

Supporting the Mental Health and Well-Being of our School Community

At Green Ridge Primary Academy, we are committed to supporting children, staff and parents in their well-being and mental health. We know that well-being, physical and mental health are all essential to positive learning experiences and future successes.

A reminder that we now have a section on our Green Ridge website linked to Mental Health and Well-being. Please click [here](#) to find more information about well-being and the Zones.

The Mental Health and Well-being **parent workshop** from Summer Term is now on our website if you missed it.

What is mental health?

Mental health refers to how people think, feel and behave.

The Mental Health Foundation explain that if you're in good mental health, you can:

- make the most of your potential
- cope with life
- play a full part in your family, workplace, community and among friends

Some people call mental health 'emotional health' or 'well-being'. It is **just as important** as good physical health. Our mental well-being is **dynamic**. It can change from moment to moment, day to day, month to month and year to year.

What has happened this term?

Mental Health and Well-being Policy

This term, the Mental Health and Well-being Policy for Green Ridge Primary Academy has been finalised. The policy describes Green Ridge's approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being. You can read the policy [clicking here](#).

Pupil Voice

Pupil voice was conducted during Autumn 1 to ascertain a baseline for current levels of pupil understanding of Mental Health and Well-Being and to ensure all pupils have access to the Zones posters and resources to support themselves to self-regulate within class.

It was a great opportunity to discuss well-being with pupils and the feedback included:

- * All children were able to tell me that they have the Zones poster in class and all children were able to tell me the different feelings within the different Zones using the correct vocabulary.
- * Most children were able to tell me how they could support themselves when they had strong/difficult emotions; they explained they could, "use the calming kit", "tell a friend or a trusted adult", "breath in and out", "take deep breaths", "take Barkley for a walk".

What is happening next term?

Parent Workshops

Over Spring and Summer Term we will be running Parent Workshops. Each session will start with a presentation and will include some ideas for activities, discussion and reflection.

If you would be interested in attending a workshop, please complete [this survey](#) to register your interest and share what support you would particularly like.



Places to go for Support and Advice Healthy Minds Bucks

Self-refer by calling 01865 901600 or submit an online referral [here](#).

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS Oxford Health)

01865901951 or [click here](#) for a referral form and more information.

NHS Every Mind Matters (<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>)

Child Bereavement Support


Helpline: 0800 02 888 40 or visit:
<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

Communicate your concerns with school

If you have any concerns about your child's emotional behaviour or well-being, please let school know.

Ideas to Support Mental Health and Well-Being

Tips for talking to your child about their Mental Health

1. Make conversations about mental health a normal part of life. Anywhere is a good place to talk; in the car, walking the dog or even cooking together. Model everyday talk about feelings—this could be completed whilst watching TV, discussing characters feelings.
2. Give your full attention. We all know it's horrible to be half listened to. Keep eye contact, focus on the child and try to ignore distractions. 
3. Check your body language. Try to keep it open and relaxed and make sure you go down to the child's level.
4. Take it seriously. Don't downplay what the child is saying or tell them they're "just being silly". Resist the urge to reassure them that everything is fine.
5. Ask open questions. Such as, "How did your day go today?" "How did that make you feel?" This helps to extend the conversation.
6. Calmly stay with the feelings that arise. It can be our automatic reaction to steer away from difficult emotions.
7. Offer empathy rather than solutions. Show that you accept what they are telling you but don't try to solve the problem

8. Remember we are all different. Respect and value the child's feelings, even though they may be different to yours.
9. Look for clues about feelings. Listen to the child's words, tone of voice and body language.
10. Have a bank of conversation starters about feelings. For example, "How are you feeling at the moment?" "You don't seem your usual self. Do you want to talk about it?" "Do you fancy a chat? I'm happy to listen if you need a chat."



Daily Mindfulness Suggestions

Being mindful can support children to develop self-awareness and self-esteem. [This resource](#) contains a two-week calendar with daily mindfulness activity suggestions. The simple, short activities encourage children to focus on what's around them to find a sense of calm.

MINDFULNESS CALENDAR				
MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
COUNTING BREATHS 1-2-3	ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE	USING THE SENSES	COLOR BREATHING	BIRTHDAY CAKE BREATHING
MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
FEATHER BREATHING	FINGER COUNTING	SLIMY HANDS	RISE AND FALL	RELAXING MUSCLES

Feeling Anxious?

Do you experience anxiety and you're not sure why?



This is really common and can be seen in the form of our 'fight' response. It can be triggered when faced with a perceived threat or danger OR it can just trigger with no visible or noticeable cause.

This is when we can't think our way out of it. We can't rationalise. We can't pin point the reason and it's tough and frustrating and hard work. When feeling this way, scientists are suggesting that we need to **shake it off**. We need to physically move our bodies in those moments in order to release the built up **cortisol** and **adrenaline** (stress hormones).

This can be hard when all you feel like doing is hiding under your duvet, but next time you feel anxiety rising for no reason... challenge yourself to go for a run, brisk walk, 10 star jumps, run up and down the stairs, skip, dance, *move your body*.

This will release the chemicals and should regulate your system back to your baseline. *This tactic can also be used with your children.*