

SEMH Bulletin

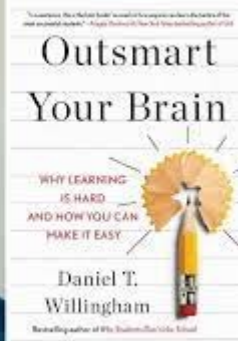
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Bulletin September 2023



Welcome Back!

As a new term begins there is always a sense of excitement as well as for some an anxiety or nervousness about what the new school year will bring. Getting fully involved in school life and that of the local community is a really good way to promote and develop positive mental health and wellbeing. For some students, this may appear to be more difficult as they feel anxious. Likewise there will be some anxiety for students returning to academic study—independent study; taking tests; reading aloud; giving a spoken presentation.

In the Summer Term our Staff Book Club book was “Outsmart your Brain” by Daniel T. Willingham. He has lots of practical advice about building healthy study habits, which we will share with our students and you as a parent body as the year goes on but we found the chapter looking at coping with anxiety very refreshing. Clearly there are young people and adults who have greater levels of anxiety than others and this does not detract from medical advice but for those of us who experience anxiety—identified by Willingham as up to 20% of those we teach—there are some useful insights into how anxiety should be viewed and managed.



Anxiety should be viewed as both helpful and difficult; some level of anxiety works to keep us safe and focused. We should aim to reframe/rethink anxiety and accept that it will take time to manage. There is not a switch we can flick that will solve the problem so we need to acknowledge that. Therefore we cannot lie to ourselves and say that we will do something when our anxiety is better; we need to be thinking about what we can do

despite our anxiety. Success is not avoiding what we need or want to do; it is doing it even though it makes you feel anxious. This may involve smaller steps to start with but does mean we do not “take away” a challenge but support students to meet the challenge.

It may sound glib but I like the way Willingham says that anxiety does feel uncomfortable but that this is not necessarily dangerous so we need to reframe that in our minds. It is not necessary to deny feeling anxious but at times we do need to suppress our anxiety to achieve an activity or task for a short period of time.

Willingham suggests three steps—firstly to normalize your thoughts and accept that while it feels uncomfortable, anxiety is normal; secondly to evaluate how serious the worst fears really are i.e. what would happen if you do not know an answer when called upon?; and finally to reengage. This may be a really small step such as answering a question in class or reading aloud one sentence from the class reader. The reality is that the more these three steps are taken, the easier it will become. Notice I say easier not easy!

Therefore within school we will aim to support students; to make reasonable adjustment so that they succeed but will not remove the challenges set so that anxiety is not a disability but something that can be managed.

SEMH Support within school

All students have the support of their form tutor, subject teachers, Head of Year. Through assemblies, form time, PSHE and the wider school curriculum there are regular opportunities to learn about, reflect upon and question personal issues as well as those linked to the local community and national/international picture.



All students have access to the School Nurse, Lisa Jaynes through the Tuesday lunchtime Drop In.

For some students there is additional targeted support—perhaps a match mentor, specific learning interventions, a bespoke curriculum including PSHE Plus or ASDAN, the support of Student Support and the Chaplaincy team.

Referral is possible to the School Nurse, Lisa Jaynes and Stella Hanson, a Talk therapist who is in school twice a week. Along with this the school liaises with Suffolk Young Carers to support our registered Young Carers and those wanting support within school and Outreach Youth for those exploring their sexuality and gender.



Keep in touch with us!

If there are any concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We welcome contact whether through the Log Book, email or telephone.

Needing a Quiet Space at lunchtime...

Every lunchtime there is a space in Room 34 for students to go and be still.

There is the chance to read, colour, do puzzles and generally unwind.



First Point of Contact

Form Tutor; Head of Year

More Serious....

Designated Safeguarding Team:

Louise Ramsay;

Simon Martin,

Lorraine Keeble

DSL : lramsay@debenhamhigh.co.uk

Needing more support—

Parent/Carer Workshops

The Psychology in Schools team run a range of workshops that may help those of you who have children needing support with an aspect of their mental health.

I am still awaiting the Autumn Term schedule, which we will send out to you when it is received. However you can check out the website <https://www.nsfthhs.uk/parent-workshops/> for recordings of previous workshops.

PSHE Corner

Every week students have a PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) lesson with someone from their Year Team—usually their Form Tutor.

Currently these topics are being taught :

Year 7—Unit 1 : Healthy Friendships

Looking at what a healthy friendship looks like in real life and online; ways to identify and manage peer pressure; how to recognise toxic friendships and ways to resolve conflict.

