



Kingswinford Academy

A part of Windsor Academy Trust

May 2022 Issue 1 (HT5): Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter:

OUR PURPOSE AT KINGSWINFORD:

We want to enable all members of our community to thrive, as we recognize that poor mental health and wellbeing will affect our community reaching their Academic and Personal potential. We aim to create a culture of positive mental health, where staff and students feel comfortable and confident to talk about their mental health. Support is readily available for all students/parents/carers and staff.

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as a 'state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.'

[▶ We All Have Mental Health](#)

WHAT IS GOOD MENTAL HEALTH?

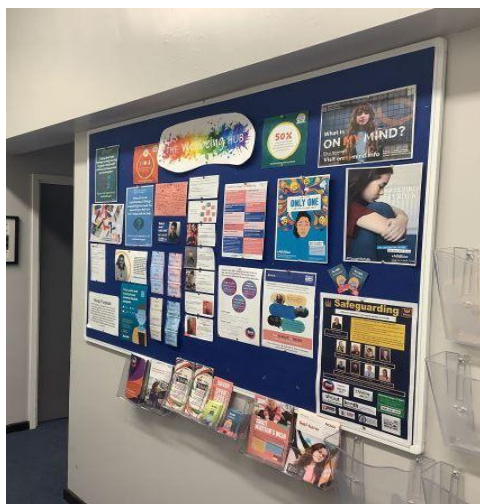
Looking after your mental health is not something we should just do if we are struggling, feeling low, anxious or stressed. It's actually something we should think about all the time and really invest in, just like with our physical health. Staying on top of our mental wellbeing is good for us and also helps us deal with difficult times in the future. Over time, it can also reduce our risk of physical health problems.

WHY IS YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IMPORTANT?

Your mental health is an important part of your wellbeing. This aspect of your welfare determines how you're able to operate psychologically, emotionally, and socially among others. Considering how much of a role your mental health play in each aspect of your life, it's important to guard and improve psychological wellness using appropriate measures. [Place2Be](#) reports that 1 in 6 children and young people have a diagnosable mental health problem, and many continue to have these problems into adulthood.

INFORMATION AND SIGNPOSTING SUPPORT

There are various display boards based around school, which provide information and support on the different services you can access to help support and guide you with a wide range of mental health concerns. We are also here to support you. Please make sure you are speaking with your Head of House. Please see the boards, one is located opposite the boys' toilets, there are two located in SSC and the other board is located opposite EN7. Visit our school website to view this support [Mental Health & Wellbeing](#)



Our School's Wellbeing Ambassadors

Our Wellbeing Ambassadors are your peers who have shown a real interest in championing positive mental health and wellbeing. These students are keen to share their learning around mental health and help to promote the importance of self care. Our Wellbeing Ambassadors can be identified as they all wear a green 'Wellbeing Ambassador' Badge. They are available to help and support you with any worries or concerns. Our Wellbeing Ambassadors will soon be available at break and lunch times - we will tell you where you can find them soon - keep on the lookout for announcements on your House Google Classrooms!



Events this month

Mental Health Awareness Week

We celebrated Mental Health Awareness Week 9th - 15th May. The Mental Health Foundation started Mental Health Awareness Week 21 years ago. They continue to set the theme, organise and host the week. Mental Health Awareness Week has grown to become one of the biggest awareness weeks across the UK and globally. The theme this year was Loneliness. A number of helpful and informative resources were uploaded to your Google House Classrooms. Remember the important messages of the Assembly as shown in the video titled, ['Feel so Alone'](#) and in the below statements.



No act of kindness,
no matter how small,
is ever wasted.

