



Principals' Letter – Spring Term 2020 Week Ending 17th April 2020

Dear Passmores Family

Well that was the Easter holidays!

We are sure it didn't come as a big surprise to hear that we are going to be closed for at least another three weeks. With the news we are hearing from across the school of families that have at least one ill member and of those losing loved ones it seems like it may not be the last of these announcements either.

Obviously, the extended closure puts pressure on each of us as individuals, families and as a school community. Hopefully, some of you will have already received the pack of home learning (if not it is on its way). Our change in approach, away from such heavily online content, is a reflection on the fact that we have no idea what you are having to deal with at home and do not wish to add further stress/anxiety. The online content is always available and there is no limit on what can be done if you wish to access them. The government has also published a list of online resources if you would like to use them - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education#english>.

If your pack of resources doesn't arrive by Monday please do email datateam@passmoresacademy.com or go to our website as they are all on there too –

<https://www.passmoresacademy.com/page/?title=Home+Learning+During+Lockdown&pid=89>

Please be reassured that we will do everything to support all of our young people to catch up on any vital work missed and we will be sending out specific information for Year 11 next week as the government has changed it's previously released guidance. We are fortunate to have excellent access to the Department for Education to get answers first hand so we will keep you up to date as soon as we hear anything.

We have been contacted by the Local Authority with information that some families are struggling to know when they should go to A and E for non-Covid symptoms due to not wanting to open themselves up to the virus and/or add extra strain on the NHS. At the end of this letter you will find some advice on that issue. A video has also been prepared focusing on the health and well-being of children which can be accessed here –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5Mgm1cmptw>

We hope that you got to see the video produced By Ms Begum about the acts of kindness happening across Harlow, many involving members of our community (https://youtu.be/yC6Xd_WAwwI). Next week we will be focussing on encouraging being active.

We are getting lovely feedback from tutors and other staff from when they have spoken to some of you about how you are managing at home and we hope that you continue to stay well. For those going through really challenging times you are in our thoughts and we will do all that we can to support you.

A message from the Pastoral Team: We hope you all had a nice Easter and that you and your families are well. Last week our theme was kindness and we created a video about the amazing acts of kindness being shown within our community, you can access this video at Passmores Academy You Tube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yC6Xd_WAwwI

This week our theme is about keeping active. Since the lock down, we are all now spending a lot more time at home. Staying as physically active as possible is more important now than it has ever been. Official guidance from the Government is to stay at home, only go outside for one form of exercise a day, only go to the shop for necessities and for medical reasons. This inevitably means that all of our routines have changed. However, it is still possible to remain active and lead a healthy lifestyle.

Getting daily exercise is paramount to ensuring you keep yourself, not just physically fit, but also mentally fit. Just because gyms have closed their doors and all sport is cancelled, it doesn't mean we cannot find other ways to satisfy our bodies need for exercise. If you want to walk, cycle or run, there are plenty of apps that allow you to record and log each workout. Maybe try to increase the distance you complete each day, set yourself a realistic target for the future and work towards it. This will not only get you fitter, as you will be working towards this target, but will also increase your mental well-being. Physical activity of any nature will release serotonin (the feel-good hormone) in the body which will make you feel happier and more positive. If you don't believe us, try it, make a conscious effort to exercise every day and over a period of time you will start to feel better.

You can contact your PE teacher for additional advice/support on how to become more active or you could try out some of the apps/sites below.

- Strava running and cycling; this app records your speed, distance travelled, time and course taken. It combines all information into leader boards, achievements and challenges as you race against your friends.
- Runkeeper; uses your phone's GPS to track your running, cycling and other distance activities.
- Joe Wicks daily workouts on YouTube
- Yoga for beginners
- MyFitnessPal
- Be Mindful

More and more people are recognising that mental health is just as important as physical health. Try to be grateful for things you have and do not dwell on things that you cannot change right now. Appreciate the amount of time you spend outside and appreciate the time you spend with your family and other members living in your household.

Although phones are a big part of our lives, try not to play on your phone too much, the same with your consoles. Use this time to speak to your families, have video calls with friends and loved ones. You may even want to complete a workout at the same time with someone in a different household via a video call.

