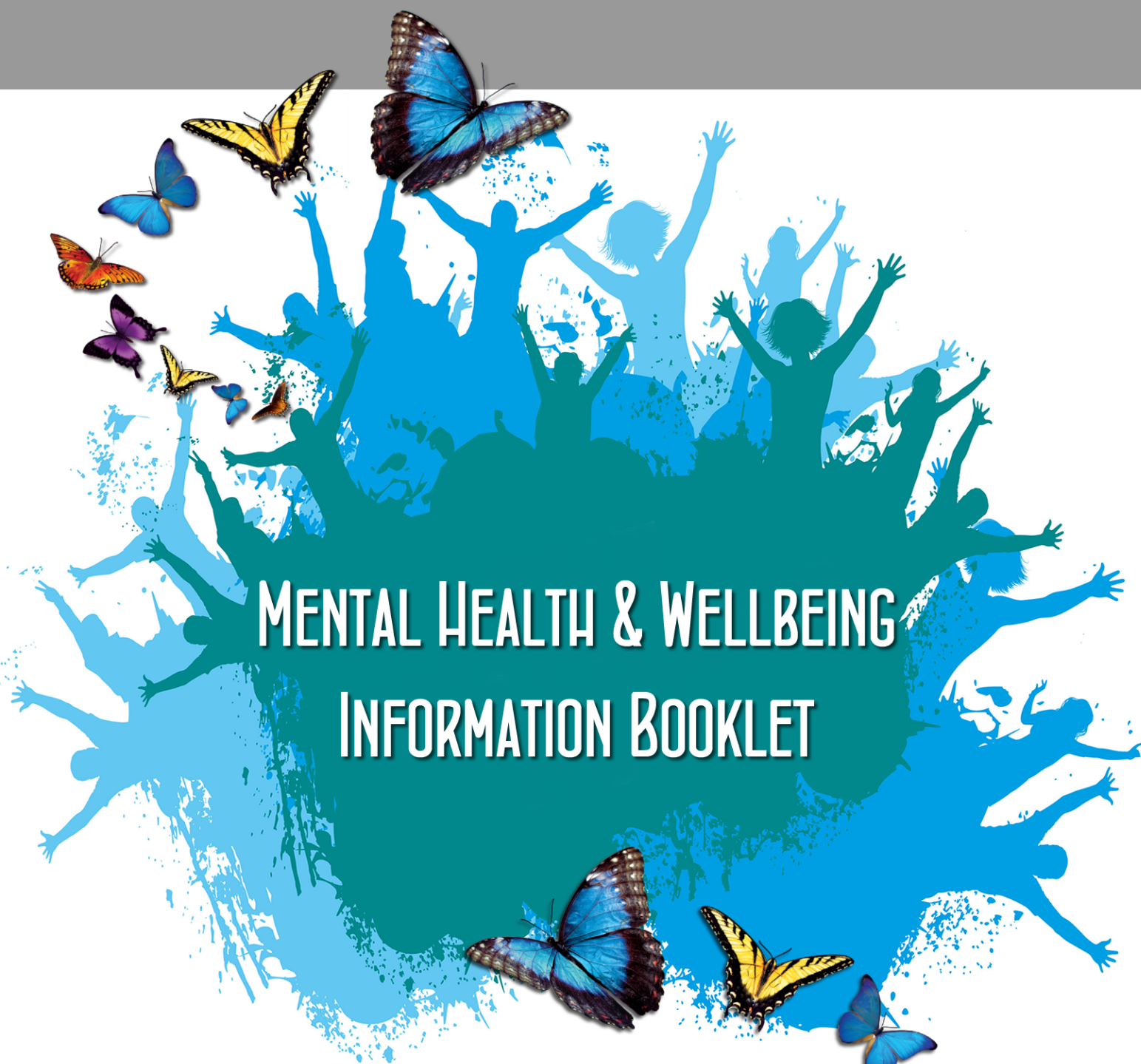




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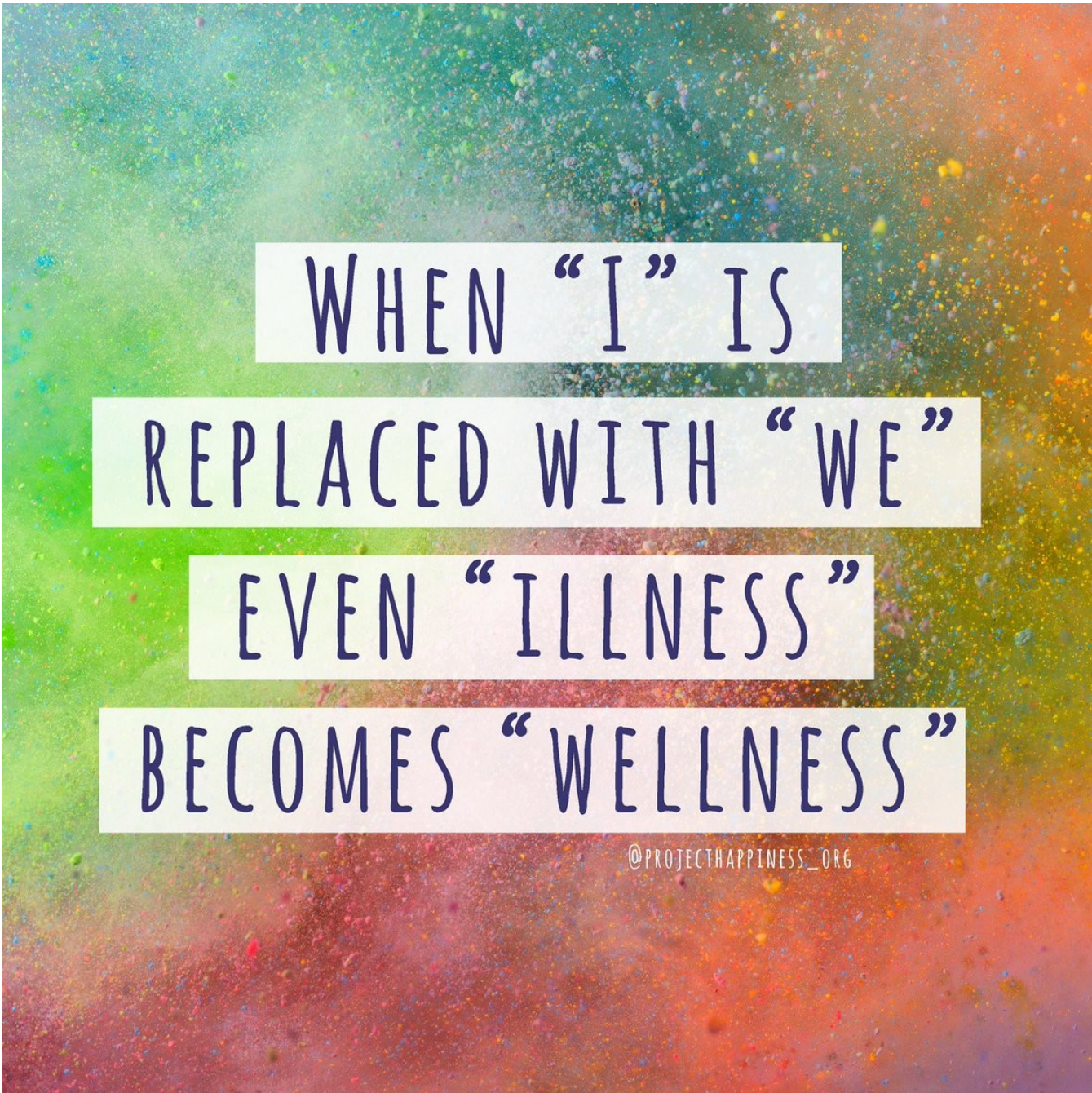
OUR LADY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING INFORMATION BOOKLET

Aspire
not to
have more
but to be
more...





