

Noel-Baker Academy Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter

Autumn Term 2020

Supporting the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Our School Community

The mental health and wellbeing of our students, staff and school community is still at the heart of our policy and practice at Noel-Baker Academy during these unprecedented times. The Academy fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect and support students, staff and parents amid the Coronavirus pandemic. The Academy continues to promote all aspects of mental health and wellbeing as a priority, with a clear understanding of the additional mental health issues that may occur for some as a result. It is recognised that all members of our school community will have had differing experiences throughout this challenging time and the Academy aims to support all members of our school community fully.

Our Academy has developed a range of strategies and approaches that support positive mental health. Our school website has evolved and has designated support pages for children and adults, as well as activities to support wellbeing during periods of isolation.

We continue to support campaigns to raise awareness of mental health and in turn reduce the stigma that can be associated with it. We supported World Mental Health Day on 10th October through #helloyellow and the 5 step challenge through daily PSHE.

Kind Regards,
Mental Health and Well-being Team

#HelloYellow
YOUNGMINDS

Mental Health

The importance of looking after our mental health during Covid-19

We all need to take care of our mental health and wellbeing, now more so than ever. The pandemic has brought a number of challenges and struggles that many of us will not have encountered before. For some children and young people, this period of change and uncertainty may have led to heightened anxiety or worry which may have presented itself in a number of ways.

Key Facts

The following statistics are from the first in a series of follow up reports to the Mental Health and Young People Survey (MHCYP) 2017, exploring the mental health of children and young people in England during the coronavirus pandemic and looking at changes since 2017. The survey sampled 3,570 children and young people aged 5 and 22 years of age in July 2020. It was found that;

- The proportion of children experiencing a probable mental disorder has increased from **one in nine in 2017** to **one in six in July this year**.
- Boys (5-16): risen from **11.4% to 16.7%**
- Girls (5-16): risen from **10.3% to 15.2%**
- The likelihood of a probable mental disorder **increases with age**.

Useful Websites

Our mental health and wellbeing page on our Academy website continues to be developed with our policies, introductions to our team, newsletters and our support page signposts links to child and adult services as well as activities to do at home to support wellbeing. You can also find a 'Talking Mental Health with Young People at Secondary School' leaflet for parents/carers (see the 'How to make a difference section below) and mental health tips for lockdown. There are some really valuable resources for you, your child or your family to access.

You can find our Mental health and Wellbeing page here;

<https://www.noelbakeracademy.co.uk/mental-health-and-wellbeing/>

Policies

MHWB
Team

Newsletters
and Events

Support

The latest links added to our website

- www.studentsagainstd Depression.org/ - a website offering advice, information, guidance and resources to those affected by low mood, depression and suicidal thinking.
- www.jwbridgethegap.com - a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving the mental health of children, parents and teachers in Derby City and beyond.
- www.childbereavementuk.org help children and young people across early years, primary and secondary settings (up to age 25), parents, carers, and families, to rebuild their lives when a child grieves or when a child dies.

Upcoming events...

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At this stage in the year, we would normally have given opportunity for parents to come into school, meet the mental health team and talk about the support we have available. Unfortunately, this hasn't been possible due to the current pandemic guidelines.

I hope that those of you that completed the 'strengths and weaknesses' survey that we conducted on our return to school in September found it useful. The survey helped us plan our provision in light of Covid-19 and highlighted any struggles particular students were facing so we could support them effectively. Thank you for your support with this and we hope that your children feel well supported in school.

We also held two parent webinars on self-harm and anxiety in October which were led by Bridge the Gap. We made these webinars available to all parents for a period of 2 weeks following the event and I hope you managed to take a look and if you did, found them informative. We are hoping to conduct another parent webinar in the Spring term so please keep an eye on our website page for the details as we release them.

Unfortunately our sport extra-curricular clubs have been unable to run but we are hopeful that these will become more available in the near future.

Noel-Baker Academy has pledged to work towards the 'LGBTQ+ Inclusion in Education Award' for schools during this academic year in order to further support our students.



How to make a difference

Top tips for listening

'Talking Mental Health with Young People at Secondary School' Leaflet

- **Give your full attention**, be curious and take it seriously. We all know it's not nice to be half listened to. Being actively interested in your child can be a powerful way to help them feel listened to and understood. Try to resist the urge to downplay or dismiss what your child is telling you.
- **Emphasise that you are always available to talk.** It may be that your child doesn't want to talk, can't find the words at the moment or is trying to assert their independence. But don't be misled by your teenager's need for separation. They need you just as much as ever.
- **Take time to reflect.** Research shows that thinking about what is going on in your child's mind and being aware of your own thoughts and feelings promotes secure attachment, good social skills and the ability to 'read' others.
- **Provide empathy.** When children feel truly understood they start to be able to manage their emotions and this has a big impact on their wellbeing. Using empathy is also a great way to defuse tension.
- **Be aware of your own stress and negative feelings.** They can really get in the way of feeling close to your child. Reflecting on the causes of stress can prevent it from spilling into your relationships at home.

How to make a difference

Top tips for listening (*'Talking Mental Health with Young People at Secondary School' leaflet*) Continued...

- **Think about timing.** Ask yourself 'Is this the right time to talk?' Choose a time when you can focus on your child and ignore distractions.
- **What should I do if I am worried?** You can find some advice and guidance listed on the back of the leaflet. In particular, MindEd for Families provides comprehensive information on a range of mental health problems. If problems persist, become overwhelming or you feel your child is displaying particular symptoms, we strongly recommend that you visit your GP.

Support available to support students mental health within School...

If you are concerned about your child's mental health, then please contact school. This can be through tutors and Heads of Year. We now have a full time school counsellor who your child can be referred to through the head of year. As an Academy we want to support students, so please do let us know if your child is finding things difficult. We may support in the following ways;

- Daily/ weekly check-ins.
- Referrals to the school counsellor.
- Referrals to the school nurse.
- Referrals to external agencies.

How to make a difference

Trust your **instincts**.
Spot signs **early**.
Get **support**.



youngminds.org.uk/supporting-parents

Young Minds have recently launched their [#SupportingParents](https://youngminds.org.uk/supporting-parents) campaign, to help you look after your child's mental health. You know your child better than anyone else. Trust your instincts, spot signs early and get support. Follow Young Minds on social media or visit their website for support;

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/>

From everyone in the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team, we wish you a peaceful, restful and happy Christmas!



Noel-Baker Academy
A.L.E.A.D. Academy