

Mindfulness Monthly



Issue 22: September 2025

Welcome to the new academic year! We hope you had a lovely summer holiday and are ready for the new year. As with our editions from last year, each month we will offer information about how to support your children (and yourselves) when it comes to mental health and well-being related issues. We hope you enjoy the publication, and as always, please do let us know if you have any feedback or topics that you would like us to include moving forward.

Supporting transitions: Helping to navigate change

A new academic year always brings a mixture of excitement and nerves for young people, and often for parents and carers too. One of the biggest challenges is managing transitions, whether it's moving up to secondary school in Year 7, stepping into the world of GCSEs, or preparing for Post-16 education and beyond. Each stage brings fresh opportunities, but also new worries. Understanding how to support your young person through these changes can make a huge difference. Transitions are not just academic; they're social and emotional too. A Year 7 might feel anxious about finding their way around a new school or making friends. Students beginning GCSEs often worry about the jump in workload and expectations. Year 11s, meanwhile, face the uncertainty of choosing subjects, thinking about exams, and making decisions about their future. All of this can understandably feel overwhelming.

The single most powerful support you can offer is *open communication*. Teenagers don't always show it, but knowing there's a safe space to talk at home makes a real difference. Some helpful strategies include;

- **Start with small conversations:** Ask about their day — not just “How was school?” but specifics like “What was the best part?” or “What was tricky today?” These small check-ins can open the door to bigger conversations.
- **Normalise their feelings:** Reassure your young person that it's normal to feel worried, confused, or even excited all at once. Hearing that these feelings are common can reduce pressure.
- **Focus on strengths:** Remind them of past challenges they've handled well. This builds resilience and confidence in tackling the next step.
- **Encourage balance:** Supporting good routines around sleep, healthy eating, and downtime can reduce stress and give them energy to cope with change.

Sometimes transitions feel especially tough. If your young person becomes withdrawn, avoids talking about school, or shows signs of ongoing stress, it may be time to reach out. Your first point of contact should always be the pastoral team within school, who are experienced in supporting students and families. Beyond school, there are excellent organisations that provide advice and resources for both parents and young people;

- **YoungMinds:** a website offering practical advice and resources for parents supporting their child's mental health.
- **Childline:** a free, confidential service for children and young people to talk about anything that's worrying them (available 24/7 on 0800 1111).
- **The Mix:** a website that offers support for under-25s covering everything from school stress to relationships and wellbeing (helpline: 0808 808 4994).
- **NHS Every Mind Matters:** a website providing tips for parents and carers on supporting young people's well-being.
- **Place2Be:** a website which offers support for a wide range of issues.

Transitions are stepping stones, not stumbling blocks. With encouragement, understanding, and the right support, young people can grow through these changes and develop the resilience they'll carry into adult life. As parents and carers, your calm reassurance is often what matters most.

Supporting transitions: Helping to navigate change cont'd...

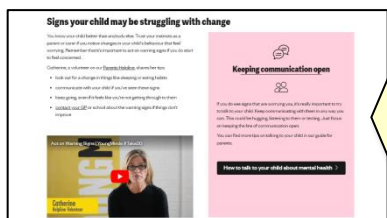
As well as the support offered on the previous page, the following articles/hyperlinks (if viewing this electronically) may be of use;



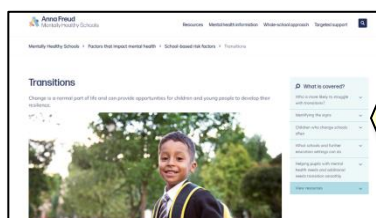
'Find Your Feet' Parent Webinar on the YoungMinds website and on YouTube



Information about transitioning to post-16 education on the YoungMinds website



The 'Transitions and Times of Change' resources on the YoungMinds website



Information about transitions on the 'Anna Freud Mentally Healthy Schools' webpage

Well-being support at Thamesmead

With mental health being such an important focal point for schools, we thought it might be useful to share with you what we do in Thamesmead to support your children. For regular readers of 'Mindfulness Monthly' you may recall these points being flagged before, but for new parents and carers we thought you might like to know. **Please note that any mental health support given is triaged in school by the Inclusion and Pastoral Teams (which allows us to ensure that the support we offer is appropriate for the student). We cannot refer directly to any agencies without this meeting taking place first as specific criteria must be met in order to meet the threshold of these services;**



ELSA

ELSA support is an individualised support programme designed to meet the emotional needs of children and young people. The principle is that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed. At Thamesmead, ELSA (which stands for Emotional Literacy Support and Advice) is often offered to students who are struggling with managing their feelings, or having difficulties within their friendship group, but they can also support in other ways.



