

# Wellbeing and Mental Health Newsletter No. 3

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## Quick Look

- The Wellbeing Team
- School receives Positive Mental Health Award
- RHE- Year Review from Miss Bill
- School Counsellor news
- Music Therapy Interview
- ELSA review
- Thank You Miss Val!
- Mrs Pereira's Book Recommendations
- Summer Holiday preparation

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## Who are the Wellbeing Team at St Stephen's CE Primary School?

- Michael Schumm - Headteacher
- Sally Bouwman - Assistant Headteacher/Senior Mental Health Lead
- Yasmin Bill - Relationships and Health Education Lead
- Theresa Kyeyune - School Counsellor
- Tami Gibb - Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)
- Marian Blackmore - School Nurse
- Crystal Luk - Clap and Toot Music Therapist
- Lia Pereira – Librarian, Quiet Spaces Ambassador
- Val Bridgeman - Midday Meal Supervisor/Chief provider of staff snacks

### A word from Mr Schumm

I am enormously proud of all the work staff have made in this area and delighted by the Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Award in recognition of our efforts. We aspire to create a school full of happy children but fully recognise there are times in our lives when we all need a helping hand.

At St Stephen's the helping hand comes in many guises from sympathetic staff, the joys of singing and dancing, a school counsellor and an ELSA, words of wisdom from Denis but most importantly maintaining a culture of kindness and thoughtfulness in everything we do.

I hope you enjoy perusing the newsletter.

Michael Schumm

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## Positive Mental Health Award



Well we did it - All our efforts to give mental health as much focus and attention as physical health in our teaching and support to children and families has been recognised by Edupod. It has been a great year, full of lovely collaborations, honest and open discussions, supportive workshops, wise guidance and advice. Thank you to everyone for such positive feedback as part of the accreditation process. Onwards and upwards as we continue the good work.

## Relationships and Health Education- A Review of the Year

At St Stephen's, our delivery of Relationships and Health Education is rich, progressive and deeply rooted in our school's values. Across all year groups, children have engaged in a carefully structured curriculum that explored the core themes of *Me and My Relationships*, *Valuing Difference*, *Keeping Safe*, *Rights and Respect*, *Being My Best* and *Growing and Changing*. While each class tackled the same topic concurrently, the learning was appropriately tailored to age and stage, ensuring that each child built upon their previous knowledge and skills in a way that was both meaningful and developmentally appropriate.

As the year drew to a close, we hosted our annual Puberty Workshops for Years 4, 5, and 6, delivered once again by the brilliant Kat Francois. These sessions offered a safe, informative and respectful space for our older pupils to learn about the physical and emotional changes that come with puberty, helping them to grow in confidence and understanding as they navigate this important stage of life.

Our wider SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) programme continued to thrive and enrich our school community. Highlights of the year included Black Voices Week, our celebratory Eritrean and Ethiopian New Year lunch, the Harvest Festival, Show Racism the Red Card, World Mental Health Day, UK Parliament Week, Hispanic Day, Anti-Bullying Week, Remembrance Day and Lunar New Year. Each event deepened children's cultural awareness, empathy and respect for others alongside being a fantastic opportunity to build relationships across our school community.

In addition, our *Cracking Careers* programme ensured that pupils met inspiring professionals from a wide range of backgrounds. This year included encounters with faith-based roles, careers in the armed forces and participation in London's Career Festival, where children heard directly from career advisors. These opportunities continue to raise aspirations and equip our children with a clearer understanding of the world of work.

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Through these rich and varied experiences, our children are not only gaining vital knowledge and skills for personal development but are also growing into well-rounded, informed citizens ready to thrive in modern Britain.

## School Counsellor Update

It's been another successful year for the therapeutic support offered here at St Stephen's. We have agreed on a few changes moving forward into next term.

The therapy space will now be offered to children from year 1 onwards. Reception age children are a little young for the service to be of any real benefit. Of course, if there are exceptional circumstances please do get in touch.

There will be an initial 3-6 sessions offered to assess if therapeutic support is what the child needs or indeed wants, continuing on where necessary. We hope this allows us to be sure that all those in need are given a chance to utilise the service.

Thank you to all the St Stephen's community who help to keep this service available, it really is a privilege to be part of such a wonderful school.

Wishing you a wonderful summer!

Ms Theresa

## Miss Val's Contribution to Staff Mental Health!



We owe a huge thank you to Ms Val, who has taken it upon herself to ensure that, at regular intervals, the staffroom table is awash with all manner of treats from fresh fruit medleys through to the much loved sweeties, cakes and biscuits (all nut free!). It honestly brings such a thrill to all the teaching and support staff on the days the treats arrive and has been hugely appreciated.

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## Music Therapy Interview

Crystal shares a two-way interview with one of her students after a year of wholesome music therapy.

**Crystal:** how would you tell your friends what music therapy is?

**Student:** It's a place where you play music to cool down

**Crystal:** Tell us 3 things you like about music therapy?

**Student:** It's fun, it's relaxing, the music

**Crystal:** What have you learnt in music therapy?

**Student:** To express my feelings, and I can tell someone my feelings

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**Student:** How do you feel doing music therapy?

**Crystal:** I feel a range of emotions! I'm excited when I meet someone new, I can feel someone's sadness when they are sad. But what I feel most is hope.

**Student:** How would you help a child?

**Crystal:** I help by getting to know them, allowing them to get to know me, by playing music and thinking about the music together.

**Student:** Do you feel sad when a child leaves the school or finishes music therapy?

**Crystal:** Yes I do feel sad when I have to say goodbye, but I also feel incredibly proud because they would have learnt a lot about themselves and have created some wonderful music in sessions.