- Aesop

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It only takes a split second to
smile and forget,
yet to someone that needed it,
it can last a lifetime

- Steve Maraboli

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Be the one who makes others
feel included

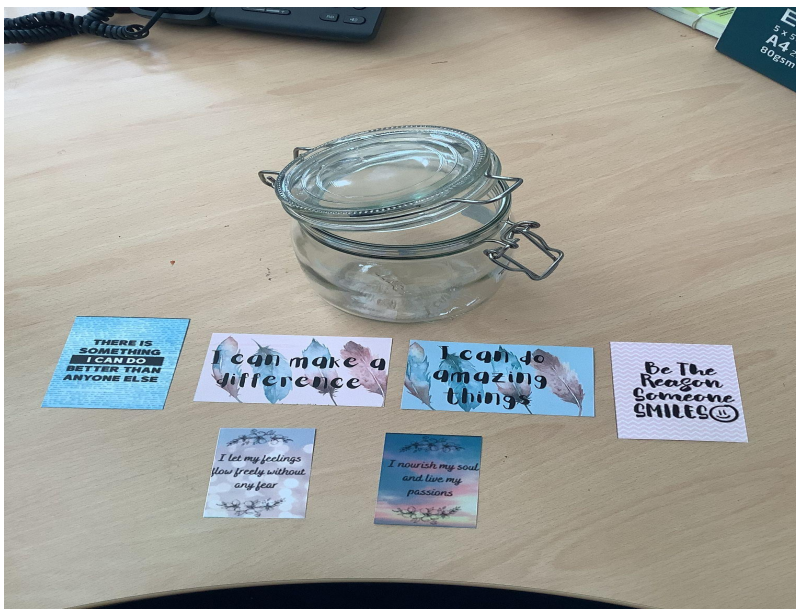
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Parent/Carer Workshops

A number of parents/carers attended a workshop on Tuesday 10th May hosted by the Reflexions Team (MHST), an organisation which offers mental health support in schools. The Reflexions Team provided practical advice on how parents/carers could help to support their child (you!) with anxiety.

Positive Affirmation Jars

Our Wellbeing Ambassadors are in the process of creating statements to be placed in jars in all Form Class Rooms. Positive Affirmations are statements that can help you to change and overcome negative thoughts. When you repeat them often, and believe in them, you can start to make positive changes. Keep your eyes open for these to appear in your Form Rooms. A group of our Wellbeing Ambassadors are organising.



Parent/Carer Tea and Coffee Morning

On the morning of Thursday 26th May 2022, the parents/carers of Year 10 and Year 9 were invited into school for a cup of tea (or coffee), and a slice of cake. Parents/carers were given the space to discuss Mental Health and Wellbeing. We hope that such events will continue to raise the profile of mental health and wellbeing provision in school and will help to support both our students, parents/carers and community. Our Wellbeing Ambassadors supported this event. They encouraged connection and interaction, and raised awareness of mental health. Our Wellbeing Ambassadors are working hard to remove the stigma surrounding the issue.

Dr Andy Cope's Visit - The Psychology of Happiness!

How lucky are our Year 9 students who are fortunate enough to participate in the The Art of Brilliance Wellbeing Award! The Art of Brilliance WELLBEING AWARD is an 8-hour whole-school programme comprising sessions aimed at students. Our Year 9 students' attended the delivery of the first module in the School Hall earlier this month - The Art of Being Brilliant: Wellbeing Launchpad. Our students were given an introduction of simple concepts and thought provoking activities. We can't wait to see their progress and development as they complete the Award.

Our own School's Wellbeing Garden

Watch this space! We have submitted a successful application, and subsequently we will be receiving items to create a Wellbeing Garden in the school grounds! More information to follow. We are so excited - we will be receiving 10 log seats, amongst other items!

Year 11

We continue to wish our Year 11 students the very best of luck in their GCSEs. You are all in a fantastic place to be successful with the additional support offered from school, home and the hard work that you are putting yourself through. If you need further support, please visit [Young Minds](#). Here, you will find 'A guide for Young People dealing with Exam Stress'.

Events coming up before the End of Term (there may be others - this is just a snapshot):

- Empathy Day is on the 9th June 2022. This day focuses on using books to step into someone else's shoes. Scientists say that we can train our brains with stories - the more we empathise with characters, the more we understand other people's feelings.
- Developing and promoting a Mental Health Literacy Board for your reference.
- It is National Schizophrenia Awareness Day on the 25th June 2022. This day shines a light on the challenges faced by hundreds of thousands of people living with a diagnosis of schizophrenia in the UK and millions more worldwide. The day sets out the steps we can all take to end the stigma and discrimination surrounding this much - misunderstood illness. More details will be shared on House Google Classrooms and during Form Time in the last few weeks of the academic year.
- Additional Parent/Carer Workshops hosted by the Reflexions Team.

