1 June 2020

Dear Year 8 students, parents and carers

I hope you and your family are well and that you had a relaxing half term break.

Welcome to week 6 of online learning.

Please **remember to stay calm and to look after your mental wellbeing.** On the last week of half term we celebrated Mental Health Awareness week and we took part in the Pay It Forward initiative in our Tutor time. It was so heart-warming to read all of your thank you messages and your kind thoughts to others. Please keep this up! Here are some more tips:

* There are lots of great free Mindfulness apps you can use to guide you through breathing techniques and meditation that can help ease your anxiety, keep you calm and clear your mind of anxious thoughts.
* Why not also try some yoga as a way to relax and also get some gentle exercise which can boost your mood? There are lots of YouTube videos you can use to suit your ability and level of mobility.
* **Managing stress and anxiety through creativity** is also great. My children are really into painting and drawing as a form of meditation during this confinement.
* **Finally, clean up your social media!** You might be spending more time than usual scrolling on social media. But have you ever thought about how this could be affecting your mental health? Try unfollowing or muting accounts that make you feel anxious, upset or angry. Find positive accounts like [@youngmindsuk](https://www.instagram.com/youngmindsuk/) that boost your mood instead.

Keep up **all your efforts and hard work this half term with your assignments**. Make sure you manage your time well using a clear weekly timetable like the one I suggested. Once you complete an assignment, submit it straightaway and tick it off your list! Remember that if you have subject specific questions or need any help with your assignments, please use the Team chat to ask your teacher. If you have any general school issues or you are having problems with Teams, please contact us at info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk

Here is this week’s full [**VTALK Schedule**](https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/)**.** Please feel free to join and watch**! It’s free and really interesting.** There is a great variety of speakers ranging from journalists to lawyers and scientists.

I encourage you to take part and join a very interesting **talk about how to challenge inequality**. On Thursday 4th June at 10 am, **Award-winning British-Turkish novelist, Elif Shafak, joins writer, journalist and broadcaster, Afua Hirsch** and they will discuss the widening inequalities across the world and how we can challenge them.

If you wish to submit questions to Elif and Afua you should email them at: **inspiration@speakersforschools.org**

**It’s easy to join the VTALKS:**

* Join 10 minutes before the VTALK to be ready
* You can join without needing an account – [**Watch how here**](https://vimeo.com/418436143)
* For full speaker descriptions visit the [**VTALK Schedule here**](https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/)

**Well done again for engaging so brilliantly with Tutor Time!** Remember to**set your alarms** for
1.30 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays so you are registering on time this week.

Kind regards

Ms Desbenoit

Student Progress Leader Year 8 / Diversity Coordinator