



10<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

**Re: 'Look after your mental health' (February 2021)**

I was listening to the radio this week. A presenter was giving tips to listeners about how to deal with the ups and downs of the national press conferences; the good messages and the shocking messages. He suggested listening to light-hearted music whilst watching TV news as a way of tempering the information being discussed. Whilst this may seem a strange thing to do, the point being made was one of mental health. Mental health was the reason that we instigated a 'No screen day' this week following 'Children's mental health week' last week.

The recent GoParks initiative being rolled out at the minute is in response to research recently conducted that fewer of us are exercising or going to parks than in the first lockdown last year. I'm sure the weather is playing a part in this; it's snowing outside as I type. However, more than ever, it is important that we encourage each other to get outside and exercise as this can help lift our mood and keep us physically healthy. Just turn up to a park, scan the QR code, select Finham Park School ... and the school may win some sports equipment.

In response to feedback from parents and students in our recent remote learning surveys, we are looking at more ways to reduce pressure on our young people, many of whom we know are struggling with the current lockdown. Of particular concern is the amount of time they are spending on screens whilst learning remotely. One initiative is to remove additional homework tasks outside of timetabled lessons, especially those which require extra screen time, for KS3 students. Those in exam classes may be set revision and consolidation activities but where possible we will aim to avoid activities which require using computer screens. Those who wish to get involved with additional reading can follow the English department's reading challenge whilst those who want more physical activity can participate in the PE department's weekly challenges. If you are concerned that your child is not coping with their workload in a particular subject, as always, please contact their subject teacher in the first instance. If the concern is more general in nature, your point of contact should be their mentor.

We shall be sending some details to you about Comic Relief Day which is on Friday 19 March 2021 and our school's participation in the event. We want to encourage as many students and families as possible to take part in fundraising activities on the day this year.

The school is closed on Monday 22 February for staff training so no lessons will take place that day, either on site or remotely. I do hope your children are able to relax over half term and enjoy some downtime.

Yours faithfully,

Mr C Bishop (Headteacher)

*'If the mountain was smooth, you would not be able to climb it!'*