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Supporting your Wellbeing at George Eliot Academy

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George Eliot Academy offer to pupils

The George Eliot Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, which is also a key aim of the government guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2026), in which there is a real focus on wellbeing and mental health. Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in identifying concerns early, providing help for children and preventing concerns from escalating. It is for this reason that we have put together this leaflet to help you, our pupils, to understand the support for wellbeing and mental health that is available to us all in our local area. We hope this helps you to keep yourself and others safe.

Pupil Wellbeing Support Staff

In addition to your Year team, you have a team of staff who are committed to support your wellbeing:



Mrs Stanton
Lead DSL



Mrs Farrer
School Counsellor



Mr Stevenson
SENCO



Mrs Sharkey
Safeguarding Officer



Mrs Rosenbach
Pupil Support Worker



Mrs Slater
Assistant Principal



Ms Paton
Attendance Manager

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On-site Safety

We take the safety and security of all pupils, staff, and visitors very seriously. To help us identify who is currently on site, we use different coloured lanyards:

What is a DBS?

A DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check is a background check to make sure someone is safe to work with children.

Colour	Who's Who – Lanyard Guide
	No Lanyard – Not Authorised Someone with no lanyard is not authorised to be on site. **What to do: Report them to a member of staff immediately!**
	Red Lanyard – Visitor (No DBS Check) Visitors wearing a red lanyard have not completed a DBS check. They cannot be on site without an adult supervising them. **What to do: If you see someone with a red lanyard unaccompanied, tell a member of staff immediately!**
	Yellow Lanyard – Approved Visitor (DBS Checked) This person has passed a DBS check and is allowed on site without being accompanied. **What to do: No action!**
	Green Lanyard – Staff Member (DBS Checked) A staff member who has a DBS check and is authorised to be on site. **What to do: No action!**

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Need to Talk?

Sharing your thoughts and experiences can help you realise that you're not alone in what you're going through. Talking about your mental health can help you make sense of your feelings, recognise possible triggers, and discover useful coping strategies.

School Counsellor

Pupils can book counselling or mindfulness sessions in school with Mrs Farrer who is a qualified counsellor and member of the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy). Here you can discuss anything that is worrying you - school, home, friendships, anything at all.

How to book:
·You can email Mrs Farrer directly from your pupil email account or go to her office in person (Wellbeing Hub).
·You can ask any member of staff to email her on your behalf.
·Put a written note in any of the black boxes located around school.
·Submit a 'reporting concerns' form online, using the link on the school website.

It's important to know that what you share with the school counsellor is usually confidential. However, there are some situations where they may need to share information to keep you or others safe. This could include if you talk about wanting to hurt yourself or someone else, if someone is hurting you, or if there are concerns that you or another person are at risk of harm. In these cases, the counsellor has a safeguarding duty to pass on information to the right people who can help and support you.

Student Support Worker

As part of the school's safeguarding team, Mrs Rosenbach works one-to-one with pupils who might need a bit of extra help. She usually meets with pupils over a half term and works closely with families and other professionals to make sure the right support is in place.
Mrs Rosenbach takes a caring, trauma-informed approach that focuses on building positive relationships. Her work aims to support your wellbeing, emotional development, attendance, and engagement in learning through personalised sessions and interventions.

Behaviour Mentoring

Miss Wells provides a safe and supportive space where pupils can talk about any difficulties they're facing in school. Together, you'll explore ways to overcome challenges and work on reducing negative behaviours.
She also helps pupils learn to manage their emotions, build self-esteem, think about future career goals, and develop positive relationships with others.

Year Team

Your Year Team is here to help you feel supported, safe, and ready to learn. The team includes your Director of Key Stage, Head of Year, Assistant Head of Year, and your Form Tutor — all working closely together to make sure you have the guidance and care you need throughout the year.
They can help with lots of things, such as managing friendships, improving attendance, supporting your wellbeing, and celebrating your achievements. If you ever have a worry or need advice, your Year Team is usually the best place to start, as they know you best and can get you the right help quickly.