WHEN “I” IS
REPLACED WITH “WE”
EVEN “ILLNESS”
BECOMES “WELLNESS”

@PROJECTHAPPINESS_ORG

“Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible”

St. Francis Of Assisi

Introduction



Our Lady's Catholic College has been awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools

This booklet has been created by the school's 'Change Team' in an attempt to raise awareness of mental health wellbeing and provide support. Our aim is to help parents and carers by providing information and signposting them to various methods of support, demonstrating our commitment to wellbeing not only for our pupils and staff but for the whole-school community.

Our school has undertaken a review of wellbeing in our school community. A whole-school approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health is a collaborative one and our recently formed 'Change Team' are driving engagement and providing ongoing communication to the whole-school community.

Developed in partnership with the National Children's Bureau (NCB), the Wellbeing Award for Schools is intended to help schools prepare and equip themselves to promote emotional wellbeing and positive mental health across the whole-school community. NCB's vision is an education system where good emotional wellbeing and mental health are at the heart of the culture and ethos of all schools, so that pupils, with the support of their teachers, can build confidence and flourish.

The Facts



Research has shown that 16 million people experience a mental health problem each year*

At any one time, 1 in 4 people in Lancashire are living with a mental health condition.

You, or your children, do not need to have mental health problems to use this booklet. Our aim is to support our community by showing how to gain and maintain mental wellbeing.

We want to work in partnership with others to provide support, and raise awareness to make mental wellbeing a priority. We believe that prevention is the solution, that everyone can achieve mental wellbeing and that resilience is the key to sustaining it. With 50% of mental health conditions developing before the age of 14, building resilience, from an early age, is vitally important.

When we think about 'healthy living', we tend to focus on looking after our bodies, our physical wellbeing, through food, being active and getting enough sleep. However, in order to be healthy overall it is important that we look after our minds, our mental wellbeing, too. Our bodies and minds are actually very closely linked, so things that we do to improve our physical wellbeing can also help our mental wellbeing. When we take steps to be healthy, inside and out, it helps us to feel better in ourselves, focus on what we want to do and deal with difficult times.

MIND's work in schools shows that many children have diagnosable mental health conditions and many more struggle with challenges from bullying to bereavement.

Why Is Wellbeing Important?



The emotional wellbeing of children is just as important as their physical health. Good mental health allows them to develop the resilience to cope with whatever life throws at them and grow into well-rounded, healthy adults. Children's wellbeing impacts all aspect of their lives including learning.

Things that can help keep children and young people mentally well include:

- being in good physical health, eating a balanced diet and getting regular exercise
- having time and the freedom to play, indoors and outdoors
- being part of a family that gets along well most of the time
- going to a school that looks after the wellbeing of all its pupils
- taking part in local activities for young people.

Other factors are also important, including:

- feeling loved, trusted, understood, valued and safe
- being interested in life and having opportunities to enjoy themselves
- being hopeful and optimistic
- being able to learn and having opportunities to succeed
- accepting who they are and recognising what they are good at
- having a sense of belonging in their family, school and community
- feeling they have some control over their own life
- having the strength to cope when something is wrong (resilience) and the ability to solve problems

Top Tips



Top tips for how you can support your child's mental health

Talk openly about mental health: Just as you might encourage them to eat fruit and vegetables to keep their bodies healthy (and model this behaviour yourself), talk openly about, for example, staying connected with others or being physically active in order to take care of our minds.

Model good habits: Children often learn from copying what they see around them. If you are taking care of your own mental health, it's easier for them to see what good habits look like.

Think about phone usage – both theirs and yours: We don't fully understand the impact of social media on our mental health but using phones, tablets and laptops can have a negative impact on our sleep, which is important to our mental health. We're also more likely to listen to one another if we're not distracted by technology. Consider having a 'screen free' day/evening. Set a cut-off time before bedtime and remove devices from the bedroom at sleeping time.

