

Barrow CEVC  
Primary School

Inspire, Create, Discover, Together

# Barrow Primary School Wellbeing Newsletter

## Supporting the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Our School Community

Autumn Term 2022

Welcome to our first mental health and wellbeing newsletter.

At Barrow, we are committed to supporting children, staff and parents in their wellbeing and mental health. We know that wellbeing, physical and mental health are vital to successful learning.

Our aim is to provide help, tips and resources to support both parents/carers and children.

### What Is Wellbeing?

Mental wellbeing describes how you are feeling and how well you cope with day to day life.

Feelings of wellbeing are fundamental to the overall health of an individual, enabling them to successfully overcome difficulties and achieve what they want out of life.

Past experiences, attitudes and outlook can all impact wellbeing, as can physical or emotional trauma following specific incidents.

Our mental health can change from moment to moment, day to day and month to month.



### Five Ways to Wellbeing

1) **Connect** - There is strong evidence that indicates that feeling close to, and valued by, other people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to functioning well in the world.

It's clear that social relationships are critical for promoting wellbeing and for acting as a buffer against mental ill health for people of all ages. With this in mind, try to do something different today and make a connection.

Talk to someone instead of sending an email. Speak to someone new. Put five minutes aside to find out how someone really is.

2) **Be active** - Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups. Exercise is essential for slowing age-related cognitive decline and for promoting wellbeing.

It doesn't need to be particularly intense for you to feel good; slower-paced activities, such as walking, can have the benefit of encouraging social interactions, as well providing some level of exercise.

3) **Take notice** - Reminding yourself to 'take notice' can strengthen and broaden awareness.

Studies have shown that being aware of what is taking place in the present directly enhances your wellbeing and savouring 'the moment' can help to reaffirm your life priorities.

Heightened awareness also enhances your self-understanding and allows you to make positive choices based on your own values and motivations.

Take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you.

4) **Learn** - Continued learning through life enhances self-esteem and encourages social interaction and a more active life.

The practice of setting goals, which is related to adult learning in particular, has been strongly associated with higher levels of Wellbeing.

Why not learn something new today?

5) **Give** - Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy.

Research into actions for promoting happiness has shown that committing an act of kindness once a week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in Wellbeing.

## What is self-care?

Self-care is about what you can do to help yourself feel better or to keep feeling good about things.

There are lots of ways children can try self-care – try some of these ideas and see what works for your child.



## Positive Behaviours

We will continue to focus on positive behaviours with our Barrow Boost program in school during the next academic year, including confidence, motivation and responsibility

Class teachers will award merit points and Boost stickers to children who have shown a positive and caring personality in school.

## Mindfulness

**Mindfulness helps bring us back to the present. Here are some ideas if you'd like to try some:**

- **Squeeze Muscles:** Starting at your toes, pick one muscle and squeeze it tight. Count to five. Release, and notice how your body changes. Repeat exercise moving up your body.
- **Belly Breathing:** Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Slowly breathe in from your stomach (expand like a balloon) and slowly breathe out (deflate).
- **Mindful Meal:** Pay attention to the smell, taste and look of your food. No multi-tasking.
- **Meditation:** Sit in a relaxed, comfortable position. Pick something to focus on, like your breath. When your mind wanders, bring your attention back to your breath.
- **Blowing Bubbles:** Notice their shapes, textures and colours.
- **Colouring:** Colour something. Focus on the colours and designs.
- **Listening to Music:** Focus on the whole song, or listen specifically to the voice, lyrics or an instrument.

## Did you know that...?

- 1 in 10 children and young people aged 5-16 suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder. That is about 3 children in every class.
- There has been a big increase in the number of young people being admitted to hospital because of self-harm. Over the last ten years, this figure has increased by 68%.
- More than half of all adults with mental health problems were diagnosed in childhood. Less than half were treated appropriately at that time.
- Over 8000 children aged under 10 years old suffer from severe depression.
- 3.3% or about 290, 000 children and young people have an anxiety disorder.
- 72% of children in care have behavioural or emotional problems – these are some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

## Laughing is a therapy

Laughing feels good, boosts our immune system and helps us keep things in perspective.

Laughing with others strengthens relationships and, because laughter is contagious, we laugh more with others.

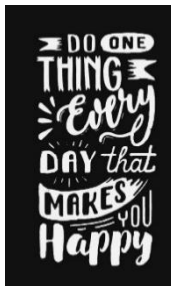
Laughter provides a full-scale workout for your muscles and unleashes a rush of stress-busting endorphins. Since our bodies cannot distinguish between real and fake laughter, anything that makes you giggle will have a positive impact. You do not need to be happy or have a sense of humour to benefit from a good laugh!

- Share jokes at home.
- Watch funny film clips and films.
- Try laughter yoga – there are plenty of examples on YouTube.

## There is always something to be thankful for ...

Research shows that deliberately focusing on the good things in our lives – practising gratitude – can improve our wellbeing. It's easy to give in to our natural negativity bias as our brains strive to protect us from harm, but we can counter that by deliberately focusing on what's good, even during the most challenging of times.

- At the end of each day, write down three good things about the day, no matter how small.
- Share at least one positive story with the people at home each day.
- Say 'thank you' for all the little things others do for you.



## We're here to help

At Barrow, we have a number of key people to support the co-ordination and development of emotional well-being and mental health provision within the school community.

Pastoral Team: Mrs Woodland, Miss Fairweather & Mrs Ashe

Contact details - If you require any help or advice about emotional wellbeing and mental health issues, you can contact the above people on the school landline or email the main office.

**Website Links to Mental Health and Wellbeing Support** - Please visit the school website for information, links and resources to help support positive wellbeing in children and adults.

## Useful Websites

- Young Minds ([www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk))
- Mind ([www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk))
- Minded ([www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)) - e-learning opportunities
- Self Harm ([www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk))
- National Self-Harm Network ([www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk))
- Depression Alliance ([www.depressionalliance.org/information](http://www.depressionalliance.org/information))
- Anxiety UK ([www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk))
- Beat—The eating disorders charity ([www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders](http://www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders))