

LITTLE HEATH SCHOOL

Wellbeing

NEWSLETTER

for parents and carers



Issue 7, February 2024

Welcome to the “Little Heath School Wellbeing newsletter”

Our Wellbeing Newsletter is published three times a year, and we hope the information and advice in this issue is helpful. This issue looks ahead to Children’s Mental Health Week which runs across the country from 5-9 February.

We also include some sources of support and to this newsletter we have attached the “tips for parents and carers” that have been put together by [Place2Be](#) for Children’s Mental Health Week.

The theme for this year’s **Children’s Mental Health Week**, powered by Place2Be, is **My Voice Matters**.

My Voice Matters is about empowering children and young people by providing them with the tools they need to express themselves. When we feel empowered, there’s a positive impact on our wellbeing. Children who feel that their voices are heard and can make a difference have a greater sense of community and self-esteem.

“My voice matters” can focus on young people being able to discuss ideas and thoughts and things about which they are passionate, but it can also be about ensuring young people are heard when they tell us how they are feeling and talk about their wellbeing.

At Little Heath School we frequently talk with students and remind students about their avenues of support. We don’t want any students “suffering in silence” and there are several places that students can go within school should they wish to chat about how they are feeling.

As a school we also believe in involving our students and we have a number of Student Voice activities where students are able to offer their thoughts, opinions and ideas.



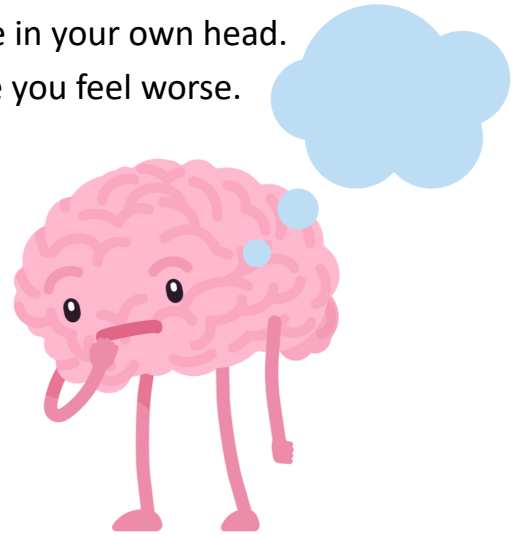
At Little Heath School, we will be marking this important week in various ways. We will host a special assembly for all year groups at the start of the week, on Monday 5 February. There will be a lunchtime activity session and regular updates on the school's social media pages will be seen through the week. Including our video where we asked students from Year 7 to Year 13, what advice they would give teachers and parents regarding how to maintain and improve their own mental health.

On Friday 9 February we will have a special tutor period where students will spend an hour engaging in activities and discussions around wellbeing with their tutor. We will also, of course, be reminding students about their avenues of support both inside and outside of school.

Ten ways to look after your Mental Health

This list was written by young people around the country for Childrens' Mental Health Week 2024:

1. Don't keep it all to yourself and spend too much time in your own head. This can sometimes make it keep piling up, and make you feel worse.
2. Talk to someone you trust and feel comfortable with – a teacher, parent, sibling, cousin, friend... if you can't think of anyone and need to talk, try talking to someone like Shout by texting SHOUT to 85258 for free.
3. Write your thoughts and feelings down.
4. Keep in contact with people, don't isolate yourself.
5. Don't dismiss your feelings because you think they aren't valid. Everything you feel is valid and important to you.
6. Focus on the good parts of your life and doing what you love, rather than the negative.
7. Be your own best friend because at the end of the day, you're stuck with you – so look after yourself!
8. If you feel upset then tell someone you trust and distract yourself in the meanwhile.
9. Do something you enjoy to help you relax and have a break – watch a film, play a game, watch your favourite YouTuber, listen to music
10. Remember that you're not alone, even if it sometimes feels like you are.



Mental Health Tips from the Mental Health Foundation

The Mental Health Foundation offer the following advice for supporting mental health and wellbeing:

- Get closer to nature
- Learn to understand and manage your feelings
- Talk to someone
- Get more from your sleep
- Be Kind and help create a better world
- Eat healthily
- Keep moving
- Plan things to look forward to
- Be curious and open minded to new experiences

Further information and detail about all of these tips can be found at [Our best mental health tips - backed by research | Mental Health Foundation](#)



LHS Wellbeing Bag

At Little Heath School we have created our own Little Heath School WELLBEING BAG. The idea behind the Wellbeing Bag is to give students a few moments to focus on their wellbeing with the support of some games, some things to read and some things to colour. It is kept in the Student Wellbeing Office- so if any students would like to have a look at the Wellbeing Bag, they are welcome to visit us before or after school, or at break and lunchtimes.