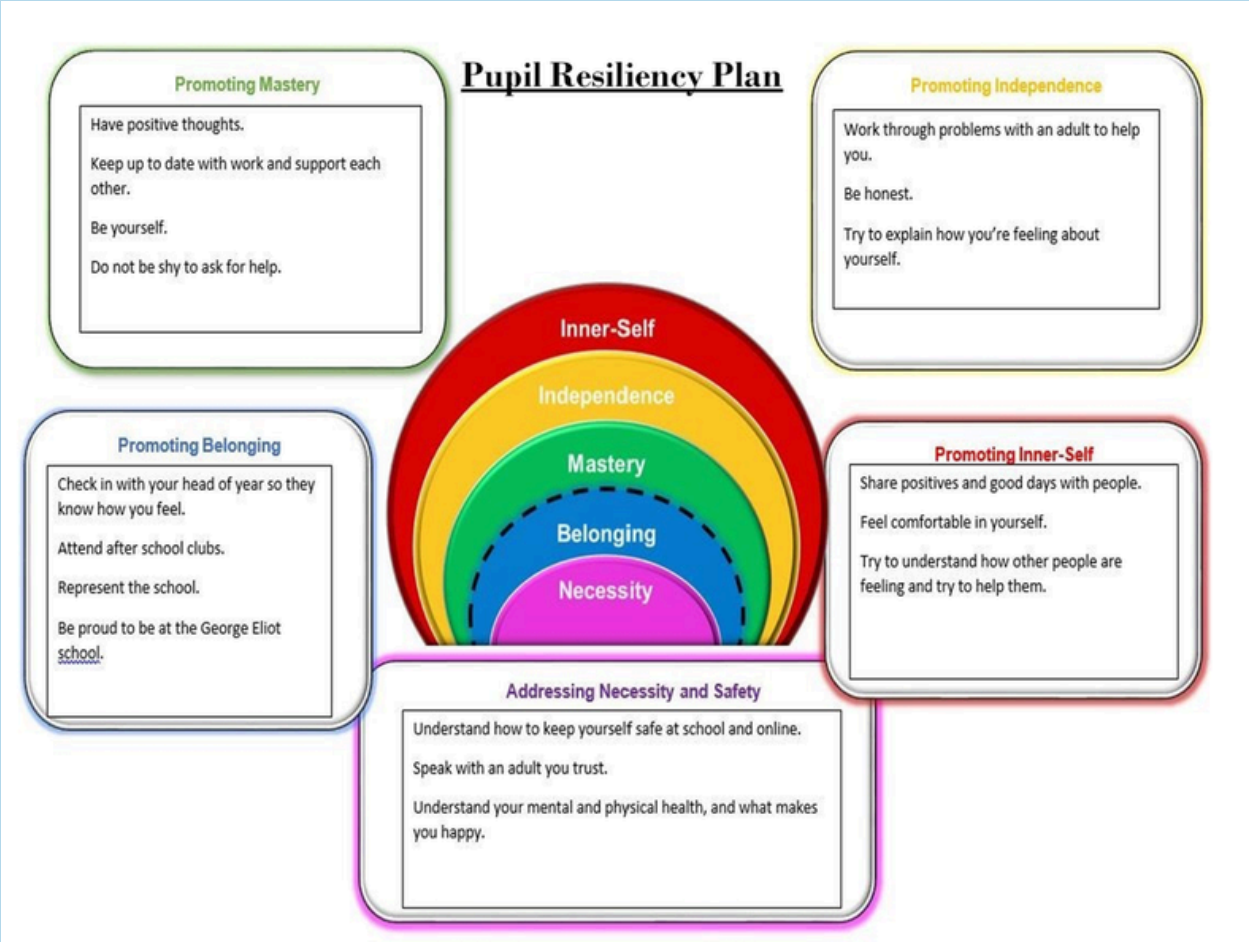
Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) Support

Our SEND team can further support you to look after your mental health and wellbeing by providing short, pupil friendly programmes that help with certain problems that you may have. Our resiliency plans have been made with the input of pupils to support all with their learning at George Eliot.

