



Robert Smyth Academy

Dear Families,

Resilience

As the days grow shorter and the weather turns colder, we enter a challenging yet crucial period of the academic year. Our students are approaching their trial examinations and assessments, which can be stressful for many. It is during these moments that the importance of resilience becomes particularly evident.

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from setbacks, adapt to difficult circumstances, and continue to pursue goals despite obstacles. It is a vital trait that will help our students succeed academically and prepare them for the challenges they will face in life beyond school.

This week, I have communicated expectations with all students in the Main School and invited them to reflect on the importance of persistence and resilience despite the challenges they face.

Here are a few ways we can support our students in building resilience:

- **Healthy Routines:** Encourage regular sleep patterns, nutritious eating, and physical activity. These habits are essential for maintaining physical and mental well-being.
- **Encouragement and Positive Reinforcement:** Celebrate their efforts and progress, no matter how small. Positive reinforcement can boost their confidence and motivation.
- **Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** Deep breathing, meditation, and yoga can help students manage stress and stay focused.
- **Open Communication:** Create a supportive environment where students feel comfortable discussing their concerns and challenges. Listening and offering guidance can make a significant difference.
- **Seeking Help When Needed:** Remind students that it is okay to ask for help. Our school offers various support services, including counselling and academic assistance. Please do not hesitate to reach out to our dedicated staff for support.

At Robert Smyth Academy, we are committed to providing a nurturing environment that fosters resilience and well-being. Our teachers and support staff are here to guide and assist students through this demanding period. Additionally, we encourage you to use the following resources:

- **My Voice** – This is the online safeguarding platform in which students can refer themselves or their peers if they feel they could benefit from support. Students also learn about self-care and wellness in PSHE.
- This **booklet** provides information about services across Leicestershire that provide support for mental health and wellbeing: [V5-SEPTEMBER-2023-Mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-BOOKLET-32PG-1.pdf](#)
- A **Teen-11 representative** is on site every Monday and offers exam stress /anxiety sessions on a 1:1 and group basis. If you feel this would be beneficial for your child, please complete the referral below: [Teen Health 11-19 referral - Referrer Details - Section 1 - Leicestershire County Council Self Service](#)
- **We are committed to 'Thrive'**, a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing and is a collaborative effort to improve the outcomes of young people. Please find below their advice on how to look after your mental health during assessment and examination season:

Advice for students

Find a balance

The most important thing is to use your time wisely and find a balance between revising and spending time doing the things you enjoy. Constantly revising without a break can make you feel emotionally and physically drained, so it's crucial that you take time to step back and do something that you enjoy. Whether it's a hobby, or getting some rest, it can help you to recharge. It also lets your brain digest what you've just revised, instead of cramming lots of information in at once.



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Advice for students (continued...)

Finding what self-care works for you

There's no one way to do self-care. You can keep it simple or go all out with it – it's about finding what works for you. It's okay to try different things until you find what you like. To help you figure this out, think about these questions:

- What feels within my power to try? Start by trying things that feel easy to fit into your life, like taking a short walk or writing down your feelings each day.
- Where am I drawing my strength from? Think about what makes you feel good and strong. Talking to people you love, doing something creative or connecting with nature might work for you.
- What are things that help ground me? Find activities that help you feel centred and present. Mindfulness, journaling and drawing can help you to tune in with yourself.
- If my best friend was feeling like this, what would I say to them? Take the same care and understanding that you'd give to someone else who's finding life tough now.
- What is my body telling me it needs? Tune into what you need. If you're feeling on edge, take time to reset your mind.

Starting self-care can feel strange. Sometimes it can feel like self-care is selfish, especially if you have big responsibilities like caring for a friend or family member. But there's nothing selfish about looking after yourself – in fact, doing so will make you better able to do the other things you need to do. Remember, you are worthy of self-care and helping yourself feel good can help you to support the people around you too.

To further support our students, we met with all Year 11 students on Monday to communicate expectations related to the **Trial Examinations**. We welcomed families for a **Year 11 Raising Achievement Evening for SEND Parents on Tuesday evening** and we have also hosted **Year 13 Raising Achievement Evening on Wednesday** which was another successful event and an opportunity for students to get the key information they need to be successful. We thank those parents and students who attended for coming out and for preparing themselves for a successful assessment window ahead. The information from the evening is available on the website [UCAS - Help for Students and Parents - Robert Smyth Academy \(tgacademy.org.uk\)](https://www.tgacademy.org.uk) and the [Slides](#).

SEND Parent Coffee Afternoon on Monday 4th November (2.00pm)

We know that children with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities** are often more likely to find this period of the academic year more challenging due to the pressure (perceived or otherwise) around assessments and so we have organised a SEND Parent Coffee Afternoon on Monday at 2.00pm. Visitors should come to Main Reception by 1.55pm and they will have the opportunity to meet our SEND Team and to discuss any relevant issues that we can support with as a school.

Together, we can help our students navigate this challenging time with resilience and determination. The message that we promote is that resilience and endurance are valuable characteristics; they are ingredients for success in school and beyond. Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Yours sincerely,

Dan Cleary
Principal



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