

April 2020

Dear Parents,

We are living in unparalleled times, and we are inevitably looking for some reassurance that all will be well. Our priority is that we will be safe and healthy, but there are a plethora of other concerns, from worrying about our friends and family, to those more needy in the community and beyond. We are also struggling to adapt to working from home and trying to ensure our financial stability.

With all this to worry about, our children's education is an added burden and one many of us feel ill equipped to deal with. We all want reassurance that though they are housebound, our children will be kept inspired and educated throughout this crisis.

As I am sure you are aware, [PaJeS](https://www.pajes.org.uk) works supporting Jewish schools across the UK, and I can reassure you that Jewish school leaders take this responsibility very seriously. However, you should also bear in mind that this is an exceptionally challenging time for schools. They are suddenly required to deliver a curriculum through distanced learning, whilst accommodating the needs of the children of key workers, those with ECHPS and those requiring free school meals. All this is being done by staff who are also looking after their own families, and sadly too many of whom are ill.

At the same time for parents, there is the daily struggle to balance work, childcare, homecare and ensuring family wellbeing which must be our priority at the moment. Whilst support may be very welcome, we are aware you have been inundated with information that too often may be inaccurate, through social media, WhatsApp groups and email. I am pleased to inform you that PaJeS has therefore compiled concise guidance for parents on supporting the educational and wellbeing needs of your children. The site will be updated on an ongoing basis and you can already find helpful and relevant tips for maintaining a happy home life. Please click on this link:

[https://www.pajes.org.uk/support\\_during\\_school\\_closures](https://www.pajes.org.uk/support_during_school_closures)

I am also delighted to invite you to hear '**Countering the lockdown - Top tips for psychological wellbeing**' a talk given by **Dr Mark Berelowitz**, child and adolescent psychiatrist at The Royal Free Hospital. Mark recently spoke as part of The Community Wellbeing Project on 'What we can learn from the Thai boys trapped in the cave' and I'm sure he will have some valuable lessons for us on coping during this crisis. His YouTube presentation will go live on Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 7pm and will be accessible via the [PaJeS website](https://www.pajes.org.uk).

As we near Pesach, which is a time when we celebrate our emergence from darkness to light may we all be blessed with health and security and with G-d's help emerge once again from this darkness to a bright and peaceful future.

Wishing you a peaceful, healthy and happy Pesach.

Rabbi David Meyer  
Executive Director, PaJeS