The Pupil Resiliency Plan has five main areas of resiliency:



- Promoting Independence (How to make the right decisions)
- Promoting Mastery (How to be confident and organised)
- Promoting Belonging (How to feel part of the GEA family)
- Promoting Inner-Self (How to look out for yourself and others.)
- Addressing Necessity- (self-care and how pupils can look after themselves.)



Relaxation

Taking time to relax is an important part of looking after your mental health and wellbeing. By trying some of the ideas below, you can learn to calm your mind, manage stress, and feel more in control.

Remember — everyone's different, so give yourself time to find what works best for you.

Deep Breathing

Breathe in slowly through your nose for four counts, then out through your mouth for four counts. This helps your body relax and your mind feel calmer.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

Tense and then relax different muscles, starting at your feet and moving up to your face. Notice the difference as your body releases tension.

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Body Scan Meditation

Close your eyes and focus on each part of your body, from head to toe. Notice any tightness and imagine the tension melting away.

Mindfulness Meditation

Pay attention to the present moment — your breathing, your surroundings, or how your body feels. Apps like Headspace or Mindfulness Coach can guide you through short sessions.

Movement and Exercise

A short walk, stretching, or light exercise can help release stress and clear your mind. Moving your body helps boost your mood and energy.

Creative Activities

Try something creative like drawing, journaling, listening to music, or colouring. Creative expression helps you relax and process your feelings.

Grounding Techniques

When things feel overwhelming, focus on your senses:
5 things you can see, 4 you can touch, 3 you can hear, 2 you can smell, and 1 you can taste.

This helps bring you back to the present moment.

More relaxation tips can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyEdZ23Cp1E

Relaxation Strategies



Breathing Techniques



Grounding Technique



Self-Care Tips

Do things you enjoy!

Self-care isn't complicated – all it means is taking time to do things that make you feel good. This includes activities that you find fun, relaxing, or energising. They can be as simple as reading a book or as big as going on holiday.

Take care of your health!

This means eating regular, balanced meals, getting enough sleep, taking care of your personal hygiene, and anything else that maintains good health. These forms of self-care might not give instance gratifications, but they will help you feel good in the long run.

Give yourself permission to relax!

When life gets busy, self-care is often the first thing to go. Set Boundaries around self-care, even if that means scheduling ''me time'' in the calendar on your phone or saying ''no'' to invitations for others until you feel you have recharged your emotional battery.

Set specific self-care goals!

Vague goals like ''I will take better care of myself'' rarely work. Instead set clear goals such as ''I will walk for 30 minutes after dinner every day'' or ''I will switch off my phone for 1 hour each evening to give myself a break from social media''.

Make self-care a habit!

Just like eating one apple won't make you healthy, practising self-care once won't fix stress. Find activities that can become a normal part of your day. Consistency is key!

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Limit unhealthy coping strategies!

Sometimes you want to zone out, scroll on your phone, and eat junk food. These habits are ok in moderation, but it is important to balance these with healthier self-care options. Your brain and body will thank you in the long run.



Mental Health and Wellbeing Tips

Sometimes life can get difficult. We can all feel sad, anxious, confused, or angry. It is important for you to look after yourself and try to make yourself feel good. We told you at the start of this leaflet how to see our school counsellor, but here are some other things you can do to help boost your mental health.



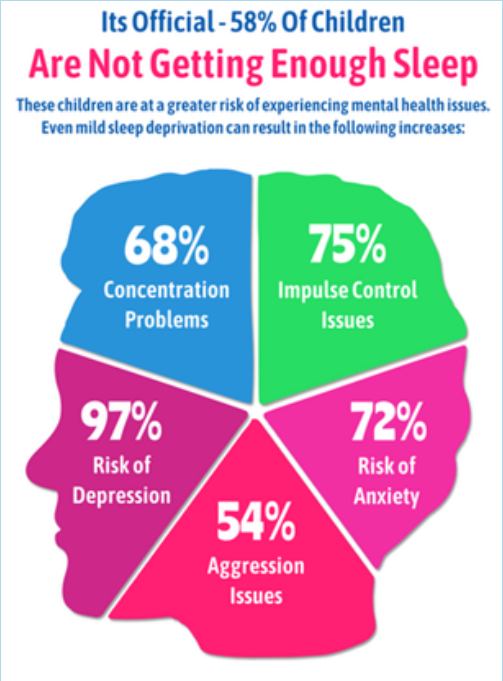
For more information on supporting your mental health RISE, has lots of useful tips and advice on their website www.cwrise.com