Below is a personal account from Mr. Elston on keeping active.

#GetActive

"I have been doing some online training in my garden or front room every morning for one hour with the help of Mike who runs his business, Body Fresh Fitness, in conjunction with Harlow Rugby Club. Mike has previously coached rugby at Passmores Academy and has been kind enough to share some online sessions for you all to try while at home. These can be accessed on SMHW from Monday 20th April and will be accessible for a week. I have also been going out for my daily walk around my local area. As a result of keeping active I feel less stressed and much happier with having to stay at home. I have also been keeping busy with some DIY chores around my house as well as in my garden as these are alternative ways to keep active.

Initially I was gutted about my rugby season being cut short, however, the bigger picture is of far greater magnitude than a sporting season. On reflection, I have realised it is the physical activity that is part of my regular routine that I missed and this is why I make sure I exercise daily. This situation will get better over time so please continue to follow the government regulations and keep as active as possible to look after your physical, social and emotional well-being.

Throughout all of this, it is essential that we do what we can to look after ourselves and everyone around us as best as we can. Offering help to someone can be as simple as a phone call or text message to ask how someone is doing and encourage and support one another to stay active."

Next week, you will be hearing from Miss Richards and Mr Gladwin who will be discussing the importance of trying something new.

Art Department: This is some art work which has been sent in by some of our students. We think you will agree Passmores have some very talented artists. These pictures are of buildings.



Natalie Christie & Vic Goddard

Natalie Christie & Vic Goddard
Co-Principals of Passmores Academy

Advice for parents during coronavirus

Whilst coronavirus is infectious to children it is rarely serious. If your child is unwell it is likely to be a non-coronavirus illness, rather than coronavirus itself.

Whilst it is extremely important to follow Government advice to stay at home during this period, it can be confusing to know what to do when your child is unwell or injured. Remember that NHS 111, GPs and hospitals are still providing the same safe care that they have always done. Here is some advice to help:



RED

If your child has any of the following:

- Becomes pale, mottled and feels abnormally cold to the touch
- Has pauses in their breathing (apnoeas), has an irregular breathing pattern or starts **grunting**
- Severe difficulty in breathing becoming agitated or unresponsive
- Is going blue round the lips
- Has a fit/seizure
- Becomes extremely distressed (crying inconsolably despite distraction), confused, very lethargic (difficult to wake) or unresponsive
- Develops a rash that does not disappear with pressure (the 'Glass test')
- Has testicular pain, especially in teenage boys

You need urgent help:

Go to the nearest A&E department or phone 999



AMBER

If your child has any of the following:

- Is finding it hard to breathe including drawing in of the muscles below their lower ribs, at their neck or between their ribs (**recession**) or **head bobbing**
- Seems dehydrated (dry mouth, sunken eyes, no tears, drowsy or passing less urine than usual)
- Is becoming drowsy (excessively sleepy) or irritable (unable to settle them with toys, TV, food or picking up) - especially if they remain drowsy or irritable despite their fever coming down
- Has extreme shivering or complains of muscle pain
- Babies under 3 months of age with a temperature above 38°C / 100.4°F
- Infants 3-6 months of age with a temperature above 39°C / 102.2°F
- For all infants and children with a fever above 38°C for more than 5 days.
- Is getting worse or if you are worried
- Has persistent vomiting and/or persistent severe abdominal pain
- Has blood in their poo or wee
- Any limb injury causing reduced movement, persistent pain or head injury causing persistent crying or drowsiness

You need to contact a doctor or nurse today.

Please ring your GP surgery or call NHS 111 - dial 111

The NHS is working for you. However, we recognise during the current coronavirus crisis at peak times, access to a health care professional may be delayed. If symptoms persist for 4 hours or more and you have not been able to speak to either a GP or 111, then take your child to the nearest A&E



GREEN

If none of the above features are present

- You can continue to provide your child care at home. Information is also available on NHS Choices
- Additional **advice** is available to families for coping with crying of well babies 
- Additional **advice** is available for children with complex health needs and disabilities.

Self care

Continue providing your child's care at home. If you are still concerned about your child, call NHS 111 - dial 111