



## Goffs-Churchgate Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter, Easter 2021

Hello everyone, and welcome to the Easter edition of the Goffs-Churchgate Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter. I hope you are all well. It is great to be back at school and seeing all the students again! We are so lucky to have our excellent facilities to call on so that our students can get back into the swing of face-to-face learning and physical activities.

As always, we have been very busy doing lots of wellbeing work. I want to start by sharing with you our Wellbeing Mission, Vision, and Values. These statements and values underpin all our mental health and wellbeing work and are displayed on our Mental Health Display Board in Reception and on the school website. The Student Executive played an invaluable part in agreeing these values.

### Goffs-Churchgate Wellbeing Mission, Vision, and Values

#### **Mission Statement**

At Goffs-Churchgate Academy, we will continue to work together as one inclusive school community of staff, students, parents and carers. We will provide a supportive, success-minded and challenge-embracing environment. We aim to maximise opportunities and achievements for everyone. Our ambition is to embed wellbeing into every aspect of our school as we continue our journey towards better mental health and wellbeing.

#### **Vision Statement**

- To promote positive social and emotional wellbeing, mental health, resilience, and wellbeing for students, staff, and our wider school family
- To create an environment, which is stimulating, secure, and provides opportunities for all
- To develop empathy and understanding for our local community

#### **Values**

C - Compassionate  
H - Helpful  
U - Understanding  
R - Respectful  
C - Caring  
H - Honest  
G - Grateful  
A - Approachable  
T - Trusting  
E - Earnest

## Goffs Churchgate Mental Health Poetry Competition

In February 2021, we decided to bring forward our annual Mental Health Poetry Competition to coincide with the lockdown and the Spring Wellbeing theme of 'Hope'. The competition was keenly contested, and the quality of the entries was outstanding. The overall winner of the school competition was Marinela Tsepa from Year 11.

In the spirit of support and cooperation during these difficult times, the school invited St Mary's High School, Haileybury Turnford, Mount Grace School and Robert Barclay Academy to run their own Mental Health Poetry Competitions. All the staff were very enthusiastic and keen for their schools to take place. We would like to thank Mrs Liz Hegarty, a retired teacher with a passion for poetry, who helped to adjudicate on the Goffs- Churchgate poems.

The winners from each school then submitted their poems to a judging panel made up of the three Goffs-Churchgate Mental Health Champions - Sir Charles Walker MP, Helen Barnett, and Martin Griffiths.

The judging panel met at the beginning of March 2021. To say that they were impressed at the quality of the five entries is an understatement. They described all five entries as 'incredible quality', a 'privilege to read every one of them' and 'incredibly uplifting'. They decided that all the entries deserved to be winners in these unique circumstances.

The students from each school will receive an inscribed trophy as a joint winner of the inaugural 'Wellbeing Poetry Challenge', which we hope will be an annual event and bring the schools even closer.

### **Hope, by Marinela Tsepa**

Hope  
There's days when you'll be down,  
And there's days when you'll be sad.  
There's days when you will feel like you can't even  
help yourself.  
Just stress and anxiety  
Messing up your head  
School and work on one side,  
Personal life on the other:  
All part of a painting,  
But you just can't find the colours.  
Trying to do your best,  
But that doesn't seem enough,  
When you fail to achieve something,  
I know, life seems pretty tough.  
And... well, it is.  
No one said it's going to be easy,  
Everyday you'll face a challenge  
A difficulty, obstacle, damage  
But don't let that tear you down,  
You are way stronger than that!  
I promise it gets better,  
Just hang in there a little.  
Try to find the light,  
Escape that imprisoning dark.  
Remember it's bad moment,  
Not a bad life.  
Think about the smile,  
You see in people's faces,  
How happy and proud you feel  
When you were the one to place it.



This is a picture of Marinela with her award

Think about the sunshine  
Right at the end of a storm  
That brightly colours the day  
And spreads out all its warmth.  
Think about the first snow  
On a cold December night,  
Think about the stars  
That shine in dark blue skies,  
Think about the flowers  
That perfume the summer air.  
Do not ever lose hope,  
A brighter future waits ahead.

