

# Our Well-Being Newsletter

Newsletter for pupils, parents & staff  
Issue 13 - February 2022

St Michael's Catholic College, Llewellyn Street, London, SE16 4UN  
02072376432 | [contact@stmichaelscollege.org.uk](mailto:contact@stmichaelscollege.org.uk)  
[www.stmichaelscollege.org.uk](http://www.stmichaelscollege.org.uk)



## Welcome to our February Well-Being Newsletter!

Spring is approaching slowly. Temperatures slowly rise, day light increases. All good reasons to feel a bit more optimistic.

Since the beginning of the academic year, St Michael's Mental Health Ambassadors have highlighted the importance of good mental health and kindness to their peers. Our KS3, KS4 and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Ambassadors have recently organised and led St Michael's Anti-Bullying and Mental Health Awareness Weeks. Both groups set up numerous fun and informative fund-raising activities and workshops (please see page 2). All proceeds from the activities were donated to the Charity Young Minds. Our Mental Health Ambassadors will continue to highlight the importance of good mental health and support their peers throughout the year.

Physical exercise can cost next to nothing. Regular exercise can have a profoundly positive impact on our physical but also mental health. It relieves stress, improves memory, helps us sleep better, and boosts our overall mood. We don't have to be a fitness fanatic to reap the benefits.

## The Mental Health Benefits of Exercising

There are many studies which have shown that doing physical activity can improve mental health. For example, it can help with:

- better sleep – by making you feel more tired at the end of the day;
- happier moods – physical activity releases feel-good hormones;
- managing stress, anxiety or intrusive thoughts – doing something physical releases cortisol which helps us manage stress;
- Being physically active also gives our brain something to focus on and can be a positive coping strategy for difficult times;
- better self-esteem – being more active can make you feel better about yourself as you improve and meet your goal;
- connecting with people – doing group or team activities can help you meet new and like-minded people, and make new friends.

However, it may be that you feel that you are not able to start exercising straight away, due to emotional difficulties or physical health challenges. Do not be too hard on yourself, you may need to focus on other things for a while, and build some physical activity into your routine once you're feeling a bit better. It is important to find a balance, and figure out what works best for you.



## The Physical Benefits of Walking for Exercise

- Strengthen the heart and reduce cardiovascular risks;
- Going on walks, even short walks, can help decrease blood sugar. In fact, researchers have found that individuals who walk regularly have as much as a 50% reduced risk of developing type 2 diabetes;
- Boost immune function. Individuals who walk regularly develop fewer upper respiratory tract infections;
- Burn calories. This means that walking can help in maintaining and losing weight;
- Prevent bone loss. Weight-bearing exercise, including walking, is critical for maintaining bone density;
- Boost energy. Walking increases blood flow throughout the body and temporarily increases levels of the hormones cortisol, epinephrine, and norepinephrine.

# St Michael's Anti-Bullying Week

Led by our KS3/4 and 6<sup>th</sup> Form Mental Health Ambassadors

## Year 7 Football House Competition



**Congratulations to all for participating!**

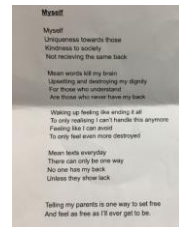
## Express Yourself Competition – Best entries



**“Love Nwantiti – Ckay” played by Ayomide Daramola (8RU) (Winner of the music prize)**



**Leila-Rose Murphy (8SA) (Winner of the best painting)**



**Oceane Ananzotchi (7MA) Winner of the best poem on bullying**

## Workshops



## 6<sup>th</sup> Form tuck shop



## Staff Corner

### Well-being links



<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/supporting-staff-wellbeing/>

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-organisations/guides/staff-wellbeing-signposting-template/>

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-individuals/guides/breathing-exercises-for-beating-stress-and-creating-calm/>

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-individuals/guides/time-management-and-wellbeing-at-work/>

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-individuals/guides/a-guide-to-meditation-for-teachers-and-education-staff/>

## ✠ Chaplain's Corner ✠

*Dear Lord,*

*In this time of anxiety, give us strength.  
In this time of fear, give us comfort.  
Ensure Lord, we are near to the ones we love  
In heart, In mind and In spirit.  
Keep us, Oh Lord, close to you and give us  
hope for each day anew.*

*Amen*

## Support around Depression and/or Anxiety

**shout** here for  
**85258** you 24/7

Free 24/7 mental health text support



Free online Emotional support for young people



A free online counselling Support for over 25s

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:  
800-273-8255 (TALK)**

### Your GP surgery:

Your doctor can help you work out what kind of support you need and introduce you to the right mental health service. This is known as a GP referral.



## How to help someone who is emotionally struggling



- **Accepting that the person in front of you is really suffering and to not downplay their feelings or make them feel guilty (they might already do for feeling the way they do). Saying things like “It will pass”, “I know how you feel, I’ve been there”, “You’ve got so much going for you”, etc do not help and will invalidate the person’s feelings;**
- **Listen empathetically to the person and acknowledge that you hear them: “Thank you for sharing with me what’s going on. I hear you”. The more you listen, the more you’ll understand, the less alone they’ll feel, and the more hope they’ll be able to see in the future;**
- **More often than not, helping with practical things help as much as listening, e.g. help with daily tasks;**
- **Keep reassuring the person, tell them how proud of them you are and tell them you are by their side. They may feel like a burden, reassuring them that they are not.**
- **Usually, the person will talk to you because you make them feel safe. Stay present;**
- **If the person in front of you is having a panic attack, the best thing to reassure them is to say that it will pass; gently repeating things like “you will survive this”; “it will be over soon” or “you are safe”. Panic attacks are scary, this is why reassurance is the best tool to help;**
- **Remind the person of their accomplishments, their strength, their positive traits;**
- **Finally, you may want to sign post the person to their GP or mental health professional if you feel they would benefit from the extra support.**