Talking to Young People about their Mental Health

Talking is important and can be a huge source of support. We would always encourage students to talk to someone they trust if they are, at any time, feeling worried, anxious, unhappy or sad. When talking to others about their wellbeing and mental health, the Mental Health Foundation suggest:

- Finding a good space to talk without distractions
- Giving eye contact and full attention
- Listening and asking questions
- Asking how you can help

There is advice about how to prepare to talk to someone about their mental health and phrases to use and avoid. Please see [Talking about mental health | Mental Health Foundation](#)

The Young Minds website has a good deal of information to support parents/carers in talking to their children about mental health and wellbeing:

[How to Talk to Your Child about Mental Health | YoungMinds](#)

The website also has wider information to support parents/carers in looking after young people's mental health: [Parents Mental Health Support | Advice for Your Child | YoungMinds](#)

Mentally Healthy Schools have produced the following guide: [tips-for-having-a-conversation-with-a-child-about-mental-health.pdf \(mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk\)](#)

Mind has the following support for parents in holding conversations with young people: [Talking to an 11-18 year old about their mental health - Mind](#)

The Children's Society offers the following advice: [GCR-2022-Well-being-Support Guide.pdf \(childrensociety.org.uk\)](#)



Questions I wish my Parents had asked me

Young Minds and Mentally Healthy Schools have produced the following based on conversations they have had with young people, about helpful questions for parents to ask their child:

Who are the people you feel safe with?

Is there a lot of picking on people at your school?

Is there anything you want to talk about?

What are you most dreading this week?

What makes you feel calm?

What difficulties are you facing now?

I can tell you really like..., what do you love so much?

When was the last time you were very happy?

It's ok to keep stuff private, but did you want to tell me about...?

Is there anyone who is upsetting you?

What are you worried about when you lie in bed and can't sleep?

How do you feel about things changing?

What are you most looking forward to this week?

Where is a place you feel safe?

Do you have any worries about starting a new school?

If you could change anything in your life, what would it be?

How do you feel about growing up?
What's exciting, what's scary?

What can I do to help?

How are you coping since your dad died?

YOUNG MINDS
fighting for young people's mental health

Self Care Strategies

Just as we look after our physical health, it is just as important to look after our mental health. Self-care is about what we can do to look after ourselves, to keep ourselves feeling ok, or to help ourselves feel better.

Everyone's approach to self-care is different but it is important that young people, and all of us, explore and develop strategies that work for us. Self-care does not have to be a big event - but it is important that we all find time to practise self-care. Importantly, self-care is not a substitute for seeking professional support if needed.

There are so many ideas and suggestions for self-care that are available. Here are some common themes:

Physical activities and exercise are important – they are a great way to relieve stress and help to centre or clear our mind.