## Mindfulness sessions for students

In January 2021, several students started a weekly online Mindfulness session, working with Sarah from Natural Flair Coaching Ltd. The sessions continue to be engaging and relaxing. The students have learned about breathing, how to regulate their thoughts, and appreciate living in the 'here and now'.

The students have really enjoyed this experience, giving feedback such as, 'great meeting, very helpful', 'really good info', 'this was a great experience' and 'it was a lovely experience, and I loved the part of the sessions when we clapped our hands, and the presenter made us close our eyes, and we used our senses'.

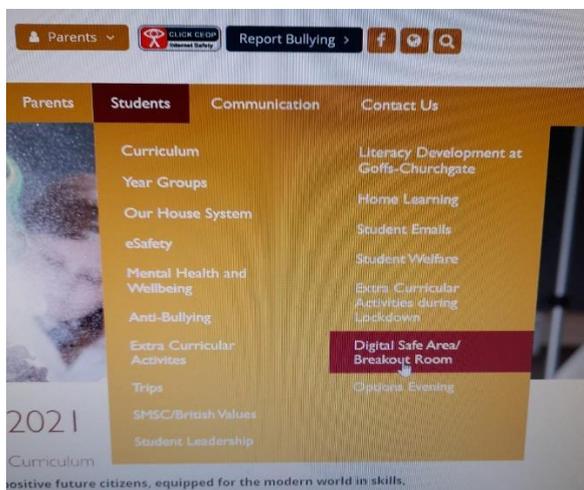
## Digital Safe Area

We have just launched our 'Digital Safe Area/Breakout Room' on the school website. It is a fantastic area, packed with information on mental health and wellbeing. There are a range of yoga, physical exercise, and mindfulness videos. There is also a page full of information on different mental health organisations and a link to the new BBC mental health website – 'Headroom'.

You will also find videos on motivational speeches and inspirational stories, self-care, and coping strategies. The purpose of this new and exciting page is to share as much information with you as we can to access it at any time, whenever is convenient for you, 24/7.

To access the Digital Safe Area/ Breakout Room

- Go to the Goffs-Churchgate Website
- Click on 'Students'
- In the right-hand column, you will see 'Digital Safe Area/ Breakout Room'. Click on this.



## Breakout Room

We have exciting news to tell you about regarding our new student breakout room! It is located in the old block, opposite room 301, and it's open for business! We want to make the room an area where students, under supervision, can access a safe and calm space if they are going through a stressful or anxious episode or completing 1-2-1 sessions.

One of our Year 8 students, Emili Marangoni, will paint a mural on one of the walls. My wife, Lesley Clune, has raised money for school mental health and wellbeing activities by making quilts. As a result, we have purchased a mini Hi-Fi system, beanbag, some plants and a diffuser for the room.



## Wellbeing Surveys

As you may be aware, earlier this year, we sent out Wellbeing surveys to staff, students and parents/carers. We asked the students to rank the school's commitment to mental health and wellbeing on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). The average score was 4.13, which is an excellent reflection of the positive emphasis placed on Mental Health and Wellbeing in school.

Within the survey, there were many concerns raised about the long-term impact of Covid-19 and stresses about exams; however, generally, the responses to questions were very encouraging and thought-provoking, with some great and simple ideas to help the whole school community. The formal reports are in the process of being completed and signed off, and so I will be able to share a complete report with you shortly.

Our Wellbeing theme is 'Hope'. We all hope to return to school, after the Easter break, to more good news on vaccinations, the continued reopening of society, and a return to normality. Spring is traditionally a time of hope and renewal. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [wellbeing@goffschurchgate.herts.sch.uk](mailto:wellbeing@goffschurchgate.herts.sch.uk) if you need any further help, support, or advice.

**Jim Clune, Mental Health Lead, Goffs-Churchgate Academy**