



OUR LADY'S ABINGDON (OLA)
CORONAVIRUS – Supporting pupil's mental health
Addendum to the Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

We comply with the Government guidance and regulations, currently in force, regarding COVID.

1. Background.

The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in fundamental changes to the lives of children and young people. The Public Health England COVID-19 mental health and wellbeing surveillance report (Nov 2021) suggests that whilst some evidence shows that children and young people have generally coped well during the pandemic, other evidence suggests that some children and young people, especially those with certain characteristics, such as those who are disadvantaged economically, females, and those with pre-existing mental health needs, appear to have experienced greater negative impacts on their mental health and wellbeing. OLA has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils and students, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their pupils and students. Taking a coordinated and evidence-informed approach to mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges can also help foster readiness to learn.

[Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#)

2. Identifying Mental Health issues during lockdown and remote learning

- The Class Charts wellbeing app is an effective tool for gauging pupil wellbeing in remote learning. Higher levels of negativity reported by pupils were set to automatically alert the Head of Section whilst lower levels were dealt with by Form Tutors. Parents were also able to report low mood levels in their children. Two-way communication with families was possible using the Class charts App.
- Form tutors encouraged their tutees to keep in regular contact during periods away from school

3. Supporting wellbeing through the curriculum

Pupil wellbeing was first and foremost in staff minds during lockdown periods. OLA took deliberate actions to support wellbeing during lockdown in the following ways:

- *Designated year group wellbeing afternoons*
- *Reduced screen time at certain periods*
- *Continuing PSHEE lessons*
- *Introducing SEL ideas*
- *Continuing with online PE lessons*
- *Encouraging the increased use of Class Charts positive points*
- *Celebrating success in the newsletter*
- *Designing the Teacher Assessed Grading process by careful consultation with staff, parents and pupils*

4. Supporting families

- Full instructions for IT use during remote learning were provided to families with online live Zoom support sessions held
- Ideas to support wellbeing were made accessible via a Wakelet collection of resources

5. Supporting pupils during remote lessons

- Teachers delivered lessons which contained a balance of live lesson delivery as well as independent study. On this way we were able to balance screen time and computer use.
- Two-way communication was encouraged through Teams
- OLA did not make it compulsory for pupils to have their cameras switched on during live lessons

6. Supporting key worker children

All key worker children were supported to complete their work in an ICT room at OLA, under supervision.

Our Lady's Abingdon is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all students fulfil their potential.

Coronavirus Addendum – Supporting pupil's mental health: Reviewed September 2022