

2,700 staff and pupils in mental health journaling project

Friday 30 October, 2020

[MindSpace Stamford](#) and [Art Pop-Up](#) are launching the Journals Project to help local school pupils to look after their mental health.

Over 2,700 children and staff will be involved during the 6-week project, which begins after half-term. Pupils will each receive their own journal (in a lovely shade of MindSpace orange!) and will be given the opportunity to explore the practice of journal keeping as a way of looking after their mental health, emphasising the reflective benefits of creativity and self-expression.

Artists often use letters and sketchbooks to unfurl and explore their emotions and thoughts. This process of self-expression and reflection is the inspiration behind the project which will be tailored to suit children of all ages.

Every week, a letter will be delivered to the school containing a prompt for the children to respond to in their journals using their choice of creative writing or drawing. The letters and prompts will be sent by visual artist, Sam Roddan of Art Pop-Up, and local poet, Chris Martin. These prompts link to the 5 ways to wellbeing* (steps everyone can take that have been proven to improve mental health and wellbeing) and encourage pupils to reflect on the 5 ways and to consider positive steps they can take to look after their own mental health.

The 5 ways to wellbeing initiative was initially launched in our local schools last year by Carol Hines, former Headteacher of The Bluecoat School in Stamford. Carol is now a mental health trainer and advocate for MindSpace and is delighted to have supported the re-launch of the project. Carol said "It has never been more important to talk openly and positively about mental health and how to take care of it with children and young people. The use of the journals is an exciting and motivational opportunity to re-visit the 5 ways to wellbeing project in our schools and to encourage those conversations between friends, colleagues, pupils and their teachers.

Sam Roddan of Art Pop-Up said "Using our visual and written prompts the children can explore their emotions with no expectations – a squiggle or a masterpiece, a word or a poem. There are no rights or wrongs, this is a medium for self-expression and discovering the 5 ways".

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