Notice any changes in your child's behaviour: Young people tell us how they're feeling in many ways, not always verbally. Learning what is normal for your child makes it easier to notice when things change, and if this might be a sign that they're struggling.

Talk to your child about body image: It can be difficult for children (and adults) to distinguish between what is a healthy body image and what is not. Try to normalise diversity – we all come in different shapes and sizes, there isn't one ideal body shape, and beauty comes in many different forms, not just airbrushed or filtered 'perfection'. For example, if you watch a program together you can point out things that are unrealistic.

Look out for warning signs: If you notice a change in your child's behaviour, like spending lots more time alone in their room, avoiding friends, or a shift in their mood, speak to them about your concerns. Make sure you both know what help is out there (on- and off-line) and seek advice from your school or GP if you need extra support.

Promote good sleep habits: Encourage everyone to have tech-free time by turning off their screens, at least 1 hour before bedtime, to help prepare for sleep. Use of bright screens in the evening has been shown to negatively affect sleep. Leave phones, laptops etc. out of the bedroom and buy a separate alarm clock to wake up to.

Don't forget it helps to lead by example!

Top Tips



When times get tough

Sometimes you might worry about your child's mental health. Here are a few things you can do if you're worried:

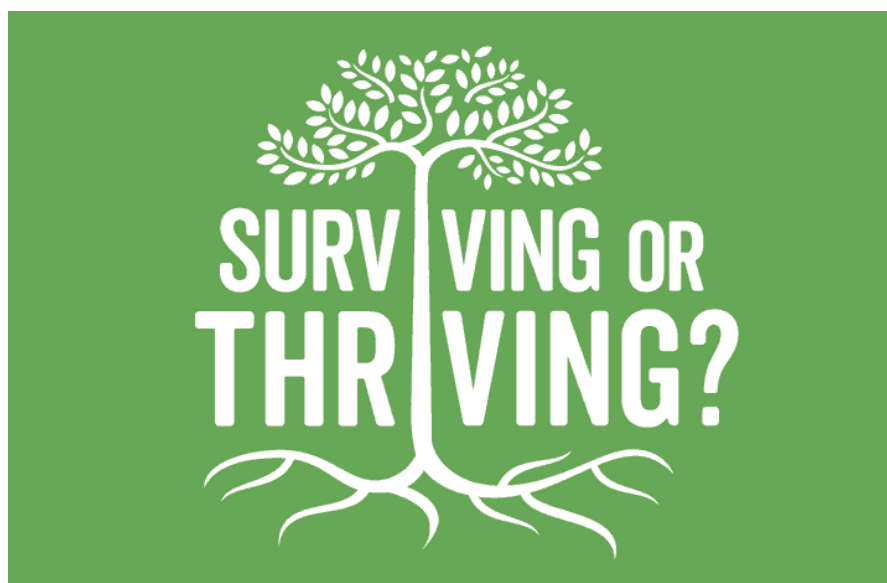
Let your child know that you're concerned: Explain why you feel that way, for example if you've noticed they haven't been interested in activities they usually enjoy.

Use activities that you do together to have conversations about how they are doing: Talking whilst doing something together, side-by-side, such as cooking, can help them share their feelings more easily than a face-to-face conversation.

Let them know that struggling sometimes is normal and nothing to be ashamed of: Tell them about the mental health spectrum and that we all, *including you*, go up and down the scale throughout our lives. Reassure them that talking about difficult feelings, with the people we trust, is a brave thing to do.

Listen and empathise: Often the first step to feeling better is feeling connected and knowing that someone is alongside you. Empathy helps young people (and adults) connect. Empathy involves acknowledging what your child is feeling, trying to understand things from their point of view and avoiding judgement. Empathy is usually more helpful than giving advice or trying to 'fix' their problem.

