

Mindfulness Monthly

Issue 19: June 2025

Welcome to the June edition of 'Mindfulness Monthly'. This month we will look at how to support your children with their end of year exams, as well as learning more about colleagues who support students with their mental health and well-being within school.

Managing exam stress (for Key Stage 3)

Last month we spoke about how to support students on the approach to the GCSE exams. This month, we find ourselves on the lead-up to the Key Stage 3 exams. The end of year exams can be a challenging time for younger students as they are still developing their study habits, so support at home can make a big difference. As a result, we thought it would be good to offer some top tips to support students with these assessments.

Create a calm study environment

Ensure your child has a quiet, comfortable space to revise. This should be free from distractions like mobile phones and TV during study time.

Encourage a realistic revision routine

Help your child create a revision timetable that breaks topics down into manageable chunks. Encourage short, focused sessions (25–30 minutes) with regular breaks to keep concentration high.

Use active revision techniques

Passive reading isn't enough. Support your child in using more active methods, such as making flashcards or mind maps, teaching the material to someone else, practising questions or completing quizzes.

Focus on understanding, not just memorising

Encourage your child to think about *why* things work, not just remember facts. Ask them open-ended questions like, "Can you explain that to me?" or "What's the difference between these two ideas?"

Balance study and well-being

Remind your child that rest, sleep, and downtime are essential. Over-revising can be counterproductive. Healthy meals, regular exercise, and a consistent sleep schedule will help their brain perform at its best.

Celebrate effort, not just results

Praise your child for the work they put into revision rather than the outcome alone. This helps build a growth mindset and reduces pressure.

Communicate with teachers if needed

If your child is feeling overwhelmed or unsure where to start, reach out to their teachers for guidance.

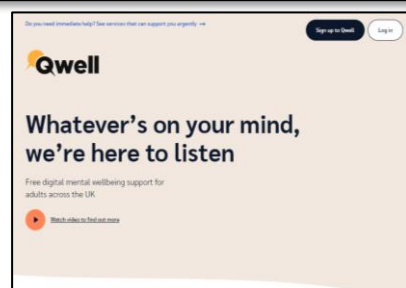
By staying positive, organised, and encouraging, you can help your child face their end-of-year exams with confidence and resilience.

Website recommendation of the month

Qwell

(<https://www.qwell.io/>)

Qwell is essentially the adult version of the service called Kooth that has been recommended in Mindfulness Monthly before. It is an online mental health and well-being service available to adults and offers support for a wide range of topics. All you need to do is sign-up to the free service and you will have access to all of their resources, including access to a live chat if you need it.



Thamesmead staff profiles

As with previous editions, every month we learn more about some of our colleagues in school. This month we'll learn more about Mrs Oates;

What is your role at Thamesmead?

I am an Assistant Headteacher (Key Stage 4) and a teacher of English.

How long have you worked at Thamesmead?

I have worked here since September 2008, so 16 years and 8 months!

Have you had other careers prior to working at Thamesmead?

I have had many careers, including Actor, Bar Manager and Telesales Executive.

What do you do to support with your own mental health?

I like to spend time with my family playing card games or watching movies. Lots of reading and listening to audio books also helps me to relax. When I feel anxious I use the senses technique to ground myself:

The 5-4-3-2-1 Technique:

5 – See: Name 5 things you can see around you (for example, a book, a chair, a crack in the wall, your hands, the sky)

4 – Feel: Name 4 things you can physically feel (for example, your feet on the floor, the fabric of your shirt, the air on your skin, your phone in your hand)

3 – Hear: Name 3 things you can hear (for example, a ticking clock, birds outside, distant traffic)

2 – Smell: Name 2 things you can smell, or imagine two smells if you can't smell anything right now (for example your coffee, soap, fresh air)

1 – Taste: Name 1 thing you can taste or imagine a taste (for example, gum, toothpaste, or the taste in your mouth)



Mrs Oates

Amy's trip to the Palace!

Our very own Amy was invited to Buckingham Palace on Monday 12th May in order to receive her Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. Amy said of her experience; 'The Gold DofE pushed me out of my comfort zone - trekking for days and camping in all weather conditions certainly tested my endurance and determination! It was an unforgettable experience that helped me grow both mentally and physically'. We are incredibly proud of her achievement and thankful for everything that she does to support students at Thamesmead.



Welcome to Kate

As you may remember from previous editions of Mindfulness Monthly, we are incredibly lucky to have a number of colleagues in school to support with your child's mental health and well-being. From an ELSA perspective we have Mrs Horgan and Mrs Barnes. From East to West we have Amy and Lei, and the Mindworks mental health team include Ellen and Yasmin.

