



# INCLUSION



# NEWSLETTER

MAY  
2026

Welcome to the Inclusion Newsletter for Term 5.

Our focus this term is mental health, as this week has been Mental Health Awareness week.

We all have 'mental health' – it refers to our emotional and psychological wellbeing. Mental health affects how you feel, think and act. It can change on a daily basis and over time, and can be affected by a range of factors. It's important to look after your mental health, as your state of wellbeing affects how you cope with stress, relate to others and make choices. It is also important to be mindful of others' mental wellbeing and be supportive and understanding of when they may need help, recognising that "It's OK not to be OK."

When children and young people have good levels of wellbeing, it helps them to engage positively with the world around them. Learning how to tackle anxieties and build resilience, self-esteem and confidence leads to children being better able to manage their emotions, feel calm, and engage positively with their education, potentially improving their academic attainment. It will support them to form and maintain good relationships with others, and increase their ability to cope with change, setbacks and uncertainty.

Overleaf you will find some hints and weblinks that can help to support good mental health and wellbeing. We also have access to a wide range of local support services and several interventions that we can put in place in school for children and families who may be experiencing difficulties with their mental health and emotional wellbeing. We are lucky to have a fantastic Wellbeing Team at Riverside who you can approach about any concerns - the staff concerned are Mrs Barber, our Home School Support Worker, and Mrs Puplett, our Wellbeing Coach. Please do contact them, or your child's class teacher, if you feel you or your child needs this type of support. You can do this via Class Dojo or the school office.

As always, if you have any queries or concerns about your child's additional needs, or any other aspect of SEND or Inclusion, please don't hesitate to contact us at the school.

Mrs Huggett      and      Mrs Richardson  
Inclusion Manager      Assistant SENCo





# SPOTLIGHT ON MENTAL HEALTH



## Key Information

Many worries are a normal part of growing up. There will be times in a child's life when it is normal to feel anxious, such as when going to a new school or before tests and exams. Some children can feel shy in social situations and may need support with this.

Anxiety becomes a problem for children when it starts to get in the way of their everyday life. Severe anxiety like this can harm children's mental and emotional wellbeing, affecting their self-esteem and confidence. They may become withdrawn and go to great lengths to avoid things or situations that make them feel anxious. Signs could include:

- Starting to wet the bed or have bad dreams
- Lacking confidence to try new things or seeming unable to face simple, everyday challenges
- Difficulties with concentration, sleeping or eating
- Having angry outbursts
- Avoiding everyday activities such as school/seeing friends
- Harming themselves.

Taking action at an early stage can help prevent the issues from worsening.

## Did You Know?

About half of all lifetime mental health conditions begin by the age of 14. Research suggests that children living with a parent who has a mental health condition are significantly more likely to experience mental ill health themselves.



## Useful Websites

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/>

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200580/child\\_mental\\_health](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200580/child_mental_health)

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/>

## Handy Hints



- ~ Talk to your child about their worries. Reassure them and don't be dismissive of how they feel.
- ~ If your child is able to understand, it may help to explain what anxiety is and the physical effects it has on our bodies.
- ~ As well as talking to your child about their worries, it's important to help them find solutions. For example, if your child is worried about going to a sleepover, you may feel it's easier to tell them they don't have to go. However, this could mean your child learns that anxiety will stop them from doing things. It's better to recognise the worry and suggest solutions to help them, so they can go to the sleepover with a plan in place.
- ~ If your child's wellbeing has been impacted by distressing events, such as a bereavement or separation, look for books or films that will help them to understand their feelings. Try to have open discussions so that they know they can share how they are feeling.
- ~ Practise simple relaxation techniques with your child, such as taking deep, slow breaths and taking time for mindfulness activities.
- ~ Turn an empty tissue box (or similar) into a 'worry box'. Get your child to write about or draw their worries and post them into the box. You can sort through the box together at the end of the day or week and discuss what to do about each one.
- ~ Ensure they have a range of activities to engage with, including breaks from screen time and opportunities to exercise and enjoy fresh air.
- ~ Seek advice - Don't face it alone. Reach out to school and other services for support.