'East to West'

East to West is a charitable organisation which offers support for a wide range of needs being faced by young people. Relational support workers and counsellors work alongside young people to understand their situations, grow their confidence and help them thrive. Often, their work takes places in 1-1 and group sessions, listening to and caring for students over several weeks. More information about East to West can be found on their website (www.easttowest.org.uk)



The Mindworks Mental Health Support Team offer a school-based service which supports the mental health of children and young people in schools across Surrey. They offer support and advice to key people (teachers, parents/carers) around the child or young person to enable them to identify any concerns, understand what has happened for that child or young person and support any developing mental health needs. Referrals can be completed to enable members of the team to work one-one-one with students. More information about the work of the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) can be found on their website (<https://www.mindworks-surrey.org/our-services/school-based-needs/MHST>).

For parents and carers, we also offer a range of information leaflets about a range of mental health and well-being issues. Leaflets currently available are; 'Supporting your young person at home', 'Supporting your child at home', 'Mental health support that we offer in school', 'Supporting students who are at risk of emotionally based school non-attendance', 'Guidance if you are worried that your child may have an eating disorder', 'Guidance if you are worried that your child may be self-harming', 'Guidance if your child appears withdrawn or worried', 'Dealing with exam stress', 'Supporting students who identify as LGBTQIA+', 'Supporting students who are dealing with a bereavement', 'Online behaviour and its impact on mental health', 'Transitions: From primary school to secondary', 'Transitions: Coping with the demands of GCSEs', 'Transitions: Moving to post-16 education' and 'Supporting parents and carers with their own mental health'.

Website recommendation of the month

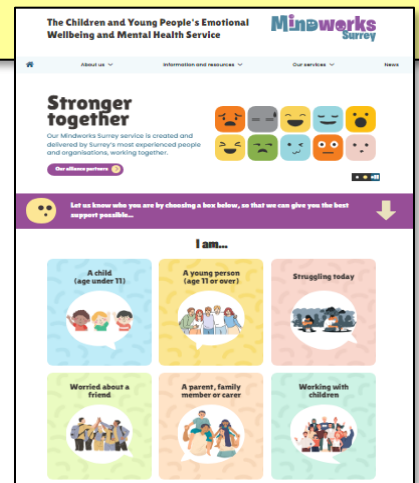
Mindworks Surrey (<https://www.mindworks-surrey.org/>)

Each month we will share with you information about useful websites that may support you or your children when it comes to mental health and well-being.

This month we would like to draw your attention to the website created by our marvellous Mental Health Support Team (MHST) in school; the Mindworks Surrey website (hyperlinked opposite if you are viewing this edition electronically).

This website is an invaluable resource and offers information and advice for both young people and their parents/carers. The website also signposts you to different services and organisations that may be useful to you.

The Mindworks team have recently put together an information sheet offering support for parents and carers. This has been copied below should you wish to access any of the resources;



If your concern is not urgent, but you want to find the right support for a young person's emotional wellbeing:

Online support

If a child or young person needs support with life's ups and downs outside of their regular support system, try Kooth which offers a free, safe, anonymous online support for young people (kooth.com) or Chat Health which offers confidential text support with a qualified nurse (chathealth.nhs.uk).

Self help tools & resources

A range of resources, strategies, and tools developed by professionals are available on the Mindworks website www.mindworks-surrey.org/advice-information-and-resources.

Workshops and groups

Mindworks offers free workshops and groups for children, young people, and families - no request for support or diagnosis needed. More info at: www.mindworks-surrey.org/our-services/building-resilience

CYP Haven

A welcoming space for 10–18s to talk about worries and mental health in confidence. Provided by Surrey County Council. More info at: www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/support-and-advice/families/support-and-advice/young-people/cyp-haven

Support in schools

Children and young people should be encouraged to talk to the Mental Health Lead in their school, who can discuss with Mindworks school-based staff whether a referral to Mindworks is appropriate, what Mindworks service is best placed to meet their needs or what other services might better support them. If a child is not in a Surrey state school or is not able to access support via school, then a professional working with them can make a request for support via <https://mindworksrequestforsupport.sabp.nhs.uk/>. GPs can also use e-RS.

Specialist support

We provide specialist mental health support for: Eating disorders, sexual trauma, children in care, care leavers, adoptees, and those under Special Guardianship Orders affected by trauma and attachment difficulties, Learning disabilities and young people who are isolated and/or vulnerable. A request for support can be made on <https://mindworksrequestforsupport.sabp.nhs.uk/>. GPs can also use e-RS.

