

## Welcome to National Mental Health Awareness Week 2020 Kindness

*He gives strength to the weary, and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40. 29-31*

We have moved into the next significant time of transition and change. This bulletin aims to possibly prompt and certainly affirm a lot of excellent practice in diocesan schools. The main message for this season is *it is normal to not feel normal*.

The following are points to consider and resources to draw on;

- **Communication is vital**; the acknowledgement of loss, honesty of the unknown, recognition of anxieties, a focus on the positive and emphasising that change is a part of life all add to a mentally healthy community.
  - [The Emotion Wheel](#) can be used with children of all ages
  - [Feeling angry](#) (KS2) a short animation from the BBC on managing feelings of anger
  - [Emotional Check-in](#) to help pupils who find it hard to express their emotions
  - [Conversation starters](#) for adults to use with children
  - [Anxiety Thermometer](#) to help children and young people express their mood
- **Lean into the school's ethos and vision**; the school identity is rich and secure. It is familiar and will ground the community.
  - [Seven Days of Kindness Calendar](#) could be adapted to suit one of your values
  - [Kindness Matters](#) – Mental Health Foundation animation promotes the theme of this year's Mental Health Awareness Week, including being kind to one's self.
  - Regular connection for staff with coffee mornings, bake and cake, personal reflection in every meeting as a standing item, a staff buddy system, diarised peer-to-peer daily 'check-ins'
  - (and don't forget, if you are building evidence in your SIAMS SEF, these examples could be used)
- **Reflective moments** built into a curriculum will teach emotional literacy and help everyone think about their feelings and acknowledge their anxiety. It's best to have a few strategies to release a feeling of empowerment rather than a huge number that can then feel overwhelming.
  - The [mindfulnessinitiative.org](http://mindfulnessinitiative.org) education strategy can help with this
  - [The Coronavirus Time Capsule](#) is a project inviting young people to produce a video of their lockdown experience
  - A *recovery curriculum* is being worked on by the SDBE. These lessons will focus on helping pupils reflect on the experience they have had and relate it to their own personal development. More news to come...
- **Celebrate what has been achieved** before and during lockdown. Openly **praising and rewarding** even minor pupil successes.

And for those **pupils moving from one stage to the next**, the ritual of final assemblies, proms, leavers' services and trips are gone. Pupils (and staff!) are grieving.

If you are saying goodbye to pupils:

- Open dialogue with pupils could be aided by the [video Find Your Feet: Transitioning to Secondary School from YoungMinds](#).
- An alternative way of marking each of the transition stages, from the SDBE, is in the pipeline
- [10 Ways for Parents to Help Their Children Cope with Change](#)