If you're still worried: Talk to a trusted member of school staff or your doctor who can point you towards sources of help.





Healthy

Feeling happy
Coping well
Sleeping and eating well
Getting on with others

Keep up the healthy ifestyle

- ♦ Sleep
- ♦ Limit social media
- ♦ Take part in physical activity
- ♦ Healthy diet

At Our Lady's
Help others

Have you thought of becoming
a Wellbeing Champion?



Feeling a bit low
sometimes

Feeling anxious at times
Needing help with a problem
A bit worried
Struggling to deal with something alone

Talk to a friend or family member
Talk to an adult you trust

At Our Lady's

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Speak to a Wellbeing
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**Struggling to
Cope**

**Unable to cope
Low mood regularly or
all the time
Trouble sleeping or
sleeping too much
Not able or wanting to
go to school or socialize
isolated, avoiding
others**

**Tell a teacher or form tutor
Tell your parents/guardians
Time to see your doctor**

At Our Lady's

**School Nurse
School Counsellor
ARK
Support from external
agencies**

Aspire
not to
have more
but to be
more...



Mental illness

**Unable to function
normally
Very distressed
Bizarre thoughts and/or
actions suicidal thinking
Hearing voices/seeing
things that are not there
Substance abuse
Self-harm
Risky behaviour**

**EMERGENCY HELP NEEDED
HOSPITAL OR GP
EMERGENCY HELPLINE
Samaritans: 116 123
NHS: 111**

At Our Lady's

**Individual Care Plan
Support from external
agencies**

The Five Ways To Wellbeing



Often life events, that are outside our control, can damage our mental health and this is made worse if we feel powerless to do anything about them. One of the ways we can re-gain a sense of control and nourish our mental health is to remember '**the five ways to wellbeing**' which have been found in research to improve mental wellbeing both in children and adults.

These five evidence-based actions are:

1. **Connect** - talk and listen, be there, feel connected
2. **Give** - your time, your words, your presence
3. **Be Active** - do what you can, enjoy what you do, move your mood
4. **Take Notice** - remember the simple things that give you joy
5. **Keep Learning** - embrace new experiences, see opportunities, surprise yourself

Our everyday habits are important to our mental health, just as they are to our physical health. Research shows that just as '5 a day', fruit and vegetables, are important to our physical health, the 'five ways to wellbeing' are equally as important to our mental health. **Thinking about the five ways to wellbeing - are there things you can encourage your children to do, or do together, each day?**



Most children grow mentally healthy, but surveys suggest that more children and young people have problems with their mental health today than 30 years ago. That's probably because of changes in the way we live now and how that affects the experience of growing up.

