept of online safety as they perceive it to be a hypothetical risk but it will be worth having a conversation with them. This could be as simple as asking what they would do if they saw someone being bullied online or engaging with the detailed activities for families produced by CEOPS.

[https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/home-activity-worksheets/11-13s/?utm_source=Thinkuknow&utm_campaign=03f521e658-TUK ONLINE SAFETY AT HOME 21 04 20&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0b54505554-03f521e658-55278649](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/home-activity-worksheets/11-13s/?utm_source=Thinkuknow&utm_campaign=03f521e658-TUK%20ONLINE%20SAFETY%20AT%20HOME%2021%2004%2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0b54505554-03f521e658-55278649)

Finally, the Government has produced a very comprehensive document that outlines where support can be found and what issues young people may encounter online.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online>

If there are any concerns or worries about school during this period of lockdown, please get in touch with us and we will do everything we can do to help.

Keep safe.



Ray Baker
Headteacher