



# St Robert of Newminster

Catholic School and Sixth Form College

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021

## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



### Do you need to speak to someone for support?

For those who are seeking a Priest with whom they can speak at this time, could you please contact the Parish Priest at your local Church. You can find your local Church telephone number by visiting our [Church directory](#) and selecting the link for your church. This link will display the Church contact details.

Dedicated counsellors and listeners are also available at the Cathedral Listening Service on 0191 232 6953 and on the Northumberland Listening Service on 07732 980740.

### Diocesan Spiritual Support

These resources have been created to support you and your loved ones in this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Resources for times of grieving'](#)

[Prayers for the sick'](#)

Contains a collection of Catholic prayers to comfort you and your loved ones during difficult times of sickness.

Dear Parents/Carers, Students and Friends of the School,

Thank you for your ongoing and unwavering support of the school and our students during this difficult time. Your children have adapted to remote education superbly and the attendance and engagement to lessons has been, on the whole, excellent. Please continue to support your child with their learning and encourage them to use the lessons to seek guidance and support from their teachers. If you or your child is experiencing any difficulties with their remote learning then they can contact the school through their Head of House.

Dear everyone

I hope that you are all well and, to our students, I hope that you have continued to engage successfully with your online learning. We have received very good feedback from students so far, but if you do have a problem accessing the learning, please let us know.

Year 11 and Year 13 students, the government is currently engaging in a consultation process on the arrangements for grading this summer. Any parents/carers or students who wish to respond to the consultation can find the links for GCSE/A Level and Vocational qualifications below:

[GCSE & A Level Consultation](#)  
[VTOS & other General Qualifications](#)

Once the consultation is complete and the government publishes its final plans, we shall of course inform you of the arrangements. One of the areas the consultation explores is the feasibility of some form of assessment of students in place of full exams. Therefore, as previously stated, it is absolutely essential you remain engaged with your studies during this period of remote education. We will update you further when we can.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the newsletter and please take care.

With my best wishes  
Mr D Juric  
Head Teacher

### Pope Francis – Prayer to Mary for Protection during the COVID-19 Pandemic

O Mary,  
you always brighten our path  
as a sign of salvation and of hope.  
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, while remaining steadfast in faith.

O loving mother you know what we need, and we are confident that you will provide for us as at Cana in Galilee,

Intercede for us with your son Jesus The Divine physician for those who have fallen ill, For those who are vulnerable and for those who have died. Intercede also for those charged with protecting the health and safety of others and for those who are tending to the sick and seeking a cure

Help us, O Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who took upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows  
So as to lead us, through the cross, to the glory of the resurrection.  
Amen.

Under thy protection, we seek refuge, O Holy Mother of God. In our needs despise not our petitions but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin.  
Amen



## Thank you!!

We would like to say thank you to a local company, Washington-based efficient water systems supplier Cenergist, who has donated 15 computer tablets to our school to help children studying from home.

Mr Juric said **'We really appreciate the support from Cenergist. We don't want any children struggling due to lack of tablets and computers at home. This donation will make a real difference for our children.'**

If your child is having any issues with connectivity and hardware issues then please contact the school directly to discuss how we can support you.



## Sixth Form Interviews

Our Year 11 students all have the opportunity to take part in a meeting with various teachers to discuss their hopes and aspirations for the next academic year.

This is a great opportunity to ask any questions about our Sixth Form at St Robert's, the different courses we have on offer and also discuss which courses would be best in terms of future career, training and education.

Year 11 students will be receiving a Teams invite to an online meeting over the coming days. It would be fantastic if they could accept the invite and take up the opportunity.

We have an incredibly successful Sixth Form at St Robert's with a whole host of extra-curricular activities to support the academic, social and spiritual aspect of young people.

## Increasing data allowances on mobile devices to support children

The Department for Education is piloting a scheme to temporarily increase data allowances for mobile phone users on certain networks. This is so that children and young people can access remote education if their face-to-face education is disrupted.

Schools can request mobile data increases for children and young people **who meet all 3 of these criteria:**

1. do not have fixed broadband at home
2. cannot afford additional data for their devices
3. are experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education

If you feel your child meets the 3 criteria outlined above, please click on the following link to take you to an application form where you will need to give information on the mobile phone number and mobile network for the school to apply on your child's behalf: If you have any questions about this please contact Mrs Dunn, Assistant Head teacher.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=rAEj3M-dr0GSuG7q2XpfpLByUshjsY5DkPNe8qjOmYpUNjNSQ1kwVVJFU05HTktDTDdSWUYxRzBEMS4u>

## Rewarded Engagement & Effort

All teachers at St Robert's are keen to reward the excellent engagement and effort that our young people are demonstrating during these challenging times. From next week different pupils will be nominated across departments and will receive this postcard as recognition of their excellent effort.