Year 8—Unit 1 : Why is it important that I like myself?

Looking at the importance of self esteem and self compassion; the role of the media and stereotyping; gender identity and stereotyping and the importance of having positive body image.

Year 9—Unit 1 : Relationships: How to manage intimate relationships?

Looking at love, relationships and intimate relationships; the concepts of sexuality and sexual identity—i.e. diversity in relationships; the idea of consent—being in control of your relationships and managing peer pressure

Year 10—Aiming High—Careers overview

Unit 1—Health and wellbeing : Respecting Ourselves?

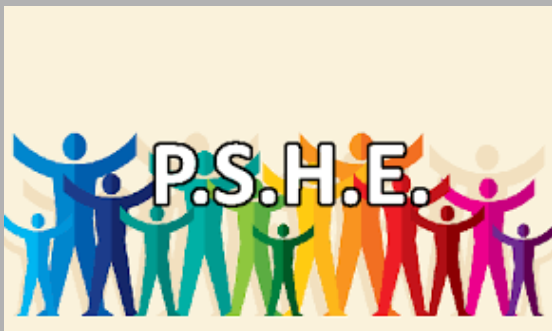
Re0capping the importance of good sexual health ; the impact of pornography on relationships and body image; management of power within relationships looking at control, coercion and abuse; avoiding unhealthy substances.

Year 11— Pathways Post 16

Unit 1 : Promoting Emotional Wellbeing

The importance of emotional health and wellbeing—the importance of resilience and reframing negative thinking; the management of risk

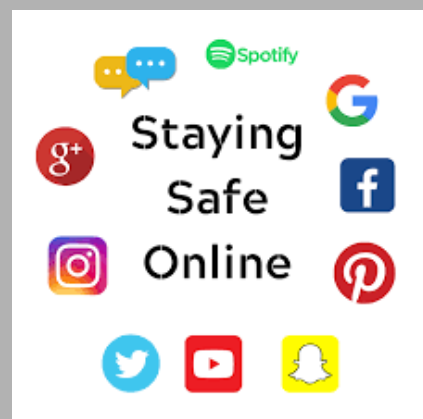
If you want to know more about our PSHE Curriculum please follow this link



Developing Oracy and Student Confidence

Developing Oracy is a key part of our Literacy Action Plan 2022-25. In order to help build student confidence in terms of discussion, using talk to develop understanding in the classroom and to build the skills needed to give an oral presentation, staff are working across the curriculum to include opportunities for this important way of learning.

In PSHE all students will be working on a lesson on Active Listening as to be able to develop oracy, listening is a vital skill. This lesson is adapted from resources written by the Samaritans. Also, in Year7, Unit Three of their PSHE Programme of Study will explicitly teach the skills needed to give a presentation.



See attached our Online Safety Information Sheet

Participation : A sure fire way to feel better about school life!



There is plenty of opportunity to get involved in clubs and activities within school this term. Hopefully there is something for everyone—whether sporty, musical, needing a quiet place to be, working with computers, building with Lego, celebrating languages at Polygot Club.

The opportunity to try something new, improve at an existing skill and/or to spend time with people who have similar interests, makes being involved in the extracurricular life of the school so important.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Lunchtime 1.20 – 1.50	Year 7 Netball Year 11 Football Year 7 Drop In MFL Drop In Philosophy and Current Affairs Club Chess Club Quiet Space	Years 7 and 8 Hockey Years 8 and 9 Rugby Girls Football – All years Basketball – All Years Year 7 Drop In STEM Club Orchestra String Choir Quiet Space	Years 7 and 8 Dodgeball Years 10 and 11 Netball Year 10 Football Years 10 and 11 Rugby Table Tennis – All Years Year 7 Drop In Photoshop Lego Textiles Club Arts and Crafts Club Quiet Space	Year 7 Rugby Years 8 and 9 Netball Year 9 Football Years 9-11 Hockey Running Club – All Years Year 7 Drop In KS4 Art MFL Storytelling Pop Choir Quiet Space	Year 8 Football Badminton – All Years Just Dance – All Years Year 7 Drop In Polyglot Club KS4 Art Jazz Band Quiet Space
After School 4 – 5pm	Year 7 Football Year 11 Classical Civilisations (Class) KS3 Homework Club KS4 Homework Club	Year 11 Classical Civilisations (Class) KS3 Homework Club KS4 Homework Club	Warhammer KS3 Homework Club KS4 Homework Club	KS3 Homework Club KS4 Homework Club	