15 TIPS TO DEVELOP GOOD MENTAL HEALTH



Exercise regularly and stay active



Talk to friends



Don't be afraid to tell people how you feel



Get into a good sleep routine



Take part in something that makes you happy



Make sure you are eating well



Relax - practice some deep breathing



Challenge your negative thoughts



Learn what your stress triggers are



Invest time in developing your confidence



Share your feelings with friends and family



Learn how to problem solve effectively



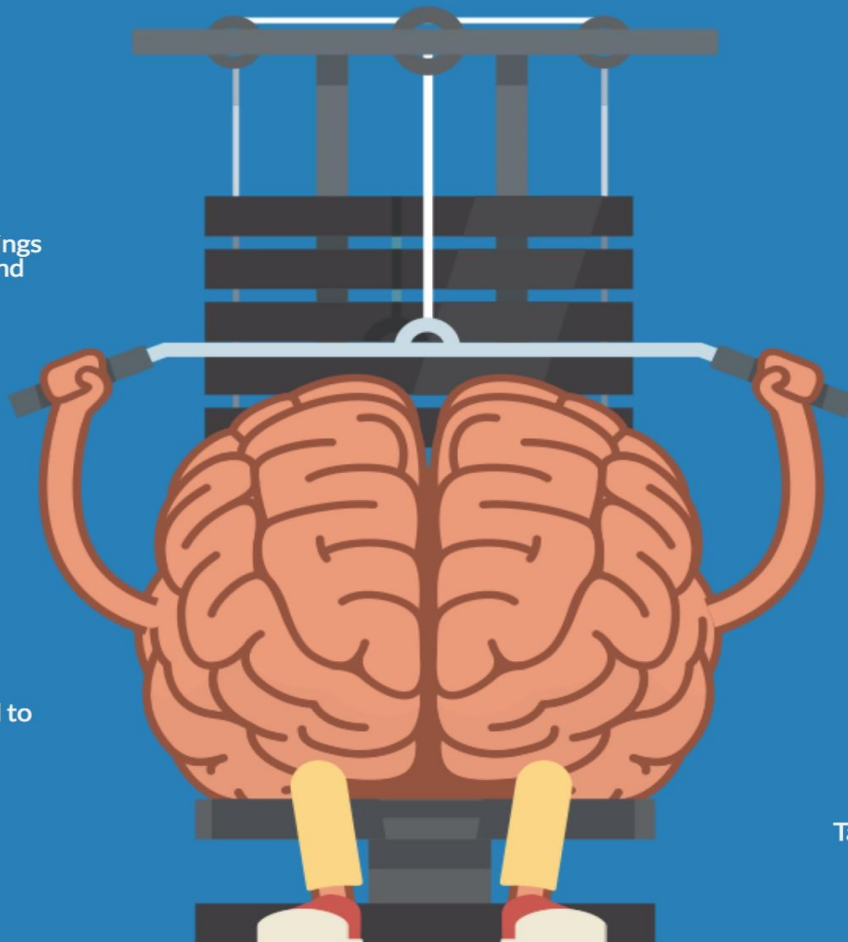
Don't be afraid to seek help



Learn some strategies to manage your stress



Take time to relax and reflect



Technology and Mental Wellbeing



"Limiting children's screen time is linked to better cognition," reports BBC News.

A study of 4,524 children found those who used screens recreationally for less than 2 hours a day did better on tests of mental functioning.

The recommendations the group followed were:

- to restrict screen time (TV, smartphones, tablets & games) to less than 2 hours a day
- to sleep 9 to 11 hours a night
- to do at least 1 hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity a day

The children who performed best on testing were those who followed all 3 recommendations.

Screen time and sleep accounted for around 22% of the variation between test results, while physical activity alone didn't seem to be linked to mental functioning.

The researchers say parents should consider limiting screen time and ensuring adequate regular sleep for children, as well as encouraging physical activity.

Children are increasingly connecting with the world through digital media. With technology constantly changing, it can be hard knowing how to keep your children safe and healthy online. What you can do is help to minimise the negative impact on your child, while encouraging healthy internet use to maximise the benefits.

The internet isn't all bad. Research shows there are many benefits to young people going online. From connecting with friends and relatives to following piano lessons or researching homework, it provides a wealth of opportunities for education and enrichment. Find out what your children are using the internet for and focus on the positives.

An internet ban is rarely helpful. This is almost impossible when access is so widely available. It is also likely to be counter-productive, encouraging secretive rather than open use as well as denying the many benefits the internet has to offer.

Our children learn how to use technology from us, even if they use it for different things. Often what we do affects them more than what we say, so why not take the opportunity to challenge your habits to make your own use healthier as well. You will both benefit and possibly avoid future arguments too!

External Support



Professional help

Most support for troubled children and young people is provided free by the NHS, your child's school or your local council's social services department. If your child is having problems at school, a teacher, school nurse, school counsellor or educational psychologist may be able to help. Otherwise, go to your GP or speak to a health visitor. These professionals are able to refer a child to further help. We have also listed some other external support services. Different professionals often work together in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

CAMHS: provide a service for children and young people aged 5-16 who have a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties. The service supports and promotes emotional health and wellbeing.