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Sleep

We have all heard that sleep is good for us right? But did you know that sufficient sleep supports the release of "happy hormones" that promote positive mood and overall well-being.

Evidence shows that there is a strong link between teens not getting enough sleep and problems with their mental health and wellbeing therefore it is important that you adopt a nighttime routine to support this.





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Keeping Safe Online

As social media sites have increased their influence on our lives, more attention has been drawn to the connection it has with our mental health. If social media is used excessively, it can lead to mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression, eating disorders and addictions.



Signs your social media use is affecting your mental health

There are signs you can look out for that might suggest your social media use is having a detrimental impact on your mental health. These include:

- You're spending more time socialising on social media than face-to-face.
- You feel sad or low on self-esteem when you see other people's posts.
- You find you're comparing yourself to others in an unhealthy way.
- You're distracted by social media when you're at work or school.
- You find you're doing things/behaving in a certain way, just to attract likes on social media.
- You feel sad or disappointed if your posts don't get as many likes as others.
- Checking social media is the first thing you do in the morning and the last thing you do at night.
- You start to neglect your other hobbies or interests in favour of going on social media more.

How to modify your social media use for positive mental health

Become more aware of how much you use social media.
Making yourself aware of how much social media consumes your life is the first step towards starting to cut back.
Being more aware of your social media habits will increase understanding of how much technology is adversely affecting your life – and how you could replace your 'addiction' with things that might improve your happiness levels and mental health.

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Reduce use wherever you can!

Alongside becoming more aware of how much you use social media, you can introduce a series of small changes to your digital habits, making them instantly more sustainable and healthier:

- Turn your screen to greyscale to reduce the lure and addictiveness of colours, sounds and app styles.
- Remove apps which 'hook' you in
- Turn off all notifications.
- Use an app to track your usage of different apps and set a goal that aims to reduce it.
- Look for usage patterns. Are you logging in or switching on during times of stress, boredom, anger, or sadness?
- Don't take your devices to bed with you.

Prioritise other activities!

Social media is an enticing distraction. If you can shift your focus and engage your brain in something else that captures your attention, you'll be less inclined to pick up your phone. There are loads of ways you can do this, like finding a new hobby, volunteering, or practising mindfulness. Meeting someone face-to-face is proven to have a more positive effect on your mental health when compared to other forms of communication. Therefore, you could also take the time to reach out to family and friends and organise physical meetups with them.

Sexting and Nudes

What is sexting?
You may have heard lots about sending nudes or rudes, or sexting. But what does it actually mean?
Sexting includes naked pictures or 'nudes,' 'underwear shots,' sexual or 'dirty' pics. It also includes video.
You could be sending these to a boyfriend or girlfriend, or someone else.

Why shouldn't I send nudes?

Once you send an image you lose complete control over what happens to it. It doesn't jump straight from your phone to the other phone you are sending it to. It can find its way to places you might not want it to or fall into hands that you didn't mean it to.
You may also feel that everyone is taking and sending nudes and you are the only one who is not. That is not true. Even if people are talking about it and are saying they've done it that's not always the case. Never feel pressurised to do anything you don't want to, including sexting someone.
Did you know? If you take and send 10 naked pictures of yourself almost 9 of them are going to end up somewhere else on the internet.

What is the law about sending nudes?

Anyone who takes, sends, shares, or has a naked image of someone under the age of 18 is breaking the law.