As we approach the end of the year, we are also lucky to have support from Kate Smith from The Lucy Rayner Foundation for a period of seven weeks. Kate will be a very welcome edition to the team and will be able to meet with students who request support should they need a check-in or some guidance from a counsellor. Students have been informed that they can speak with their Pastoral Manager, Head of Year or Mr Todd if they would like an appointment with Kate, or they can self-refer by scanning the QR code opposite.



THE
Lucy Rayner
FOUNDATION

Infographic of the month

This month we introduce a new feature to Mindfulness Monthly; the infographic of the month. Each month we will share an infographic from a reliable mental health and well-being site that offers useful information when supporting young people. This month, the infographic has come from the Mental Health First Aid England website;

Tips for talking with young people

We believe talking about mental health can help you and those around you to be happier and healthier.

Anyone who works with or cares for a young person has the opportunity to play an active role in supporting their mental wellbeing. Giving a young person the chance to open up and have a conversation about their mental health can reassure them that help is available and empower them to access appropriate support should they need to.

Starting a conversation is the first step on that journey.

Talking tips

- Keep your body language **open and non-confrontational**
- Be **empathetic** and take them seriously
- Take into account **cultural differences** in communication styles e.g. how much eye contact is appropriate
- Do not offer **glib advice** such as "pull yourself together" or "cheer up"
- Keep the chat **positive and supportive**, exploring the issues and how you may be able to help

Creating a safe space

- Give yourself **plenty of time** so you don't appear to be in a hurry
- Meet in a **neutral space** such as a quiet room or pastoral room
- Sit down** even if the other person is standing – it will make you seem less intimidating
- Make it clear that they are **not in trouble**

Useful questions to ask

- How long have you felt like this?
- How can I help you?
- How are you feeling at the moment?
- What kind of support do you think might help you?

How to listen

- Give the person your full focus and listen without interrupting
- Listen to their words, tone of voice and body language – all will give clues as to how they are feeling
- Accept them as they are. Respect the person's feelings, experiences and values although they may be different from yours. Do not judge or criticise because of your own beliefs and attitudes
- Don't make a moral judgement. Be genuine – show that you accept the person and their values by what you say and do
- Get on their wavelength. Place yourself in the young person's shoes and demonstrate to them that you hear and understand what they are saying and feeling

What happens next?

- Keep the conversation going – follow up and ask them how they are doing. Reassure them that you are always here if they want to talk, and really mean it.
- Give **reassurance** that there are **lots of sources of support** and some of these might be available at home through parents/carers, through their place of education, by visiting their GP, or online. If appropriate, offer to go with them to seek support.

Take a look at our **list of support organisations for young people**
To learn more about how to support the mental wellbeing of young people, visit mhfaengland.org
Find us on social media by searching **'MHFA England'**

MHFA England

© MHFA England 2018

Well-Being Quote:

"You don't have to control your thoughts, you just have to stop letting them control you"

Dan Millman

Joyful June 2025

SUNDAY

1 Decide to look for what's good every day this month

8 Find joy in music: sing, play, dance, listen or share

15 Look for something to be thankful for where you least expect it

22 Watch something funny and enjoy how it feels to laugh

29 Share a friendly smile with people you see today

MONDAY

2 Say positive things in your conversations with others

9 Ask a friend what made them happy recently

16 Speak to others in a warm and friendly way

23 Create a playlist of uplifting songs to listen to

30 Make a list of the joys in your life (and keep adding to it)

TUESDAY

3 Re-frame a worry and try to find a helpful way to think about it

10 Bring joy to others by doing something kind for them

17 Take time to notice things that you find beautiful

24 Bring to mind a favourite memory you feel grateful for



WEDNESDAY

4 Take a photo of something that brings you joy and share it

11 Eat good food that makes you happy and really savour it

18 Look for something good in a difficult situation

25 Show your appreciation to people who are helping others



THURSDAY

5 Think of 3 things you're grateful for and write them down

12 Write a gratitude letter to thank someone

19 Get outside and find the joy in being active

26 Make time to do something playful, just for the fun of it



FRIDAY

6 Get out into green space and feel the joy that nature brings

13 Take a light-hearted approach. Choose to see the funny side

20 Rediscover and enjoy a fun childhood activity

27 Be kind to you. Do something that brings you joy



SATURDAY

7 Do something healthy which makes you feel good

14 Share a happy memory with someone who means a lot to you

21 Send a positive note to a friend who needs encouragement

28 Notice how positive emotions are contagious between people



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together