YoungMinds: YoungMinds provide help and support for depression in children. Parents helpline is free Mon-Fri from 9.30am - 4pm - **0808 802 5544** and available to offer advice; about child's behaviour, emotional wellbeing or mental health conditions to parents and carers worried about a child or young person under 25. **www.youngminds.org.uk**

Samaritans: If you're in distress and need support, you can ring Samaritans for free at any time of the day or night.

www.samaritans.org Freephone 116 123 (24 hours)

Lancashire Mind: has been working closely with families to develop a new support package. Learning from these experiences, they have created 'Together Workshops' to support families of children and young people. If you, or someone you know, is experiencing a mental health crisis it can be hard to know what to do. Mind provide information to help you find what you need.

www.lancashiremind.org.uk Wellbeing and Mental Health helpline
Mon - Fri 7pm – 11pm and Sat - Sun 12pm - midnight 0800 915 4640

Elefriends: Elefriends is managed by Mind. It is a supportive online community. We all know what it's like to struggle sometimes, this is a safe place to listen, share and be heard.

www.elefriends.org.uk

Kooth is a free, safe and anonymous online counselling service helping children 10-18 years old with any troubles they may have. It is a digital mental health support service which gives children and young people easy access to an online community of peers and a team of experienced counsellors.

www.kooth.com

Support in School



Every year group in school has a Head of Year who is supported by a Pastoral Support Officer. These staff will support your children throughout their school life whether the issue is academic, mental or emotional. If you have any concerns about your children please contact these staff. Our pupils know they can go to these trusted adults with any issues.

These staff are:

- **Year 7**
 - ⇒ Head of Year **Verity Brogan**
 - ⇒ P.S.O. **Victoria Taylor**
- **Year 8**
 - ⇒ Head of Year **Lowri Rowlands**
 - ⇒ P.S.O. **Louise Baldwin**
- **Year 9**
 - ⇒ Head of Year **Jessica Calverley**
 - ⇒ P.S.O. **Richard Preston**
- **Year 10**
 - ⇒ Head of Year **Drew Thomson**
 - ⇒ P.S.O. **Sarah Rowan**
- **Year 11**
 - ⇒ Head of Year **Megan Whiteside**
 - ⇒ P.S.O. **Richard Teasdale**
- **Years 12 and 13**
 - ⇒ Head of Year **Alison Bates**
 - ⇒ P.S.O. **Stuart Seddon**

In addition to the staff named above we also have two counsellors, Dierdra Trueman and Rachel Dean. They can be seen by appointment or on a drop-in basis when they are free.