Thank you Crystal for all your amazing support to students this year. They are thoroughly rewarding and very often life changing sessions. We are hugely fortunate to have your service at the school.

## ELSA Review of the Year

I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as the ELSA this year, finding it incredibly rewarding to support and nurture the emotional well-being of our pupils. We are extremely lucky to be able to provide this provision alongside the School Counsellor

The ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) provision has had a positive and meaningful impact on our school community. It has provided a safe, supportive space for pupils to explore their emotions, build resilience, and develop healthy coping strategies. Students who receive ELSA support show improved confidence, better relationships with peers, and a more positive attitude toward learning. By addressing emotional well-being, the ELSA

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provision has contributed to a more inclusive, nurturing school environment where every child feels valued and supported.

Have a wonderful summer break and here is another favourite quote from me!

Nothing ever goes away until it has taught us what we need to know. Pema Chodron.

Tami

## Book Recommendations:

Here's a super selection of great picture books covering a multitude of mental health topics courtesy of Mrs Pereira;

### 1. Divorce & Separation

- **"Two Homes"** by Claire Masurel, illustrated by Kady MacDonald Denton  
*Gentle reassurance that a child can feel at home in two houses.*
  - **"The Family Book"** by Todd Parr  
*Celebrates diverse family structures in a positive, inclusive way.*
  - **"Living with Mum and Living with Dad"** by Melanie Walsh  
*Simple, sensitive book for young children dealing with separated parents.*
  - **"Was It the Chocolate Pudding?"** by Sandra Levins  
*Addresses children's misunderstandings about divorce.*
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### 2. Bereavement & Loss

- **"The Invisible String"** by Patrice Karst  
*Comforting story about love that connects people even when they're apart.*
  - **"Badger's Parting Gifts"** by Susan Varley  
*Beautifully illustrated tale about remembering those we've lost.*
  - **"I Miss You: A First Look at Death"** by Pat Thomas  
*Straightforward and supportive introduction to grief.*
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### 3. Coping with Anger & Big Feelings

- **"When Sophie Gets Angry—Really, Really Angry"** by Molly Bang  
*Depicts anger in a realistic and healthy way for young children.*
- **"Anh's Anger"** by Gail Silver  
*A mindful approach to dealing with anger, inspired by Buddhist teachings.*

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- **"Ravi's Roar"** by Tom Percival  
*Part of the Big Bright Feelings series; deals with temper outbursts.*
  - **"The Color Monster"** by Anna Llenas  
*Explores emotional literacy and recognizing feelings through colors.*
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#### 4. Friendship & Social Skills

- **"How to Be a Friend"** by Laurie Krasny Brown  
*Explains friendship dynamics and conflict resolution simply.*
  - **"Stick and Stone"** by Beth Ferry  
*A heartwarming tale of loyalty and standing up for friends.*
  - **"Be Kind"** by Pat Zietlow Miller  
*Shows how small acts of kindness can make a big difference.*
  - **"Leonard the Lonely Astronaut"** by Jonathan Kelly  
*An imaginative story about connection and being understood.*
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#### 5. Moving House / Starting a New School

- **"Alexander, Who's Not (Do You Hear Me? I Mean It!) Going to Move"** by Judith Viorst  
*Captures a child's emotional response to moving house.*
  - **"Big Ernie's New Home"** by Teresa Martin  
*A comforting book for children coping with relocation.*
  - **"Moving Molly"** by Shirley Hughes  
*Simple story about adapting to a new environment.*
  - **"Wemberly Worried"** by Kevin Henkes  
*Perfect for children nervous about starting school or new places.*
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#### 6. Change & Transitions

- **"Goodbye House"** by Frank Asch  
*Focuses on saying goodbye to the old and welcoming the new.*
- **"Goodbye Hello"** by Anita Lobel  
*Explores daily and seasonal changes with poetic rhythm.*
- **"Topsy and Tim Move House"** by Jean Adamson  
*Reassures through familiar characters in transitional moments.*
- **"A House for Hermit Crab"** by Eric Carle  
*Metaphor for growing up and adapting to life changes.*

## 7. Fears & Anxiety

- **"The Dark"** by Lemony Snicket  
*Tackles fear of the dark in a unique and empowering way.*
- **"Silly Billy"** by Anthony Browne  
*Great for children who worry, introducing worry dolls.*
- **"Ruby Finds a Worry"** by Tom Percival  
*Teaches children that talking about worries helps them shrink.*
- **"There's a Nightmare in My Closet"** by Mercer Mayer  
*A humorous take on bedtime fears*

## Summer Holiday Survival Kit

As we head into the summer holidays, it's a perfect time to relax, recharge, and take a well-earned break. While many young people enjoy the freedom this time brings, others might find the lack of routine or missing daily contact with friends a little challenging. That's why it's so important to look after our mental wellbeing over the break.

Summer can also be a great opportunity to build healthy self-care habits—small things that can really help when things feel stressful, even once the school term begins again.

Below are some lovely resources from the Anna Freud Centre, full of simple ideas and activities to support wellbeing during the holidays and beyond:

- [Self-care resources and ideas for young people](#)
- [Self-care resources and ideas for parents and carers](#)

And remember—summer isn't just about doing lots of things. It's also about slowing down. Take time to sit quietly, listen to the birds, watch the clouds, notice the butterflies, and enjoy the small, peaceful moments.

Wishing you all a restful and joyful summer break

**Sally Bouwman**

**If you have any feedback please pass this on to:**

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