

## **Student Wellbeing at George Stephenson High School**

At George Stephenson High School, we prioritise **Respect, Community, and Ambition** in everything we do. We believe that a supportive and inclusive environment is crucial for the wellbeing of our students.

### **Wellbeing At George Stephenson High School**

**PSHE Curriculum:** We have a comprehensive Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education timetable, featuring a dedicated lesson every two weeks. These lessons cover essential topics that promote mental health, resilience, and social awareness. Please see the link to get more information on this:

<https://www.gshs.org.uk/pshe>

**Awareness Events:** We actively celebrate and raise awareness, including:

- **Anti-Bullying Week**
- **Children's Mental Health Week**
- **National Diversity Week**
- **Black History Month**
- **Pride Month**
- **This is Me Event (combined with Percy Hedley School)**



These events encourage dialogue, foster understanding, and promote a sense of belonging within our school community.

**CSI Team (Celebration of Student Individuality):** Our dedicated CSI team for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 meets weekly to create assemblies, events, and lesson plans that celebrate the individuality of our students. This team provides a safe and friendly environment for everyone to share their ideas and express themselves.

### **Get Involved!**

We encourage all students to participate in our events and initiatives. Your voice matters, and together we can build a stronger, more inclusive community. If you have ideas for events or would like to get involved with the CSI team, please let us know!

### **Dimension's Days**

We have different workshops to help with wellbeing on whole school Dimension's Days. Examples from some workshops for Year 10 include:

**Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit** – Sending of Images and Grooming

**Army Outreach Team** - This outdoor session gives students a taste of Army teamwork and problem solving skills. The Elite Skills Academy is full of challenging tasks that develop mental and physical attributes. A careers presentation is included.



**NUFC – Battling Anti-Social Behaviour**

**Worth Educating – Sexual Harassment – how to identify, challenge and report**

This interactive workshop, informed by the national RSHE guidance, consists of updated information in regards to the prevalence of sexual harassment, what it is, and what we can all do to recognise, report and challenge inappropriate and illegal sexual behaviours, both face to face and online.

**Diversity Role Models – Anti-Bullying and LGBTQIA+**

We introduce the Equality Act 2010 and all the protected characteristics to explore the rights we all have under law before explaining that our work is focused on the protected characteristics of sexual orientation and gender reassignment. We then look at the concepts of sexual orientation and gender identity and the impact of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and language. We run an interactive game involving

assumptions and stereotypes to explore how there are many stereotypes associated with gender and sexuality and that these can be inaccurate and harmful. Young people discuss some of the challenges' LGBTQ+ students could face in school and consider practical scenarios to reflect on how they could challenge prejudice and discrimination in their school through being allies rather than bystanders to prejudice based bullying and language. Through hearing a personal story from the facilitator, who is a member of the LGBTQ+ community, and engaging in an anonymous Q&A session we help build empathy and understanding of the differences that could motivate bullying. These activities help young people consider how they can make their school a more welcoming and inclusive environment.

### **Ben Kinsella – Knife Crime Trust**

Students learn about the dangers and implications of knife crime through real life stories and create their own projects to address this.

### **Mental Health Band and Workshops**



Year groups such as year 9 have up-and-coming bands such as "Absnt Mind," complemented by a thought-provoking discussion on Mental Health, Body Image, Cyber Bullying, and an engaging Q&A session.

The primary goal of this is to empower students to make informed, healthy life choices while sharing real-life stories and practical advice. The messages on mental health are designed to instill confidence in students to openly discuss their mental well-being, equip them with the tools to identify when to seek help, and guide them on who to reach out to for support. Given the band's personal experiences with these topics, they are eager to engage in meaningful conversations with the younger generation.

### **Support Resources**

We recognise that sometimes students may need extra support. Here are some local help groups and resources you can turn to:

### **Great APPS for mental health:**

**Headspace** - This app offers guided meditation and mindfulness exercises, which can help with stress and anxiety.

**Calm** - Similar to Headspace, Calm provides relaxation techniques, sleep stories, and meditation sessions tailored for different needs.

**Moodfit** - A comprehensive mental health app that includes mood tracking, exercises, and tools to help improve overall mental well-being.

**Woebot** - An AI chatbot that offers conversational support and cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) techniques to help manage emotions and stress.

**MyPossibleSelf** - Developed by mental health professionals, this app includes courses on mental well-being, anxiety, and stress management.

**Sleepio** - A sleep improvement app that uses cognitive behavioural techniques to help users develop better sleep habits, which is essential for mental health.

**Mindfulness Coach** - This app teaches mindfulness skills to help manage stress and anxiety, with exercises and resources tailored for young people.

**YoungMinds** - The app provides resources and information specifically aimed at young people dealing with mental health issues, along with a community for support.

**T2 Mood Tracker** - This app allows users to track their moods and identify patterns, which can be helpful in understanding triggers and managing mental health.