Here's an example. If you are 16 and take an image of yourself in your underwear for someone, you are breaking the law. The person you send it to would be breaking the law as they have a photo of someone under the age of 18 in their underwear. If they send the photo to their friends, the friends have also broken the law as they now have a copy of the image too. You can see how this can get out of hand.
It is illegal but the police will help you and safeguard you in the first instance if you are involved in sexting. If you send an image and it all goes wrong always speak to an adult who you trust straight away.
It's also helpful for you to know that your school and college have powers to deal with incidents of sexting. Sometimes they will have to report it to the police or other agencies.

Help – I have already shared an image online!

If you have shared a picture online, the website 'So you got naked online' offers children, young people and parents advice and provides strategies to support the issues resulting from sexting incidents: Find out more by visiting: SYGNO V3.

General Online Safety

Staying safe online is really important. The internet and social media can be great for connecting with friends and learning new things, but they can also expose you to harmful or inappropriate content. If you ever see, receive, or experience something that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, it's important to speak up and report it.
You can report online harms or concerns through the following trusted organisations:
• CEOP Safety Centre: Report online abuse, grooming, or exploitation.
• NSPCC Helpline: Get advice or report concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing.
• Report a hate crime - True Vision: Report hate speech or online hate crime.
• Internet Watch Foundation (IWF): Report any child sexual abuse material you come across online.

If something doesn't feel right — trust your instincts, don't reply, and tell a trusted adult straight away.

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Top Ten Online Safety Tips



1. Don't add people just for followers



2. Don't post personal information online



3. Watch what you look at online. Stay safe and report inappropriate content



4. Don't share nudes. It's a criminal offence



5. Be careful about what you post online



6. Don't share your passwords with anyone



7. Set your social media profiles to private so that random people can't message you



8. Go online for positive use only and be aware of behaviour such as bullying



9. Be careful which websites you go on



10. Be aware that there are possible dangers online such as fake accounts and people who lie about who they really are



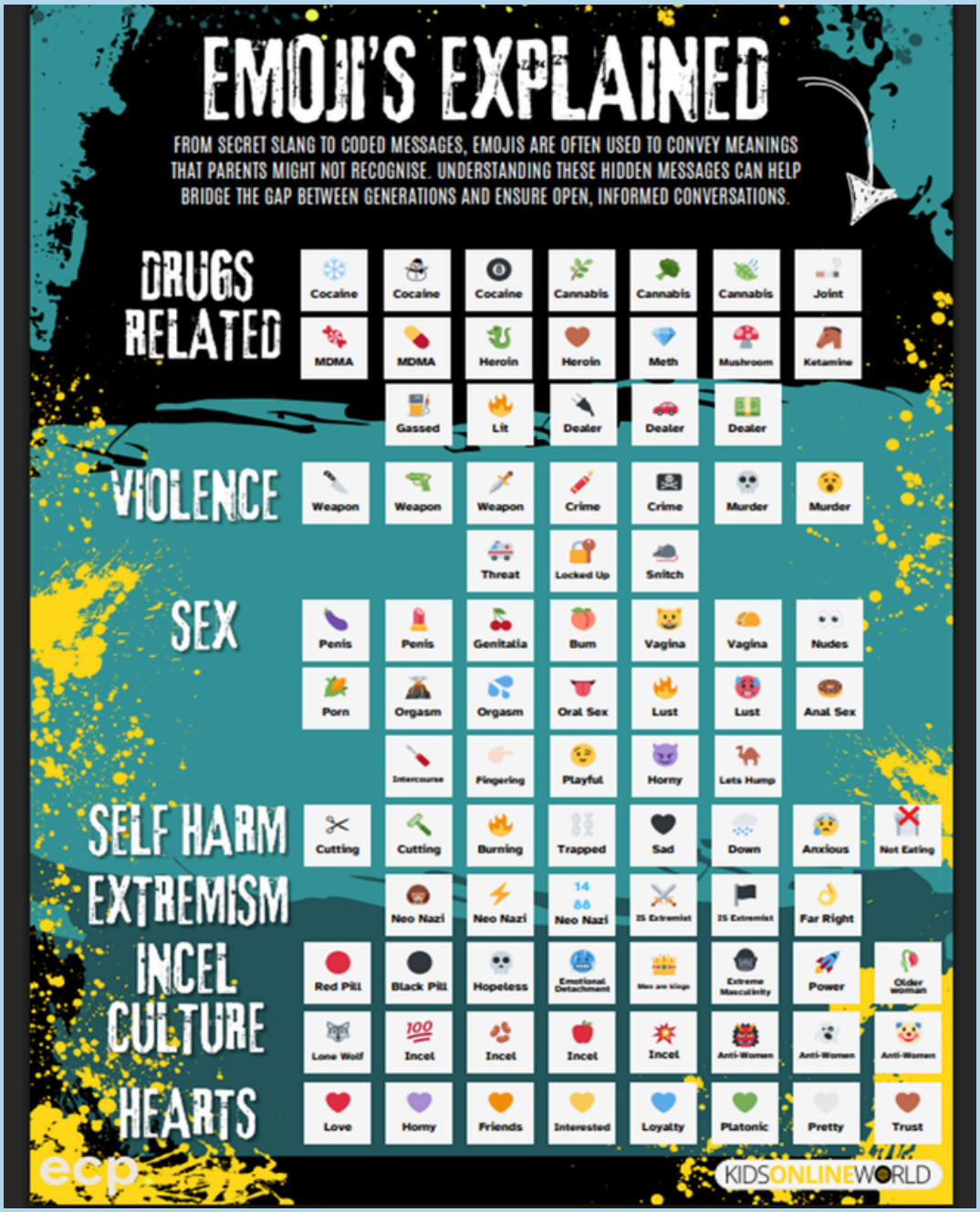
Produced by young people from the Calderdale SEND Reference Group

