

Dear students, parents and carers,

Firstly, I hope you, your family and friends are safe and in good health. It's with a heavy heart that I write to you to confirm that in what are the strangest of circumstances this year will be my last as Principal at OALP after being appointed to a new role with Oasis as Executive Principal Isle of Sheppey and Specialist Advisor for Inclusion for London and the South East.

During the current circumstances I feel a great deal of sympathy for you all losing your independence, freedom to meet friends and come to school. Despite this, I know your teachers are really proud with how you're engaging with home learning activities and the new challenges this presents. I'm sure you'll join me in thanking Mrs Dover and all the staff for doing such a remarkable job providing remote home learning to such a high standard.

It might not feel like it now, but developing these new independent, interactive learning and communication skills will most definitely make you more resilient and help you cope and adapt to any future obstacles that life throws at you, as you become young adults and progress into the world of GCSEs, further education and work.

You all have bright futures and what I have discovered over the last five years is that the families and community of Manningham, Bradford West and across our city have a determination to succeed and an ability to find humour and show compassion in the toughest of circumstances.

As I prepare to leave and start my new job in September I want to personally and specifically thank you all for the support and kindness you have shown me since I arrived in 2015. The appreciation you've shown to me at the entrance gate, after assemblies or around the academy as I wish you a good day, and the replies of 'you too, sir' always filled me with warmth and happiness and I'll miss that enormously.

Since day one and throughout my time at OALP I have felt that all parents, carers, children and staff have backed my beliefs and ideas for the academy and you are an amazing group of people. The manner in which you have engaged with your learning and supported the academy has enabled us to be successful. This shows in that we now have a waiting list from current Year 6 across Bradford who want to join OALP as opposed to their local school.

Please ensure you continue to have high ambitions, push yourself to higher grades but also enjoy and make time both during and after lockdown to pursue your hobbies and interests. Try to live out your dreams and believe that regardless of privilege or wealth YOU can rise to the top in the area of education or career that you eventually choose. If you experience set backs, keep your heads held high, come back a stronger and better person who will achieve wonderful things and live a good life through hard work, determination and being a nice and helpful person to those around you.

When many of you joined OALP our academy was judged by Ofsted to be in 'Special Measures' or 'Requiring Improvement', but it has been your response and the staff I've had the pleasure to appoint and work with that has enabled us to rise above this rating. The way you have increasingly worked and engaged with your teachers week after week, term after term, enabled OALP to achieve its first ever 'Good' rating from Ofsted in 2018. That was the best feeling I've ever had in my 28 year long career, thank you for making that possible - I was so happy for us all that day that I'm not ashamed to say I cried with joy and a little bit of exhaustion!

Individually and collectively I hope to say goodbye in person properly once the COVID-19 lockdown is lifted and we can once again welcome you on site and arrange some year group assemblies, social events and REACH days as we adjust back into a routine that you no doubt are missing as much as I am. It will also be nice to reminisce about the ups and downs that we have all had over the last five very eventful but happy years since many of us began our journey together.

Finally I want you to know that as a group of young people I will never forget you and the pleasure you have brought to my working life. I plan to visit OALP regularly in the years to come, to see colleagues and community members I regard as friends to ensure my association with this community and the hub we are building is a lifelong relationship.

Thank you for the memories . Live your dreams, work hard and be nice.

Best wishes,

Mr Simpson



### Easter Holiday Activities in the Academy

During the first week of the Easter holidays, the students that were in the academy had a real opportunity to be creative. They wanted to show their support to the NHS and key workers by making a rainbow in the Post 16 common room. The students thought it would be nice for everyone to see as they drive up North Avenue towards our school.



We then decided to do some baking! Students made a range of cakes and buns, which they took home to share with their families. We made pizzas and the students chose which toppings they liked the most; we also learned that different foods take longer to cook in the oven than others.



Later in the week we made rice crispy squares - these were a favourite of the students! Following the Easter theme, we decorated hard boiled eggs in different patterns. To finish the week, on Friday the students settled down with popcorn while watching Ice Age.



### Performing Arts Awards—Weeks 2 and 3

Our Performing Arts Students have continued to submit excellent work to Mrs Brown and Miss Emery while distance learning! Here is an example of a piece of work from Kaif Ramzan in Year 8 who submitted a tense and exciting monologue for his Drama work.

*I felt really bad after we ran off home. I knew I'd done something really bad. My mum asked where I'd been, she said I looked pale as a ghost and asked if I was feeling sick. I told her I just wanted to go to my room and lay down.*

*I heard the news come on the TV, how the rock killed a guy on the motorway. I felt my heart going too fast. I slammed my bedroom door shut. I started to cry. A shiver ran down my spine.*

*I felt so guilty. I hugged my pillow. And cried myself to sleep.*

*Soon as I woke up, I went to my door. I opened it and froze.*

*You wouldn't believe who I saw. The police!*

Congratulations to all our winners! To see all the winners of our awards and examples of their work, please visit the 'News' page at [www.oasisacademylisterpark.org](http://www.oasisacademylisterpark.org)



### Safeguarding Awareness

During this difficult time we hope that you and your families are safe and well. Please make sure that you follow the steps below to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19):

#### Stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you do go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Do not meet others, even friends or family.

Stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives.

If you have any safeguarding concerns or need any support please contact Mrs Malik on 07971487677 or Mr Taylor on 07487639925.

If you are suffering from any bereavement/separation and loss or any other emotional symptoms, please contact Mrs Wainwright on 07970963838.

**If your personal details change, such as your address or telephone number, please notify the Academy immediately at [admin@oasislisterpark.org](mailto:admin@oasislisterpark.org)**

# Listen Life: from the students

## Anxiety Linked to Working From Home...

Hello everyone,

Today, I would like to talk about the importance of looking after our wellbeing whilst trying to confront school work and this massive upheaval caused by the predatory coronavirus.

Studying in school can ordinarily present us with many challenges. Despite education igniting us with a thirst for knowledge, it can still be arduous, tiring and complex! Therefore, studying from home in this virtual sphere could perhaps be very daunting for students. However, to my shock and horror – I have realised it can actually be somewhat easier! Yes, easier. Suddenly, we have some power and autonomy over our preferred learning environment, style and pace. You choose the hours of work you put in, the music you listen to and preferred nibbles and snacks along the way. However, for some they may struggle to find a driving factor, no motivation to keep them going besides themselves, and that in itself is an extremely difficult act. Not everybody has the willpower to see the bigger picture and keep working or even motivate himself or herself to work. I highly respect people who have the ability to get out of bed in the morning, open up Teams with an optimistic mind-set that looks towards completing everything they have been set - it's not easy!

Many of you may be struggling with the idea of falling massively behind, and not knowing where to start. Perhaps you have not done any work so far and are now starting to see how important this time is and how much you are missing out. Perhaps you are overwhelmed with the workload and it seems too much for you. These scenarios are common to every student across the entire world, so don't feel alone! There is no way I can answer for every individual person but as a general community of students, I can offer some advice and what I do to help me complete work and nurture my emotional wellbeing.

Firstly, you should never feel pressured into completing and handing in work if it negatively affects your mental health. If the pressure and stress is genuinely becoming too much for you, take a step back. I know people who feel the work is too much for them and I have said the same thing. What I would recommend doing is having open communication with your teachers, sending regular emails and updates and asking for extensions on work so that you have more time - it is your education, your time and so take a stand regardless of what other people may think.

To the most reluctant students and the people who do not intend to do anything (of which there are some), I would say to begin with the core subjects of Maths and English, with a similar necessity placed on the Sciences. Work backwards with the most recent subjects. Aim to do something - you will not have the ability to get this time back! I will speak on behalf of teachers who I'm sure will wholeheartedly agree—it is absolutely vital that you aim to do something rather than nothing!

Similarly, ask your friends for help with the work, or even better, after you have completed a piece of work, share your thoughts with your friends so that you are working towards achieving a similar goal, which will take the stigma and (hopefully) some of the hardship that surrounds working. Open communication with friends is important as advice/help from them is a much more casual resource. This is a method that I apply a lot; I talk to friends when I need help and friends come to me and this proves to be one of the most useful methods.

In other news, one thing to look forward to and you can use to unwind from work. The school talent show will now be moving online and the contestants will be sending clips of them at home performing and these will be judged! I think that a lot more people can get involved now, so I would love to see a lot more students that wouldn't normally participate take part from the comfort of their own home! If you want to take part, send your entry to me or Mrs Brown.

Hope you are all safe and taking good care of yourself.

Best wishes,

Atyab

# STUDENT COMMENTS

"Mental Health should be put before working, as when you're mentally stronger you can work more efficiently and with more attention"

**Mohammed Burhaan**

"The stress of work and trying to achieve everyone's expectations may be a trigger to mental health issues. In circumstances like these, it is vital to prioritize mental health over work as (whilst grades are important) they do not guarantee success in life"

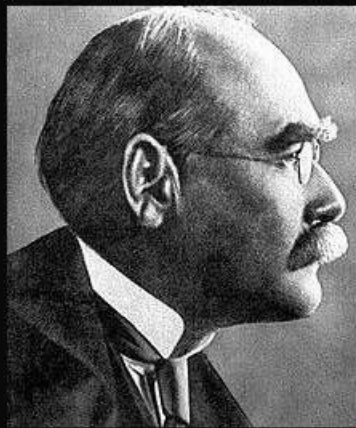
**Nahyaab**

"I battle through daily problems which are made harder because I'm only a teenager - I don't know how to cope. The stress of getting good grades amplifies it tenfold as everything piles together and some days it becomes too much. We have to achieve constant perfection and are told we don't put enough effort in, unbeknownst to them that we don't have the strength for it"

**Aneeqa Iqbal**

"Having a little anxiety to motivate you isn't good in my opinion as it could increase into something more severe. When there's constant pressure to do well, it becomes too much for someone."

**Malikah Mahmood**



If you can dream—and not make dreams your  
master;  
If you can think—and not make thoughts your  
aim;  
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two imposters just the same

(Rudyard Kipling)