**ReachOut** - A peer support app that connects teenagers with others facing similar challenges, allowing for sharing experiences and advice.

### **Great Podcasts:**

**The Teenager Therapy Podcast** - A group of teens discusses various mental health topics, sharing their experiences and offering relatable insights.

**Mind Your Head** - This podcast features conversations with young people and mental health professionals, addressing common issues and promoting well-being.

**Feel Better, Live More** - Dr. Rangan Chatterjee discusses various aspects of health and well-being, including mental health, with practical tips and expert interviews.

**The Happiness Lab with Dr. Laurie Santos** - While not exclusively for teens, this podcast explores the science of happiness and offers valuable insights that are applicable to all ages.

**The Mental Health Podcast** - Aimed at young people, this podcast covers a range of mental health topics with insights from experts and real-life stories.

**My Silent Episode** - Hosted by a teen who shares personal experiences with mental health struggles, this podcast provides an authentic perspective on navigating challenges.

**The Stress Sessions** - This podcast addresses stress and anxiety, providing practical strategies for managing these feelings, particularly relevant for teens.

**Unbroken** - Focusing on mental health recovery, this podcast features interviews with young people who have overcome challenges, offering hope and encouragement.

**Breathe: A Podcast for Teens** - This podcast focuses on mindfulness and mental well-being, offering practical exercises and advice tailored for teenagers.

**The Mental Health Foundation Podcast** - While it covers a range of topics, many episodes focus specifically on issues affecting young people and provide helpful insights.

## **Advice:**

1. **Stay Active:** Regular physical activity can boost mood and reduce anxiety. Find an activity you enjoy, whether it's sports, dance, or just going for a walk.
2. **Practice Mindfulness:** Techniques like meditation or deep breathing can help manage stress. Apps like Headspace or Calm can guide you through these practices.
3. **Connect with Others:** Building and maintaining friendships is crucial. Talk to friends, family, or even join clubs or groups to meet new people.
4. **Limit Screen Time:** Be mindful of how much time you spend on social media and screens. Take breaks and engage in offline activities.
5. **Express Yourself:** Journaling, drawing, or engaging in creative hobbies can be great outlets for emotions and help process feelings.
6. **Establish a Routine:** Having a daily routine can provide structure and stability, which is especially helpful during stressful times.
7. **Get Enough Sleep:** Prioritise sleep, as it's essential for mental and physical health. Aim for 8-10 hours a night and try to maintain a consistent sleep schedule.

8. **Eat Well:** A balanced diet can positively impact your mood. Focus on whole foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
9. **Seek Help When Needed:** If you're struggling, don't hesitate to reach out to a trusted adult, teacher, or mental health professional. Talking about your feelings can be very beneficial.
10. **Set Realistic Goals:** Break tasks into manageable steps to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Celebrate small achievements along the way.
11. **Practice Gratitude:** Take a moment each day to reflect on what you're grateful for. This can shift your focus and improve your outlook.
12. **Engage in Activities You Enjoy:** Make time for hobbies and interests that bring you joy, whether it's reading, playing music, or gaming.

**Remember, it's important to find what works best for you, and everyone's journey is different. Encourage open conversations about mental health with friends and family, as it can help create a supportive environment.**

### **Books:**

1. **"The Stress Solution" by Arthur P. Ciaramicoli** - This book offers practical strategies to manage stress and build resilience, with techniques that are easy for teens to understand and apply.
2. **"Mindfulness for Teen Anxiety" by Christopher Willard** - This guide introduces mindfulness practices specifically designed for teens dealing with anxiety, offering exercises and tools to help manage feelings.
3. **"The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens" by Sean Covey** - A classic that combines personal development with practical advice, this book helps teens build self-confidence and manage their lives effectively.
4. **"Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway" by Susan Jeffers** - This book encourages readers to confront their fears and provides strategies for building self-esteem and confidence.
5. **"How to Be a Stoic" by Massimo Pigliucci** - A practical guide to applying Stoic philosophy in everyday life, helping teens develop resilience and coping strategies for challenges.
6. **"The Gifts of Imperfection" by Brené Brown** - While aimed at a broader audience, this book focuses on embracing vulnerability and self-compassion, which can be incredibly relevant for teens.

7. **"Daring Greatly" by Brené Brown** - Another of Brown's works, this book discusses the importance of vulnerability and how it can lead to a more fulfilling life, resonating well with teenagers.
8. **"You're a Badass" by Jen Sincero** - A motivational book that encourages readers to embrace their potential and pursue their dreams with confidence and positivity.
9. **"Turtles All the Way Down" by John Green** - A novel that beautifully portrays the struggles of mental illness through a compelling story, helping teens feel understood and less alone.
10. **"Reasons to Stay Alive" by Matt Haig** - A memoir that discusses mental health struggles and offers hope, insight, and encouragement for anyone facing similar challenges.

These books can provide valuable insights, practical advice, and a sense of connection for teenagers as they navigate their mental health journeys.