Mental Health Awareness Week - Focus on Kindness

In the current climate it has never been more important to look after ourselves. We have had to adapt significantly to new ways of working as the ‘new normal’ has changed the way we are living. Lockdown and social distancing is affecting us all at a time when we are missing our families, friends and colleagues.

The theme for this year’s Mental Health Awareness Week is about kindness and looking out for each other. There is a large support network out there in place for people who are finding things challenging and need a helping hand.

There are some positives that have come about from ‘lockdown’ and these are that 37% of people have got back in touch with old friends or family since the lockdown. 60% of people say they’re talking more often to family and friends on the phone than before the lockdown.

Mr J Hickman
SENDCo

Shenley Academy - Virtual School

It has been very encouraging to see that so many of our students have been completing the work set through the virtual school. Our records show that the majority of students have been registering each day, completing the tasks set for each subject and receiving feedback on their knowledge and understanding through the instantly marked quizzes.

We recognise the many challenges that working at home poses for our students and families. We have attempted to set a useful amount of work for students each day, whilst at the same time not overwhelming students with an excessive number of tasks. If a greater amount of work is required we are recommending that students use the excellent online resources at BBC bitesize and Seneca to consolidate the work set through the virtual school.

The academic curriculum has been complimented by the mental health daily doses, PSHE lessons and careers activities.

Many of our year 11 students have also been completing the prestigious EtonX online resilience course.

Finally, we would like to say a big thank you to all of our parents, careers, students and families for working with us in ensuring that a worthwhile educational experience is maintained through these challenging times.

Mr M Berry, Senior Assistant Head Teacher

Aimhigher Plus

Despite the current situation, the Academy continues to work closely with the University of Birmingham as part of the Aimhigher Plus programme. Students have access to virtual support and advice via the Aimhigher Plus website and we have also being sharing sessions and resources with our students as part of their remote learning.

Congratulations to Kaylee Moore in Y9 who has won a £20 Amazon Voucher for participating in the Broadening Horizons online event this week.

Mr S Beeston, Pastoral Support Manager

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to once again take the opportunity to thank you all for your continued support.

We recognise that it is challenging to educate children from home but the work that you are continuing to do with your children is making an invaluable contribution to their learning.

As I receive updates from the government I am sharing them with you. I have no further updates following the letter moving the potential return date for targeted year 10 students back to the 8th June, however, the government are due to release further guidance for secondary schools in the very near future. It goes without saying that safety is our top priority.

I am sure you will join me in thanking our staff, both teachers and support staff, who are working tirelessly each and every day. I would also like to thank you for taking time in your day to talk with us when we call you. We are missing the students and we feel this is an important opportunity for you to discuss anything with us. We are here to help and if there is anything we can do to offer you further support please contact us.

Once again, for all of the key workers in our community we express our biggest thanks for everything you are doing.

May I wish you all a restful half term

All my very best,

Dr Bartlett

For information regarding academy closure and reopening arrangements please visit our website. www.shenleyacademy.e-act.org.uk/

Latest updates can be found Here.
The role of mindfulness in your self-care routine

Key words: Mental health, mindfulness, anxiety, meditation

During this collective experience of lockdown you may have noticed various emotions arising, including anxiety, which is a normal response to a situation in which we feel overwhelmed, or that we have little or no control over. Our thoughts can also exacerbate anxiety as the mind has the propensity to not deal so well with uncertainty. Given this, it’s important to take a moment to reflect on self-care and how we can support our mental health. Specifically, I’d like to talk about mindfulness, which despite becoming a buzzword over recent years, research suggests plays a key role in stress reduction and the promotion of health. Meditation is one form of mindfulness that helps improve awareness and connection to breath, and I have found the headspace app to be a good resource in developing a meditation practice. Mindfulness, however, can also be explored more actively. So, next time you’re out on a walk or in your garden, take the time to be aware of all the different sounds, smells and sights. Literally, smell the roses! Flowers are in full bloom right now, the birds are chirping away, and the warmth of the elusive sun feels great. Giving yourself a momentary break from your thoughts, by getting out of your head and in the moment, may just give you a sense of peace that was always there.