Neurodevelopmental support

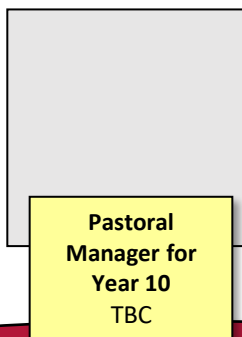
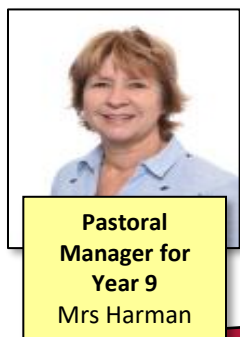
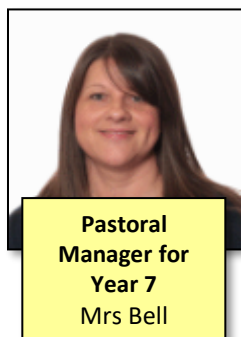
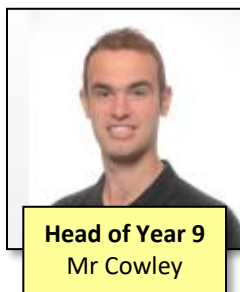
The Mindworks website offers advice for families navigating traits or needs which may be associated with neurodivergency, including details on workshops, support groups, and the diagnosis pathway. A dedicated helpline for parents and carers of children with suspected or diagnosed Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)/Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is available daily from 5–11 PM at 0300 222 5755. More info at: <https://www.mindworks-surrey.org/our-services/neurodevelopmental-services>

The new pastoral team in school

As is often the case in schools, a new academic year brings with it changes to teams. With this in mind, please find information below about the pastoral team in school for this academic year;

Year 7 tutors	Year 8 tutors	Year 9 tutors	Year 10 tutors	Year 11 tutors
7HVA Mrs Vallianatos	8NRI Mrs Ripoche	9FHE Mrs Hencharld-Emeto	10RSI Mr Singh	11CGO Mrs Goddard
7ACA Miss Catcheside	8AWI Miss Wickham and Mrs Johnson-Brown	9MPI Mrs Philips and Mrs McCarthy	10TSC Mr Scrivener	11RPI Mr Phillips
7JHA Miss Hayes and Miss Shillabeer	8EHA Miss Harper	9BHO Mrs Holmes	10CAZ Mrs Azoulay and Mrs Clifford	11HMA Mrs Mazhar
7SKH Dr Khan and Mrs Khan	8AGO Miss Gooderham and Mrs Johnson-Brown	9BCA Mr Cambridge	10JLA Mr Lawson	11LSO Miss Soanes
7LBU Mrs Burton and Ms Stock	8RMA Mr MacDonald	9NBO Mrs Boyle and Mrs Rosethorne	10RHA Miss Harris	11SMC Mr McLaughlin
7SWE Miss Weeks	8HLO Mrs Long	9CDE Mrs Dewar and Mrs Ward	10JBO Mrs Bond and Mrs Rosethorne	11MME Mrs Melder-Green
7HLE Miss Lewis	8TMO Mr Moses	9CWU Ms Wu	10PLI Mr Liyanage	11HJO Mrs Jones

Heads of Year and Pastoral Managers



Well-Being Quote:

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Self-Care September 2025

MONDAY

1 Find time for self-care. It's not selfish, it's essential

TUESDAY

2 Notice the things you do well, however small

WEDNESDAY

3 Let go of self-criticism and speak to yourself kindly

THURSDAY

4 Plan a fun or relaxing activity and make time for it

FRIDAY

5 Forgive yourself when things go wrong. Everyone makes mistakes

SATURDAY

6 Focus on the basics: eat well, exercise and go to bed on time

SUNDAY

7 Give yourself permission to say 'no'

8 Be willing to share how you feel and ask for help when needed

9 Aim to be good enough, rather than perfect

10 When you find things hard, remember it's ok not to be ok

11 Make time to do something you really enjoy

12 Get active outside and give your mind and body a natural boost

13 Be as kind to yourself as you would to a loved one

14 If you're busy, allow yourself to pause and take a break

15 Find a caring, calming phrase to use when you feel low

16 Leave positive messages for yourself to see regularly

17 No plans day. Make time to slow down and be kind to yourself

18 Ask a trusted friend to tell you what strengths they see in you

19 Notice what you are feeling, without any judgement

20 Enjoy photos from a time with happy memories

21 Don't compare how you feel inside to how others appear outside

22 Take your time. Make space to just breathe and be still

23 Let go of other people's expectations of you

24 Accept yourself and remember that you are worthy of love

25 Avoid saying 'I should' and make time to do nothing

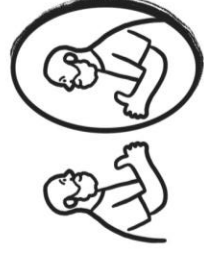
26 Find a new way to use one of your strengths or talents

27 Free up time by cancelling any unnecessary plans

28 Choose to see your mistakes as steps to help you learn

29 Write down three things you appreciate about yourself

30 Remind yourself that you are enough, just as you are



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together