

Orchard Primary School Well-being Newsletter

Supporting the Emotional Well-being and Mental Health of Our School Community

Autumn Term B 2021

Welcome to our second Mental Health and Well-being newsletter.

At Orchard, we are committed to supporting children, staff and parents in their wellbeing and mental health. We know that wellbeing, physical and mental health are all vital to successful learning.

Our aim is to provide help, tips and resources to support both adults and children as we recognise the importance of parents and carers feeling supported and well in themselves.

Great Conversation Starters

Starting a conversation can be difficult, especially if you're worried that your child is having a hard time. It doesn't matter what topic the conversation starts with – it's about the opportunity it gives you both to talk about feelings and to provide comfort.

Here are some conversation ideas to start things off...

General



Serious



Encouragers

You're the leading expert when it comes to your child. You can tell when they aren't in the mood to talk, or when they aren't responding to your attempts. Reassure them that if they don't want to talk now, they can talk to you at any time. You can also follow up conversations with encouragers:

Encouragers



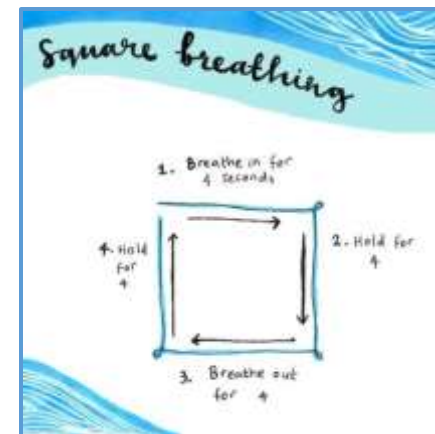
If you are concerned about anything that has come up in a conversation, try your best to tell them how you see things, and be clear about any actions you are going to take.

Try to provide comfort and reassurance.

Grounding Techniques

Does your child display signs of anxiety?

These are simple actions that you can encourage your child to take which can help you if they are feeling anxious.





The 10 Keys to Happiness

The 10 Keys to Happier Living are based on a review of the latest research from psychology related fields. Everyone's path to happiness is different, but the evidence suggests that these Ten Keys consistently tend to have a positive impact on people's happiness and well-being.

The first five keys (GREAT) are about how we interact with the outside world in our daily activities. The next five keys (DREAM) come from inside us and depend on our attitude to life.

Positive Behaviours

In school, we continue to place great emphasis on positive behaviours and 'character' education including resilience, growth mindset and kindness.

Class teachers will award Dojo points to children who have shown a positive and caring character in school. Certificates and rewards will also be given during our class assemblies.

Please share with us any examples of your child demonstrating these values through their achievements outside of school so we can celebrate by putting their photo up on our Proud Cloud. Sports, music, fundraising efforts – let us know!

Yoga

Yoga is a fantastic, fun exercise that improves posture, flexibility, strength and balance. It can also help children to relax and encourage positive thinking. Why not try it out? Grab a mat, blanket, or towel find some loose clothing to wear and click on one of the following links.

For younger children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-BS87NTV5I>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ImHIWzP49M>

For older children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eJoUIBhLkE>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sM5MGLMNN_E

Young Minds Website.

This website is fantastic!

www.youngminds.org.uk



They have a wealth of brilliant ideas including the following, which is all about what to do if your child is struggling:

If your child tells you they're struggling, it's important to make sure they feel seen and heard.

If you're worried about something that's come up in conversation, be honest and clear about how you see things and how you want to support them.

When responding, it helps to:

- *Validate their feelings. You could say 'it's really understandable that you're feeling...' to let them know that their feelings are okay.*
- *Thank them for sharing what's going on and be encouraging about the way they've opened up.*
- *Let them know that you love them, you're there for them, they can talk to you whenever they need to, and you can help them get support if they need it.*
- *Ask them if there's anything you could do that they would find particularly helpful.*
- *Spend time together thinking about what's making them feel this way. It could be something at home or school, a relationship with a friend or something else.*
- *Let your child know about the helplines that are available. Young people can find it difficult to talk and worry about upsetting their parents, so reassure them that it's okay to open up to other people.*
- *Remind your child that this is temporary. Reassure them that things can change and they can feel better.*
- *Avoid conversations at the height of distress. It's important to be there for them, but it can be more helpful to talk about the causes when things are feeling calmer.*

If you think your child needs professional support, speak to us, as well as their GP, and consider whether professional counselling or therapy might help.

Feeling safe online is vital in relation to securing positive mental health for young people and we feel it is important to work with parents/carers to offer a safe environment that allows children to be aware of the risks they may face and how to respond to them safely.



**Do you know what your child is doing online?
How are you monitoring who your child is communicating with online and offline?
Are you routinely talking to your child and checking what internet sites they are accessing?
Are the apps and sites they use suitable for their age?**

Whilst primary aged pupils shouldn't have accounts for sites such as Snapchat or Instagram, we know that some of our Year 5 and Year 6 children do, both with and without the parent/carers knowledge.

Therefore, we advise the following: please check your child's location settings as children often incite random people onto social media sites such as snapchat to get more 'likes' without realizing that they are opening themselves up to danger as these people can see their location. Pupils should only invite 'real friends' and to keep their settings private.

We have recently been made aware about a disturbing website and app called 'Monkey', which allows users to have video calls with strangers. The platform markets itself as 'an alternative to Omegle, with a Tik Tok vibe'. Both of these apps are not suitable for children.

To find out more about the dangers of this website visit <https://oursaferschools.co.uk/2021/07/06/safeguarding-alert-monkey-web/>

10 tips for pupils to stay safe online:

1. You should only talk to people you know and trust in real life – anyone can pretend to be a child online.
2. If you do talk to people you don't know, don't give away personal information – like what street you live on or where you go to school, or share your location with them. Say no to any requests they send you for images or videos of yourself, and stop talking to them.
3. Set your profiles to private, to limit what others can see.
4. Be 'share aware' – think carefully about what you share and with who. Once it's out there, you've got no control over what the other person does with it. Remember, it's illegal to take, share or view sexual images of under-18s, full stop.
5. Be mindful of your digital footprint. What you post online now could come back to bite you later, like when applying for jobs, college or university.
6. If you see something upsetting, or someone bullies you, tell an adult you trust.
7. Be aware that people will try to make their lives look more exciting online. There's a lot people can do with photo-editing to make their photos look better. So don't assume everything you see is a true to life representation.
8. Watch out for hoaxes and scams, like messages you're meant to forward on or that ask you for payment details or your password.
9. Take any content that glamorises gang lifestyles with a very large pinch of salt – it's not as glamorous as it looks. Be wary of schemes promising easy cash for receiving and transferring money too, they're almost definitely criminal activity.
10. Watch out for loot boxes or other parts of games where you pay money to take a chance on getting a reward – you can get sucked into spending lots of money on them.