TOP TIPS FOR LOOKING AFTER YOUR OWN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

There are lots of things we can do to look after our mental health and wellbeing every day-make a start with these 7 top tips

1. Reframe unhelpful thoughts

The way we think, feel and behave are linked. Sometimes we develop patterns of thoughts or behaviours that are unhelpful so recognising them, and taking steps to think about things differently, can improve your mental health and wellbeing.

2. Be in the present

If we take time to be aware of ourselves and be in the present moment, noticing our own thoughts and feelings, and the world around us, we can gain a better perspective. Sometimes this is known as being more mindful.

3. Get good sleep

Good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how we feel mentally and physically, so it's important to get enough.

4. Connect with others

Spending quality time with friends or family, talking to someone about how we are feeling or finding ways to help other people can all help stop you from feeling lonely and improve your mental health and wellbeing. This can be online, by phone or seeing someone in person.

5. Live a healthy life

Being active, enjoying the outdoors and having a healthy, balanced diet all impact how we feel. Also, binning bad habits like smoking, and cutting down on alcohol and caffeine can have a positive effect on our mood.

6. Do something for yourself

From enjoying your favourite hobby, learning something new or simply taking time to relax, it's important to do things that make you happy, like trying a new hobby or learning a new skill.

7. Write a letter to future you

When you're feeling good, think about what you would want to tell your future self if things get harder and you find you need more support. Reminding yourself of what's keeping you feeling positive right now can help you through those more difficult times in the future.

MINDPLAN

Try some of the tips from Your Mind Plan and write down the ones that helped you, include ideas of how to get started and anything else that you have learnt about yourself.

Wellbeing

Seven easy mindfulness activities you may surprisingly enjoy

Mindfulness activities involve no more than being fully present and engaged in the moment and being aware of our thoughts and feelings without judging them or getting too caught up in them.



1. Mindfulness apps

Many apps have surprisingly **down-to-earth scripts** which direct you to:

- **Focus** on your breathing
- **Notice** body sensations
- **Accept** your mind will wander
- **Acknowledge your thoughts** without judgement

Quick 3, 5 and 7 mins options can be squeezed into any work break. You can select sessions for specific needs e.g. reducing anxiety or depression or improving focus and sleep.

2. Cooking

Notice the smell and texture of the raw ingredients.

Focus on the precision of repetitive tasks, such as chopping and stirring.

Recognise the **taste and smells** of different foods as they cook.

Involve the **family** and reconnect.



3. Dancing

It's simply **dancing like nobody's watching!**

Notice what's your **mood?**

What song have you **lost yourself to in the past** what that mood?

Dance how you want to, instead of what looks good. **Feel the rhythm!**

Notice how the **sounds and lyrics** (if any) make you feel.

4. Gardening

Feel the texture of the soil, the roughness of weeds or the softness of flowers.

Take in the **smells** of freshly cut grass and nectar.

Look at the changing colours, textures and patterns of plants and flowers.

Listen to the sounds of birds, lawnmowers and watering.



5. Yoga

There are plenty of **apps and online videos** to choose from for all ability levels, focus and goals.

- Energetic/relaxing
- Knee/back problems
- Strength/flexibility/balance
- Child friendly

Pay attention to your body. What feels good and what doesn't? Is your breathing becoming shallow?

Notice your body's impact as it meets the mat. Is it light or heavy?

Acknowledge how different moves make you feel. Are you frustrated, proud, determined or relaxed?

6. ANY exercise

Be clear about what you want to focus on before you begin.

Notice sensations such as the wind or sun on your body.

Concentrate on your muscles. How do they feel as you contract them? Can you feel lactic acid release?

How do you feel after? Are you invigorated and alive or relaxed?



7. Be grateful

Write down what you're thankful for. You don't need a journal - scraps of paper placed in a box will do.

Prompts are a great way to start. You can find lots of inspiration online to help, such as:

- What made you laugh today?
- What do you love most about a family member?
- What did you enjoy most today?
- This week I plan to live by these three values...
- By bedtime I want to feel proud of...