



## Headteacher's Blog

Dear parents and carers

This is a difficult Home Bulletin for me to write. Schools are places of routine and structure; they provide young people (and staff) with a sense of purpose and order. So in these times of great uncertainty, it is deeply upsetting to be facing the current situation. My big hope though is that the present time of crisis will lead to a greater sense of community in the future, when we will be more ready to look out for those that are vulnerable, struggling or unwell.

At this point, I must acknowledge the efforts of the incredible staff. It is a privilege to lead such a wonderful team of colleagues. They have stepped in to cover lessons at short notice, sought to comfort and reassure students who have become distressed or overwhelmed, and offered freely of their time and energy. They have quietly and sensitively managed parental concerns, and adapted to the daily changes in circumstances, often at very short notice. Thank you.

Our students have also coped remarkably well with the sudden turn of events. It has largely been 'business as usual', but they are understandably upset by the fact that schools will be closed to most from Monday, and they are worried for the future. Young people are resilient though, and we will all bounce back together when schools reopen fully.

### **Closure of educational settings: information for parents and carers**

Yesterday, we sent out the latest Coronavirus update (number 4) from the Trust. This set out the details of the forthcoming school closures and the Government's information about the key groups. If you are a key worker, please complete the survey.

The Government's guidance can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

The key principles are:

- If it is at all possible for children to be at home, then they should be.
- If a child needs specialist support, is vulnerable or has a parent who is a critical worker, then educational provision will be available for them.

### **Helpful advice**

We are all trying to process the momentous upheaval to our daily lives, so I don't wish to burden you with too much information at this stage. I thought though that the following links might be helpful.

### **Kooth.com - online support for young people**

[Kooth](#) is the new online counselling and wellbeing service that has been commissioned by the NHS for all young people in Suffolk age 11-18 (up to their 19th birthday).

**Kooth** offers young people the opportunity to have a text-based conversation with a qualified counsellor. Counsellors are available from 12noon to 10.00pm on weekdays and 6.00pm to 10.00pm at weekends, every day of the year on a drop-in basis. Young people can access regular booked online counselling sessions as needed. Outside counselling hours, young people can message the team and get support by the next day.

When students register with **Kooth** they will have support available to them now and in the future. Support can be gained not only through counselling but articles, forums and discussion boards. All content is age appropriate, clinically approved and fully moderated.

To find out more, visit [www.Kooth.com](http://www.Kooth.com) where young people can register and others can find out more about the service.

### **Young Minds Helpline for parents and young people**

If there are concerns about a young person's mental health during this difficult time, you can contact the Young Minds Helplines.

- Parents Helpline: If you are a parent who needs advice about your child's mental health you can contact the Parents Helpline directly on 0808 802 between 9:30am-4.00pm
- YoungMinds Crisis Messenger: If you are a young person experiencing a mental health crisis you can text YM to 85258 for free 24/7 support.
- The Young Minds website is here: <https://youngminds.org.uk/>

### **Self Isolating & Dealing with Conflict (The Children's Society)**

Many people will be spending more time at home than they are used to. This may mean spending more time with family, carers or friends and this may create difficult situations, especially for those coping with pre-existing family problems.

The Children's Society asked one of their well-being practitioners to share her top tips for dealing with conflict at home.

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/news-and-blogs/our-blog/dealing-with-conflict-at-home>

### **Future updates**

We will continue to send out a weekly bulletin while the school remains closed, and other essential updates from Public Health England and the Department for Education.

My best wishes to you, your families and friends. Keep well.

Peter Whear  
Headteacher

## Information and Updates

### Contact Details (during closure):

<b>Main School:</b>	enquiries@stowuplandhighschool.co.uk	Mrs S Lewis
<b>John Milton Academy</b>	enquiries@johnmiltonacademytrust.co.uk	Mrs S Stringer
<b>Trust:</b>	01449 742422	Mrs S Stringer
	01449 708487	Mrs N Hooper
<b>Website:</b>	www.stowuplandhighschool.co.uk	

### Home School Communications

Please note that important updates will be posted on the home page of the school website as well as being sent home electronically via Parentmail.

### HPV Vaccinations

Following the Government's announcement that all schools will close as of today until further notice, the Schools' Immunisation team have stated that they will contact schools when they re-open to re-schedule dates for missed immunisation sessions.

If you have any queries or concerns please contact the Immunisation team on 0300 555 5055.

### Wellbeing Update

Having been in school over the last few weeks, I have been met with so many varying emotions and no doubt this is also true for you at home.

As with everything else, much of the community support and services for young people has been affected or streamlined. I have put together an updated map with some details of online and local community support and services that are still currently operating. Please feel free to use and pass this onto your child(ren) as appropriate. I hope it may be of use to some of you.

I would also recommend the following two articles for any children and young people who would like information about the virus and what they can do to look after themselves and others.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/looking-after-your-mental-health-while-self-isolating/>

As a Vision & Voice team, we will be looking to produce some wellbeing tips and advice for your child's online school portal, encouraging them with things they can do to stay both mentally and physically healthy whilst they are at home. We will also be looking to continue working alongside schools as they continue to support those with key worker parents.

Sam Petersen, School Wellbeing Practitioner