Mrs N Forshaw
Targeted Intervention Assistant
New Beginnings

As you are all aware, these are strange times for us all. We are all separated from our friends and family and our routines of going to work and school have been disrupted. Hopefully, it will not be too long before we can see each other again and return to normal, whatever our new normal will be.

Life for me has changed considerably. In March I did not realise that I had taught my students for the very last time. I would never see them again and I never had a chance to say goodbye. The reason? I was changing school after Easter and i joined Shenley Academy on 20th April.

It was a strange start to a new school. There was no getting to meet everyone and finding my way round the school. There was no greeting my classes and getting to know my students. Yet, I feel part of the school. I feel the friendship, the support, and feel very much a part of the Shenley team. I have daily meetings with my new colleagues and am fortunate to be receiving lots of training, including training in how to provide emotional support to our students on their return to school.

Although many of you will come to know me as a maths teacher, one of the reasons I have joined the school is to play a key role in the implementation and further development of mental health support across the academy. Over the last four weeks I have been attending online training courses and have been working with Dr Bartlett and Mr Hickman on plans for the future.

For now, though, I would like to tell you about an online emotional support service called Kooth that Shenley Academy will be working with. This is available to all students now and is a totally free and confidential service. Kooth is a web based support service for young people. It offers our students the opportunity to have a text based conversation with a qualified counsellor and no referral is needed. In addition, there are useful forums offering advice and support on many different topics, lots of self-help resources and a Kooth magazine, mainly written by its users.

I would encourage any students who are worried, or feeling anxious or sad to register and look through the website and the many resources available, or chat to one of the counsellors. As mentioned earlier this is a confidential service and students do not need to give their name unless they so choose. The website is www.kooth.com

I hope our students make use of the service and that it is helpful to them.

I look forward to meeting with you all soon and to working with everyone, staff, students and parents.

Ms Corbett-Lees

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Spotlight on Class of 2020 Prom

Change of Date

Sadly we have received the dreaded call from the Westmead Hotel to say that the event we had planned for Thursday 9th July 2020 can no longer take place on this date.

As we have stated, we think it is very important that we still have a Prom for Year 11 to allow them the chance to say a proper goodbye to their friends and the staff and to celebrate their achievements over the last five years.

With this in mind we have moved the date to

Thursday 22nd October 2020

I will honour all places that have already been booked unless this date is inconvenient for you. In addition, any students that have since decided they would like to go, need to please email me by 1 July.

sarah.benham@e-act.org.uk

Menu Choices

Please can you also email me your menu choices which are below. Ensure you include your name. and choose one for each course.

Main Course
- Supreme of Chicken with Dauphinoise Potatoes, Green Beans, Chantenay Carrots.
- Vegan Chickpea Curry with Sweet Potato with Sticky Rice.

Dessert
- Chocolate Fudge Cake with Vanilla Ice Cream
- Vanilla Ice Cream

The cost of the evening will remain at £30 and we will give details later for a way to make payment for this. The important thing at the moment is the numbers and the food options. I look forward to hearing from you.

Mrs Benham
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Shenley Academy supports all children by:

- Establishing a caring, safe and positive environment within the academy
- Responding to concerns for a child in a timely and effective manner
- Effectively tackling peer-on-peer abuse
- Supporting mental health and wellbeing
- Promoting British Values across the academy

Shenley Academy E-ACT Ambassadors

If you’d like to get more involved with Shenley Academy then we’re looking for people to join our Ambassador group. One of our roles is to strengthen the academy’s relationship with the local community and we’ll be hosting the 3rd annual Love Weoley Castle Awards evening on Wednesday 20th May. Over the past couple of years this has been a fantastic event that celebrates our ‘local heroes’. Watch out for more details in future newsletters and how you can nominate someone for an award.

As Ambassadors, we’d like to support the Academy in many more different ways and could do with your help. For more information please email me, paul.tucker@e-act.org.uk

You can raise a concern anonymously, here:

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