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Understanding Emojis in Messages

Emojis are a fun way to show how you feel when texting or posting online — but some can have hidden or inappropriate meanings that aren't always obvious.
The image below shows examples of emojis that are sometimes used in ways linked to unsafe or inappropriate behaviour, such as talking about drugs, violence, or sexual content.

It's important to be aware of this so you can recognise when something doesn't feel right. If you ever see or receive a message that makes you feel uncomfortable, pressured, or unsure, talk to a trusted adult — like your Year Team, a teacher, or a parent/carer. They're there to help keep you safe online.



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Bullying

There are many different types of bullying that can occur, some of the more common types are:

Name calling: persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s), which hurts, insults or humiliates.

Physical aggression: this behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking, and tripping people. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. Personal property can be the focus of attention for the bully.

Isolation/Exclusion and other relational bullying: this occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or the entire class group; relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined.

Cyber-bullying: this type of bullying is increasingly common and is continuously evolving. It is bullying carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text, social network sites, e-mail, instant messaging (IM), apps, gaming sites, chat- rooms and other online technology.

Extortion: demands for money may be made, often accompanied by threats (sometimes carried out in the event of the targeted pupil not delivering on the demand). A pupil may also be forced into theft of property for delivery to another who is engaged in bullying behaviour.

Intimidation: some bullying behaviour takes the form of intimidation; it may be based on the use of very aggressive language including body language.

George Eliot takes bullying very seriously and we ask that all pupils report such behaviour to staff if you are experiencing this or witnessing this happen to someone else. We also have anti-bullying ambassadors that are available in South Canteen most break and lunch times.

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Exam Stress

Exams can be stressful for most of us, and it's completely normal to feel worried, tired, or under pressure at times. Everyone experiences stress differently — you might feel anxious, find it hard to concentrate, or struggle to sleep. Remember, you're not alone, and there are plenty of ways to manage how you feel and look after yourself while revising.