### Who used it most?

Well done to all of the Years 9, 10 and 11 students who continue to use GCSE pod to support their online learning. Remember you can do so by watching a summary pod on a chosen topic and making notes or flashcards on this, completing a quick quiz or a check and challenge task.

Well done to our top GCSE pod users last week, **Year 9 – Archie McDonald, Year 10 – Grace Reid and Year 11 – Connell Donoghue**

### Still not logged in or activated your account?

If a student has not yet activated their GCSE pod account or cannot remember how to log in, they should follow the steps below:

1. Go to [www.gcsepod.com](http://www.gcsepod.com) and click “**Login**” in the top right-hand corner
2. If they have an account enter username or email address and password
3. If they have not registered an account, click on ‘**New here? Get started**’ select ‘**student**’ and enter their **name, date of birth** and **the school name**. This is linked to the school registers so the student must enter their name as it appears on the register.

If a student has forgotten their username or password or are struggling to activate their account, please email the school email address and we will be able to assist you with this.

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## Holocaust Memorial Day 2021

*We will continue to do our bit for as long as we can, secure in the knowledge that others will continue to light a candle long after us.*  
**Gena Turgel MBE, survivor of the Holocaust (1923-2018)**

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD), established in 2000, is marked each year on 27th January – the anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration and death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau.

As St Robert of Newminster marks HMD 2021, we encourage reflection on Jewish resistance during the Holocaust; rescue; justice; the legacy of Holocaust survivors; and the action of educating the next generation to carry these stories forward. Each of these in its own way relates to the theme ‘Be the Light in the Darkness’.

We are proud to be a Beacon School for Holocaust Education and our Y9 History students study a scheme of learning on the Holocaust that has been developed by Mrs Bone in partnership with the expertise from UCL. Each year our students in Year 9 experience listening to a survivor testimony. In the past we have been privileged enough for Holocaust survivors to visit us in person, but more recently we have participated in the Holocaust Educational trust survivor webcast – a live event where hundreds of schools and over 40,000 people bear witness to a survivor’s testimony at the same time. Our year 12 students also participate each year in the “Lessons from Auschwitz” Ambassador programme where 2 students from every sixth form and college visit Auschwitz to bear witness to the events of the Holocaust and share their experiences with their community.

This year the programme unfortunately will be an online programme due to Covid, but there will be further updates on this in due course. As part of this year’s commemorations, Year 9 History students will listen to a recording of the survivor webcast in their History lesson and we encourage you to discuss this with your child. You are of course welcome to watch the recording with your child and be part of this powerful experience.

You can also register to attend the first online Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony – link here <https://www.hmd.org.uk/uk-holocaust-memorial-day-2021-ceremony/>

Mrs K Dunn

Assistant Headteacher

## Mental Health Support

It's understandable that some of us may be feeling a bit overwhelmed and scared by everything that we are hearing about coronavirus disease (COVID-19) right now.

Children and young people react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with COVID-19 calmly and confidently, they can provide the best assurance possible for their loved one. In order to reassure other's, it is helpful if we, ourselves, understand what is happening.

### **Not all children and young people respond to stress in the same way.**

Some common changes to watch for include;

- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
- Returning to behaviours they have outgrown (for example, requiring more reassurance than normal)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and "acting out" behaviours in teens
- Poor school performance or avoiding school
- Difficulty with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs



### **There are many things you can do to support your child.**

Don't avoid the 'scary topic' but engage in a way that is appropriate for them. Take time to talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak.

Reassure your child or teen that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.

Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand. We need to minimise this negative impact it has on our children and explain the facts to them. Discuss the news with them but try and avoid over-exposure to coverage of the virus. Be as truthful as possible.

Try to keep up with regular routines. If schools are closed, create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities.

Be a role model. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members.

Involving our family and children in our plans for good health is essential. We need be alert to and ask children what they have heard about the outbreak and support them, without causing them alarm.

### Support Available

If you are concerned about your child's mental health and you feel like your child needs further support please contact your child's Head of House. They will call to discuss the most appropriate help for them.

**Remember that Kooth is always available if young people are feeling overwhelmed and needs counselling support during this time.**

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

<https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/>