



St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School

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Dear Parents and Carers of St Bernadette Pupils,

I hope that your children are back into a routine of home learning after the May break. As the period of home learning looks likely to be the main form of learning for most pupils for the remainder of this school year, I thought I would share with you some information taken from a blog by Samuel Windsor about how to motivate children and teens at home.

<https://blog.samuel-windsor.co.uk/how-to-motivate-children-and-teens-at-home>

“Life in lockdown is a challenge for everyone. And while younger family members might have found it a novelty to begin with, not being able to see friends, go to school or pursue normal activities is beginning to take its toll.

As lockdown continues, many children are missing their school community and normal routine more than they care to admit. Let them know that it’s OK to feel sad, anxious or disappointed. Teenagers may not want to discuss their emotions, but give them plenty of opportunities to talk

There are lots of ways to encourage your teen to stick at lessons when motivation runs thin. Talking to them about what they’re working towards – an ambition can be highly motivational. Remind them that keeping their brains active will give them a huge head start when it comes to returning to school and that, whatever their age, education isn’t just about exams and grades.

Science teacher Adam Robbins says: *“The act of learning has ramifications for all areas of a person’s life. Learning provides a sense of challenge that builds self-esteem. It also provides variation and stimulation that can improve our mood.”*

Some children struggle with remote learning because they’re being far too hard on themselves. Clinical psychologist Dr Hazel Harrison suggests helping children to set small, achievable goals each day. She says: *“Encourage children to notice what’s working well, even on a bad day...Express gratitude for the good things... Create an upward spiral!”*

Six tips to keep children engaged with remote learning

- **Clarify the habits.** These should include checking the tasks set by their teachers daily and aiming to complete the work to the best of their ability. Take breaks in the evenings/weekends.
- **Emphasise what you expect.** Teenagers are strongly influenced by the behaviour that is expected.
- **Help them plan what to do.** Set really clear schedules for what is going to happen and when.
- **Simplify everything.** Encourage them to sit down to study as they would sit down to a lesson – no social media, desk clear, no distractions.

- **Highlight small wins.** Teenagers feel like things are working when they see them working. Use praise to celebrate their successes.
- **Relaunch habits when they struggle.** It's sometimes going to be hard. They will face problems. Remind them that each week, each lesson is a chance to start again."

We value the support and encouragement you are giving your child and know it is really helping their learning. Thank you for all you are doing.

Stay safe and have a good week.

Best wishes

Mrs McLaughlin