Relaxation techniques – practising breathing

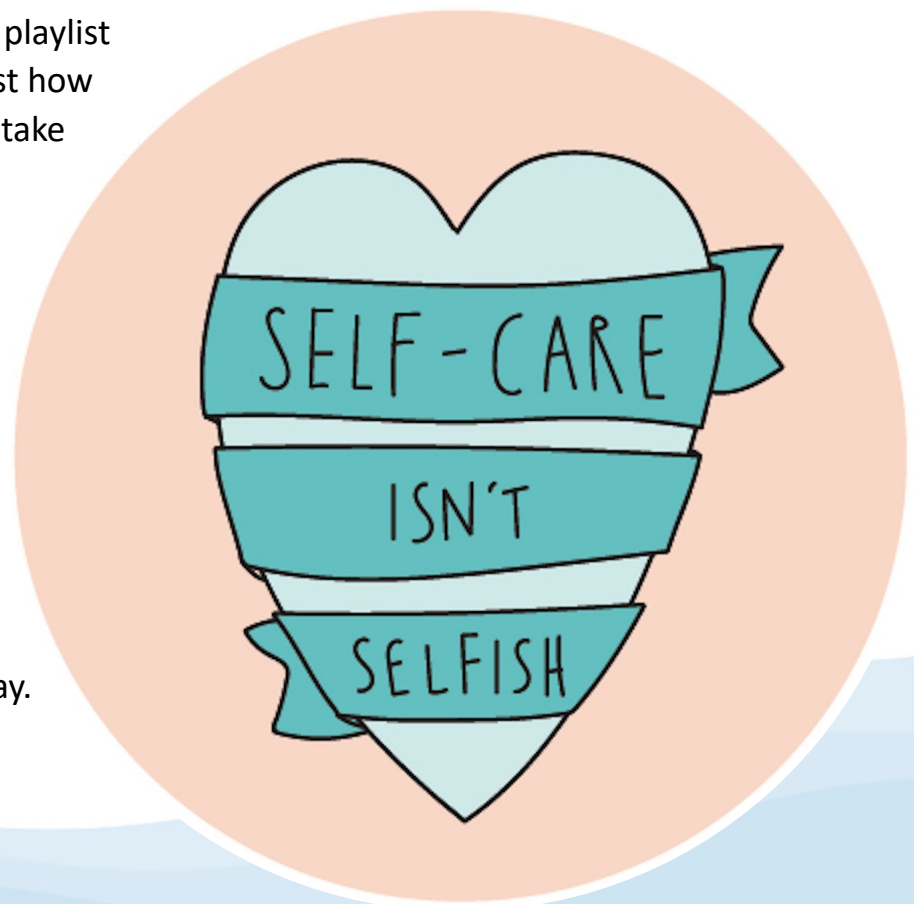
Time away from technology - leaving your phone behind, and time away from social media, can be of great benefit.

Social activities – connecting with others, spending time with others brings with it may positive benefits to boost your wellbeing. Laughing really is good medicine.

Music – can be a great source of positivity. Listening to a favourite song, creating a playlist or listening to a happy song can all boost how someone is feeling. Music also helps to take your mind away – even for a short time – from worries.

Gratitude – taking time to notice good things that have happened in the day and the blessings that we have such as family and friends.

Self kindness – taking time to do things you enjoy and taking time to recognise what you have achieved in the day.



Organisation – setting achievable goals can give extra motivation and encouragement. Writing lists can help prevent stress.

Routine – is helpful as a foundation for feeling good.

Sharing concerns – either in person or via an online forum. It is important, and beneficial, to talk about any worries or concerns that you have.



The NHS has a series of videos available to support young people in looking after themselves and coping with worries: www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/youth-mental-health/



The Anna Freud Centre has advice for self care for parents and carers - [Self-care for parents and carers | Anna Freud](#)



Young Minds also has support for young people: www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/my-feelings/

Five Ways to Wellbeing

The NHS, and others, have produced this tool to support people in taking care of their wellbeing:

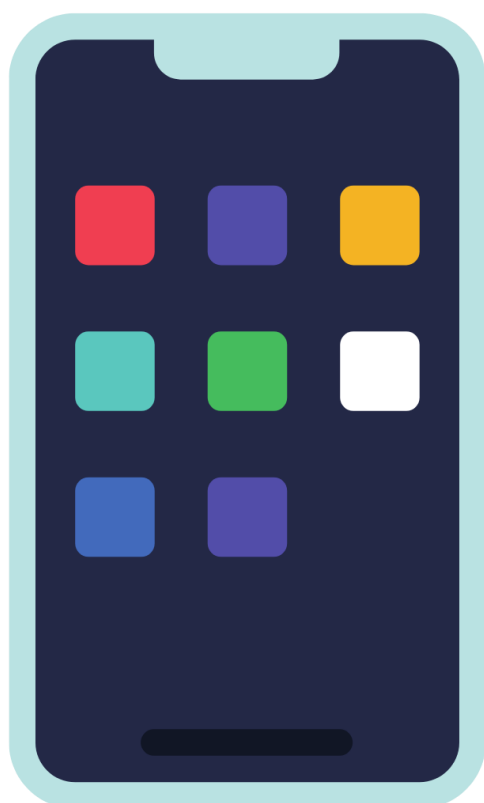


TellMi app

TellMi is an award-winning early intervention mental health service. The service delivers fully moderated, evidence-based, anonymous, peer support to young people aged 11-25 years via an app.

The app allows young people to talk with others of a similar age and experience and provide each other with support, advice, empathy and a sense of belonging. When someone registers for the app, they are asked for a date of birth so that they are only shown posts from people of a similar age (2 years above and 2 years below).

The app has been approved by NHS, and the NHS deems the app safe for people as young as 11. The app has been independently evaluated by the Evidence Based Practice Unit at University College London and is evidenced to improve mental health in young people.



