

# COVID-19 Group Update

Dear all,

In the town hall on Friday, Gail gave an upbeat overview of our business performance for the first month of 2021 which is a great result given the continuing COVID situation around the world. With retail continuing to be affected and a total number of cases now exceeding 100 million, art perhaps is providing some solace in difficult times.

## ***Around the world...***

Last week we gave you an update on what was happening in the countries where our business units are based and this week, with few countries managing to avoid the impact of COVID, it's important to remember how it is affecting Colart.

In total, we have seen a total of nearly 30 of our people testing positive for COVID with five of these cases arising in the last couple of weeks. Our thoughts are with our colleagues affected from Head Office, Lowestoft and North America and we wish them a speedy recovery.

The occurrence of these recent cases reinforces the need for us to always remain vigilant and whilst all cases were as a result of contact outside of the company it is vital that we continue to respect the protocols in place at work. Colart's emphasis on remote working where possible will of course continue in the short term so that we can maintain focus on those colleagues not able to work from home.

## ***Little Elephant art classes ...***

Little Elephant classes are continuing at a pace and during this week we welcomed 73 students making 218 over the three weeks (nine days), including lots of regulars. The 7–10-year-olds appears to be the most popular class of the day.

The feedback we are receiving continues to be very positive and Zoom continues to work well and the students appear to love Emmely our tutor! Our plan is still to share the artwork with an online exhibition. So please share the link and help other parents who are struggling with home schooling and keeping the children occupied!



You can share the Zoom link with friends and family:

(<https://zoom.us/j/94251161228?pwd=QzhIRzQzeVAyQ09Pay9GTWpieXhoQT09>)

From Tuesday to Thursday (all hours are GMT):

- 10 :00 to 10 :45 – 4 to 6 year olds
- 11 :00 to 11 :45 – 7 to 10 year olds
- 14 :00 to 14 :45 – 4 to 6 year olds
- 15 :00 to 15 :45 – 7 to 10 year olds
- 16 :00 to 16 :45 – 11 to 15 year olds

### **Code of conduct...**

Whilst the rhythm of life may be different at the moment there is one activity in the Colart rhythm that remains unchanged and that is our commitment to the code of conduct. At the beginning of each year, we remind ourselves of the expectations of the code and now that Splash has been cascaded to everyone, we will be using Splash as the mechanism for agreeing to the code. In a week you will receive an action reminder asking you to read the code of conduct which can be found in **Notices and Policies**



Once in this tab you will be able to read the full code – which will be available in your relevant language. Upon reading the code you are asked to confirm your agreement and commitment by clicking on the Confirm icon.

We will also be rolling out a training programme via your line manager to ensure full understanding of the code. Recognising the time needed for the training to take place, you will have until the end of February to confirm your agreement. Your local HR business partner will be available to help you if you have any questions.

### **Framing our thinking...**

*By Jasper van der Wurff*

When we think about the impact of COVID on our daily lives, we talk about "restrictions" and "stressors" – it is normal to think in this way as research indicates that 80% of our thoughts are mostly negative and 95% are actually repetitive thoughts. By creating awareness about this, we have the opportunity to pro-actively reframe our thoughts. For instance, "*I won't be able to get any work done with the kids at home*" could be reframed as "*I feel fortunate for being so involved in my children's education*". Now I know this is easy for me to suggest, when I don't have children but and maybe this isn't the best example...but could we try to see *opportunities* instead of *challenges*. By doing this and reframing our thoughts, we can open our minds for growth and in turn build resilience.

Our thoughts determine what we **believe**. Our beliefs determine how we **feel**. Our feelings determine our **behaviour**. Our behaviour determines our **results**. As the Chinese proverb says: *the man who thinks he can and the man who thinks he can't are both right!*

Give it a go and let me know how you get on...

### **Employee Assistance Programme...**

Whilst we appreciate the value of keeping a positive framework in our thinking, we know that

sometimes there are things in our lives that require more help. Currently we have the scheme set up in the US, UK and France and details of these arrangements will shortly be posted on the intranet to remind everyone of the value of this programme. We are also in the process of setting up membership to the assistance programme for those of you around the group who do not already have this facility. In the meantime, please talk to your line manager or HR if you have a problem that is worrying you.

If you don't feel you can ask for help directly – and we know from research that remote working can increase this feeling because of the potential sense of isolation – you can always use Ethicspoint to get the dialogue going. Ethicspoint is our secure, confidential and if needed anonymous reporting system that should not only be used to raise issues, ask questions or suggest ideas but also as a first protected step to raise your hand for help. If you are experiencing problems, please don't wait as over time the effects on you will only get worse and we do not want that to happen. Here's the link to the site:

<https://secure.ethicspoint.eu/domain/media/en/gui/103359/index.html>

### ***Pulse Survey...***

One of the insights highlighted from recent surveys is the importance that people place in the Colart values. The great examples of value led behaviour are consistently seen in the many High Fives given and received but with the pressures that we are all facing, we want to make sure that values are truly underpinning our behaviours.

For this reason, we will be posting a Pulse Survey focused on how you view values in Colart. Watch this space and more details to follow.

### ***Keeping to the basics...***

We cannot stress these basics enough and here's a reminder:

1. Work remotely for those who can, only attending the workplace for the purpose of maintaining connectivity and collaboration for up to one day per week (for at least the short term)
2. For those who cannot work remotely, you should continue to come into work as normal whilst aiming to avoid using public transport.
3. When in work (whether factory, warehouse, or office) follow the clear safety protocols that are in place to protect everyone's health and welfare.
4. Take responsibility for keeping to the safety disciplines in terms of handwashing, wearing face masks and maintaining physical distance.... Hands, Face, Space.
5. Business travel is still not acceptable unless authorisation has been obtained in advance. If you do need to travel please ensure you wash your hands before and after your journey, maintain social distancing and wear a face covering over your nose and mouth for the duration of your journey.
6. Take responsibility for yourself and others.

### ***Our mantra...***

As always, please **STAY SAFE** – please follow the basics outlined above and any advice from the government in your country.

Finally, remember we want every voice to be heard...so please keep talking to us and this includes telling us if you are struggling in any way.

You can use all routes available to you:

1. Your line manager.
2. Your local HR Business Partner.
3. The Q&A platform on the intranet.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the 'J' being particularly large and stylized.

Jane Beeston