Here are some things that can help:

- 🗓️ **Make a plan that works for you:** Break your subjects into smaller chunks and create a realistic revision timetable. Ticking off small goals can help you feel more in control.
- ☀️ **Take regular breaks:** Step away from your notes every hour or so. Go for a short walk, stretch, or do something relaxing to recharge your mind.
- 🧃 **Fuel your brain:** Eat regular meals, drink plenty of water, and choose snacks like fruit or nuts to help you stay focused.
- 😴 **Get enough rest:** Try to stick to a routine that allows for proper sleep. A rested mind remembers more and handles stress better.
- 📵 **Limit distractions:** Put your phone on 'do not disturb' while revising — check messages or social media during your breaks instead.
- 🧘 **Relax and reset:** Use calming techniques such as deep breathing, mindfulness, or listening to music to ease tension.
- 💬 **Talk about it:** If you're struggling, speak to someone you trust — a teacher, friend, or family member. Sharing how you feel can really help.
- 🧩 **Keep perspective:** Exams are important, but they don't define who you are or what you can achieve. Do your best — that's enough.

For more advice and support, visit Mind's guide to exam stress:
👉**https://www.mind.org.uk/for-young-people/feelings-and-experiences/exam-stress/**

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External Support

Sometimes we all need extra help, and that's okay. Here are trusted local and national organisations in Warwickshire where you can get advice, support, or someone to talk to.

Bereavement

- Warwickshire County Council – Bereavement Support
- General support | Suicide bereavement support
- Child Bereavement UK: 0800 02 888 40 | support@childbereavementuk.org | Live chat
- Grief: Support for Young People – Information and a notepad to record feelings, plus local support tools
- Apart of Me – Free interactive game to help cope with grief.

Child Exploitation Awareness

- Criminal Exploitation / County Lines: Police video
- Child Sexual Exploitation: Awareness video
- Childline: 0800 1111, online chat, or email

Drugs and Alcohol

- Change Grow Live – Evolve: Self-referral | 01788 578 227.

Eating Disorders

- BEAT: beateatingdisorders.org.uk
- FREED: freedfromed.co.uk/resources-for-patients-carers
- NHS Body Positive: bebodypositive.org.uk

LGBTQIA2S+ Support

- LGBT Foundation: lgbt.foundation
- Warwickshire Pride: warwickshirepride.co.uk
- Mermaids Helpline: 0808 801 0400

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Mental Health

Helplines:
·Childline is a free, private, and confidential service where you can talk about anything. Whatever your worry, whenever you need help, we're here for you online, on the phone, anytime. Phone: 0800 1111 or use the online chat app.
·Samaritans. Samaritans provides confidential emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide. You don't have to be suicidal to call us. We are here for you if you're worried about something, feel upset or confused, or you just want to talk to someone. Phone: 116 123.
·The Mix. The Mix offers support to anyone under 25 about anything that's troubling them. Email support available via their online contact form. Free 1-2-1 webchat service available. Free short-term counselling service available. Phone: 0808 808 4994 Opening times: 4pm - 11pm, seven days a week.
·Hopeline247. Here for you 24 hours a day, every single day of the year. Call us on 0800 068 4141 or text 88247
·YoungMinds. Crisis Messenger text service provides free; 24/7 crisis support across the UK. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and need support, you can text YM to 85258.
·RISE. Rise provides emotional wellbeing and mental health services for children and young people. If you are calling between the hours of 8am and 8pm: 02476 641799. If you are calling between the hours of 8pm and 8am: 02476 93800.
Apps / Websites:

- Kooth: kooth.com is a digital mental health and wellbeing platform, which provides a welcoming space for digital mental health care, available to young people. Kooth can help children and young people like you to feel safe and confident in exploring your concerns and seeking professional support.
- RISE | Mind | YoungMinds | Papyrus UK

Runaway Support

- Runaway Helpline: 116 000 (24/7)

Suicide Support

- Papyrus UK: papyrus-uk.org

Young Carers

- Caring Together Warwickshire: caringtogether.org

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AND DON'T FORGET

If you would like to talk to someone in school, these are lots of ways to do so.

1. Tell ANY member of staff that you need to talk to someone and either they will talk to you when possible, or they will ensure someone else will as soon as possible.

2.Submit a 'reporting concerns' form online, using the link on the school website, telling us that you would like an appointment or email the member of staff directly.

3.Email Mrs Farrer, our School Counsellor, from your pupil email account.

4. Email Mrs Sharkey, our Safeguarding Officer, from your pupil email account. Or ask an adult at home to contact school.