Users can anonymously post about anything that is worrying them and receive supportive replies from other people of a similar age. All posts and replies are checked by one of TellMi's team of trained moderators before being published. Moderation takes an average of 19 minutes. Moderation hours are from 8.30am to 11pm, so if someone makes a post or reply outside of those hours, it won't be published until the service opens again.

High-risk posts are redirected to the in-house counselling team for immediate support.

TellMi features a comprehensive support directory with over 600 resources and educational resources and users can access 24/7 crisis support in two clicks. Both the feed and directory can be filtered by topic, eg 'exams', 'friends' which makes it easy for young people to join relevant conversations and access appropriate support.

For information about TellMi's approach to safeguarding please visit <https://www.tellmi.help/safeguarding>.

For more information about TellMi generally, and to download the app, please visit the TellMi website: <https://www.tellmi.help/>



Support for Parents & Carers

There is support available for parents and carers to support the wellbeing of young people:

Young Minds [Parents Mental Health Support | Advice for Your Child | YoungMinds](#)



Mind [Information for supporting your young person's mental health | Mind, the mental health charity - help for mental health problems](#)



Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families - www.annafreud.org

MindEd for Families - www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk



Emotional Health Academy Young people, families and professionals can refer to the Emotional Health triage – find out more and the to access the online referral form at <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/eha>

Looking for help with something specific...

<p>ANXIETY</p>	<p>https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-anxiety/</p> <p>YoungMinds parents' helpline for confidential, expert advice. You can reach them at 0808 802 5544</p>
<p>LONELINESS</p>	<p>How To Cope With Loneliness Mental Health Advice YoungMinds</p>
<p>E SAFETY</p>	<p>Parents homepage (thinkuknow.co.uk)</p>

Support for Young People

There is lots of support available for students in school.

Form tutors and Sixth Form mentors are the first point of contact for students. Students may also, of course, talk to their Head of Year and Progress Leader as well as the Deputy Head and Assistant Heads who lead their Key Stage team.



Mr Linz, our Student Wellbeing Lead, is also available for students as are our Inclusion Team.



If students would prefer to make contact about wellbeing by email, we have a dedicated wellbeing email smile@littleheath.org.uk which is monitored between 8am and 5pm on weekdays. The **Little Heath School website** also has a page dedicated to student wellbeing - [Little Heath School - Student Wellbeing](#). There is also a 'help form' accessible from this page for students to complete if they need some support.

Since 2021, we have asked all of our students to participate in a *Tutor Wellbeing survey* towards the end of each full term, where students give an update about how they are feeling through their responses to several questions. These surveys are then analysed by tutors and by the Pastoral team, and any additional necessary interventions are then put in place. Since we began these surveys, it has proved a really worthwhile and helpful process. The next *Tutor Wellbeing survey* will be after half term.

Other Sources of Support for Young People

YOUNGMINDS [Young Minds Help With How I'm Feeling | Mental Health Advice | YoungMinds | YoungMinds](#)

Time to Talk Time to Talk West Berkshire provides FREE confidential counselling services to young people in need aged 11 to 25. If you need support and/or want to find out more please email office@t2twb.org or call **01635 760331**



kooth Kooth <https://www.kooth.com/>



Useful Websites for Young People

ORGANISATION	SUPPORT FOR
<u>KOOTH</u>	All young people
<u>STONEWALL</u>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people
<u>YOUNG MINDS</u>	Advice for young people
<u>ANNA FREUD NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</u>	<u>Self-care strategies</u> for young people feeling low or anxious
<u>SEE, HEAR, RESPOND The Children's Society</u>	Support if you are struggling with any aspect of your mental health
<u>EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELLBEING for YOUNG PEOPLE The Children's Society</u>	Full of age-specific advice on issues that may be worrying children and people
<u>CAMHS in Berkshire</u>	If you want to talk to someone about whether CAMHS is the right service to help, or if you are having extreme mental health difficulties and need support urgently, call the team on 0300 365 1234, 8.00am-8.00pm Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours, if you need urgent help, please contact the adult crisis team on 0300 365 0300

National Helplines

<u>CHILDLINE</u>	0800 1111
<u>THE MIX</u>	0808 808 4994
<u>THE SAMARITANS</u>	116 123
<u>SHOUT</u>	The UK's 24/7 text service for anyone in crisis, anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. TEXT SHOUT to 85258



smile@littleheath.org.uk



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