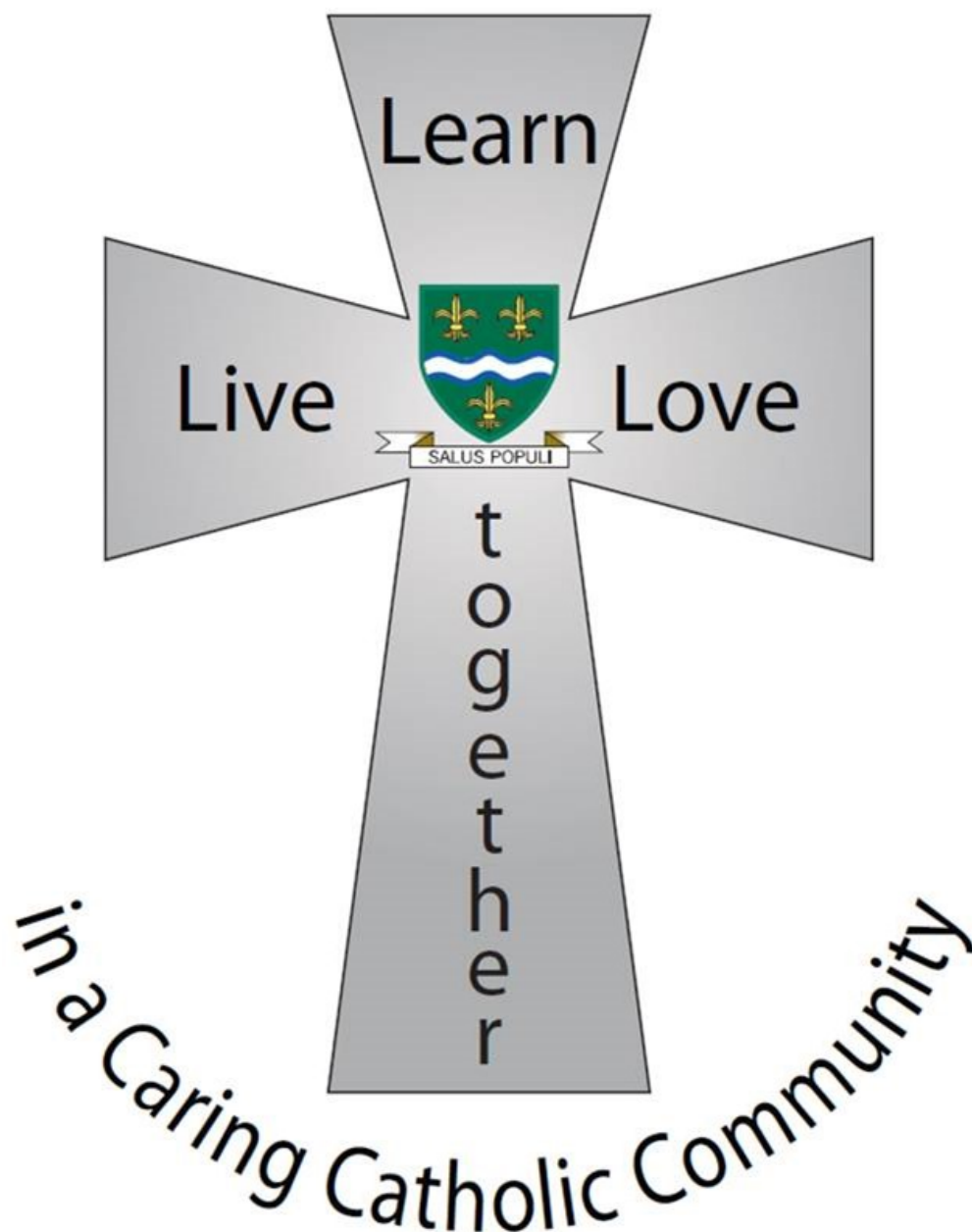
We have a nurture room for emotional difficulties where we run several supportive programs: 'strictly stress' which identifies stress triggers and coping strategies and 'talk about for teenagers', which is to develop self-esteem and communication skills. We also have ARK where children can go for extra support.

We have recruited pupils and staff to be 'Well Being Champions', so that the school community has an even wider network of support. Although we will do our very best to help children, and their families, we are not experts in Mental Health but we do have a wide range of external support that we can sign post to when necessary.



Our aim is to maintain our pupils' mental health and wellbeing during their time with us at Our Lady's Catholic College in order to ensure they achieve their best possible potential. **This is huge challenge which we can only do by working with you.**

Please use the guidance in this booklet to support our children when they are out of school and together we can give them the best chance of a wonderful school life and education, giving them the knowledge and resilience to prepare them for life beyond school.



HOW CAN STUDENTS PREPARE FOR A NEW SCHOOL YEAR



Spend some time to set yourself some goals



Get yourself in a regular routine (E.g sleep, homework)



Set yourself a study time for each day



Pack your bag the night before school



Obtain all material and supplies for your lessons



Review your progress from last year. Reflect on how you can improve and use your strengths this year

Get to know your subject structure as early as possible



Physically and mentally prepare for the school year. Exercise, eat a well balanced diet and look after yourself

Know your lesson timetable



Relax and don't be afraid to speak to teachers about your worries