



Ref: 19-20-340

18 May 2020

TO PARENTS/CARERS OF ALL PUPILS

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Mental Health Awareness Week 18 - 24 May 2020**

Cams Hill School is committed to protecting and improving the mental wellbeing of our pupils. This week is mental health awareness week, hosted by the Mental Health Foundation (<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>) with the theme 'power of Kindness'. Cams Hill School, is all about the power of kindness and we very much strive for this in our school community.

Research has shown that kindness and mental health are deeply connected and that kindness is an antidote to isolation and creates a sense of belonging. It helps to reduce stress, brings a fresh perspective and deepens friendships. Kindness can improve feelings of confidence and optimism. The Mental Health Foundation want to ensure kindness is spread further into every community across the UK.

During Mental Health Week we would love it if you and your child(ren) could get involved. The Mental Health Foundation are asking if people could do a variety of things:

1. **Reflect on an act of kindness.**
  - a. We would hope that your son/daughter might share stories and pictures of any acts of kindness with their tutors. Is there something that has lifted their spirits or someone else's spirits? Maybe your son/daughter surprised someone with a virtual birthday celebration or maybe they have helped out a vulnerable member of the community with their weekly shop?
2. Could you ask your child to share some ideas with us on:
  - a. **How to be kind** by offering their personal top tips?
  - b. **How we could build a kinder society** that would support our mental health?
3. Could you encourage your child to get active? The Mental Health Foundation have set the challenge for everyone to be kind to themselves by taking at least 30-minutes of time out each day to do something active e.g. yoga, running, walking, cycling, gardening or a Hiit Class. It is about releasing those positive endorphins to reduce stress, anxiety and depression.

If you would like to share something that your child has done please ask them to email their tutor or [office@camshill.com](mailto:office@camshill.com) marked for my attention. With your permission, I would like to share their stories or pictures on our school twitter page [@cams\\_hill](https://twitter.com/cams_hill) for the Mental Health Foundation to see and to recognise the positive and kind acts being undertaken by our pupils.

### **Taking care of our mental health**

Taking care of our mental health is important to us all, so I would like to remind you of some useful and resourceful mental health websites.

- Hampshire CAMHS <https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/>
- Young minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- Anna Freud <https://www.annafreud.org/>
- Mind <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/for-children-and-young-people/>

Please also follow this link <https://www.camshill.com/managing-mental-health-during-covid-19/> to our school website for further information and guidance from the DfE.



The app **ThinkNinja** is also highly recommended and if you have Facebook, please do look at the **Hampshire CAMHS Innovations and Events** page which is incredibly useful and informative. Please remember though, that this information is advice and guidance only. If you have any serious concerns, please make contact with your GP or visit the Hampshire CAMHS website (<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/>) who can signpost you to the services you may require.

Finally, to support you further, I would like to share some of the free online learning that is available to help support your child.

- **‘Support Young People to break the cycle of self-harm’** (<https://elearning.creativeeducation.co.uk/courses/supporting-young-people-to-break-the-cycle-of-self-harm/>) - put Cams Hill School down as the organisation and parent/carer as role)  
Self-harm is a topic that many people feel puzzled or scared by, so this course aims to demystify it for you and help to gain an understanding of the motivations behind self-harm and how we can use this understanding to support a young person to a place of relative safety. This course has been developed by Dr Pooky Knightsmith, an internationally recognised mental health expert and author of “Can I tell you about self-harm – a guide for parents, friends and professionals.
- **‘Young People and their mental health’** (<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/young-people-mental-health>)  
This course has been created for young people aged over 14 wanting to know more about mental health and might also be of interest to you. Various topics are covered including:
  - a. What is mental health?
  - b. What are common mental health problems?
  - c. What to do when you experience mental health problems.
  - d. How to boost your own mental health.
- **‘Covid-19: Helping Young People Manage Low Mood and Depression’** (<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/low-mood-during-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR1ahfGdEzSSIGN6I7qsxHB2RfEqmLsg1dk-NQOih3R3Yo0go1fA20aPW3M>)  
This course explores practical ways to help young people manage their mood and maintain healthy habits during the coronavirus pandemic. This course is particularly helpful for young people with low mood and depression and their parents and carers. Topics covered include:
  - a. Practical advice on structuring the day and promoting healthy habits
  - b. Helping family communication to keep conflict to a minimum
  - c. Tips on managing your thoughts and your feelings
  - d. Using this time as an opportunity to develop resilience
- **‘Be the Adult a child needs during lockdown’** (<https://elearning.creativeeducation.co.uk/courses/be-the-adult-a-child-needs-during-lockdown/>) - put Cams Hill School down as the organisation and parent/carer as role)  
At a time when everything feels uncertain, children of all ages are looking to the adults in their lives for guidance and reassurance. That can be difficult when we are also struggling to come to terms with a new normal and what the future holds. This course will guide you through some simple steps to support your children and protect their wellbeing.

I do hope that the information I have shared with you in this communication continues to be useful and can help with any difficulties experienced.

Yours sincerely

Mrs P Newman  
Associate Assistant Headteacher  
Mental Health Lead  
Head of Year 11