

# SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

## 10 Conversation Starters for Parents

Talking about mental health to children is sometimes hard. To the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects that we perceive our child is too young or not ready for. But rather than keeping children in the dark, this guide is designed to help you confidently talk about mental health, so they feel comfortable talking about their own worries and end any stigma before it begins.

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#WakeUpWednesday

### 1 LISTEN

This sounds obvious, but it is not something we are always great at. Active listening is where we listen without interrupting or making judgements and shows interest in what is being said. If your child feels listened to in the 'smallest of problems' they will become confident that you will listen when the 'biggest of problems' arise.

### 2 ASK TWICE

The campaign from time to change is great. <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/support-ask-twice-campaign>. Be tenacious about your child's wellbeing. Children instinctively know when your questions and support come from a place of wanting to help and care.

Are you sure?

### 3 THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A STUPID QUESTION

This advice also relates to the first point. If your child can ask you any questions about the smallest of things and you listen and answer without shaming or belittling, then they will have more confidence to ask the biggest of questions.

### 4 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Children appreciate honesty, particularly if you are having to share information or talk about a difficult subject. For example, you may be talking about death or loss: 'It's very sad that Nana has died' or 'I feel sad that Nana has died'. How you talk about a subject will differ depending on their age and developmental maturity. Talking about death to a younger child for example will be different to that of an older teen, as their experience and understanding of death is different.

### 5 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Assess the severity of the mental health difficulty you are noticing. Is the difficulty making it hard for your child to function regularly throughout everyday life? How frequently is your child affected, how long does it last and how persistent is it? Are they having problems controlling the difficulty? Talk to your child about your concerns and that it is likely they will need further support beyond family and friends.

### 6 TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH NATURALLY

Speak about mental health as part of everyday life, so that talking about our feelings and those of others is normalised. If the usual 'are you ok?' is not creating an opportunity for dialogue then say something like 'I know when something like that has happened to me I felt like this... is that how you are feeling or are you feeling something else?'

### 7 EMPATHISE

'It makes sense that you would feel this way, it is understandable'. Children often worry about things that we, as adults, might see as trivial or silly. However, for them at their age and stage it is a big concern and they need our kindness and care when they show their vulnerability and share their worries.

### 8 HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL SAFE

Teens particularly feel that by talking about their worries or concerns that this will make things worse. Reassure your child that you will discuss a plan of action together and what may or may not need to happen next. If they are a younger child, it is likely you will need to lead the conversation and explain next steps.

### 9 MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Be mindful of the language you use at home to describe and talk about mental health. Stigma often arises from misconceptions and a choice of language which is harmful. Using the word 'mental', 'man-up' or other such words in a derogatory way won't encourage your child to talk about their mental health for fear of being belittled.

### 10 IT IS OK TO SAY 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT'

Adults do not have all the answers but often children think they do. It is ok to acknowledge that what your child is experiencing is not something you have come across before or know anything about, but that you will work it out together and seek help together.

### Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



### Sources of Information and Support

Your GP  
Young Minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/v>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>  
<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/news-and-blogs/parenting-tips/2016/november/a-simple-guide-to-active-listening-for-parents/>  
<https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health>

# St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy



St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy  
WITH GOD'S GUIDANCE WE LOVE, LEARN, RESPECT AND FORGIVE



Newsbite

Week Ending Friday 4th February 2022

With God's Guidance we Love, Learn, Respect and Forgive



The children in Mrs Darby's class prepared a beautiful Liturgy this week to Celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.

Together we inspire one another to love learn respect and forgive, rooted and built up in Christ, so that every member of our school community can develop and flourish; united in mutual respect with a sense of



**Don't forget to bring a coat**

Outdoor PE Kit

Please Ensure that You PE Kit is

Labelled

**We have a lot of Lost Property!**

Lost property will be available to look through outside reception on Wednesday 9th February, after School



On Friday 28th of January the children at St Joseph's celebrated the Feast of St Thomas Aquinas.

The children were encouraged to think about how they could help to improve the World in which we live.

We joined schools from across our Trust in a remote Liturgy at the start of our day and Finished with a Trust Mass with the Bishop.



Links with St Paul's

Miss Bond has been visiting each week from St Paul's; to support the children with their French learning. These lessons are 'très bien' and very much enjoyed by the children in Miss O'Gorman and Mrs Murry's class



During celebration worship today I read Luke's Gospel.

Jesus calls us to follow him.

How can we demonstrate this through our actions?

Luke 5:1-11

One day Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret while the people pushed their way up to him to listen to the word of God. He saw two boats pulled up on the beach; the fishermen had left them and were washing the nets. Jesus got into one of the boats—it belonged to Simon—and asked him to push off a little from the shore. Jesus sat in the boat and taught the crowd.

When he finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Push the boat out further to the deep water, and you and your partners let down your nets for a catch."

"Master," Simon answered, "we worked hard all night long and caught nothing. But if you say so, I will let down the nets." They let them down and caught such a large number of fish that the nets were about to break. So they motioned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came and filled both boats so full of fish that the boats were about to sink. When Simon Peter saw what had happened, he fell on his knees before Jesus and said, "Go away from me, Lord! I am a sinful man!"

He and the others with him were all amazed at the large number of fish they had caught. The same was true of Simon's partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will be catching people."

They pulled the boats up on the beach, left everything, and followed Jesus.



With God's Guidance we Love,

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

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# 14 WAYS TO BE KIND ONLINE

Showing kindness online can mean so much to someone else. It is a choice we can all make that helps others, puts people's needs before our own and which can generate feelings of empathy and compassion. Small gestures can have a large impact and often one act of kindness can lead to more, making the world a happier and more positive place. That's why we've created this guide to suggest a few simple 'acts of kindness online' that can benefit people's mental health, support their wellbeing and encourage a more positive approach to engaging online.



Sometimes a friend or family member might post a question online or ask for help with something they can't do themselves. If you know the answer or are able to offer help, provide support and send a response. Something that may be easy for you might be difficult for someone else.



If somebody you know has done something good or shown kindness themselves, thank them for it. It costs nothing and showing them that you appreciate it means so much.

**4. SHARE FUNNY VIDEOS OR IMAGES WITH FRIENDS & FAMILY**

We often come across funny videos or images online that make us laugh and then we move on. If you found it funny, your friends and family might too. It could help someone smile who may be having a bad day.

**5. LIKE, LOVE & CELEBRATE**

If somebody posts something that you like on social media, like it, love it or celebrate it! It's a small gesture but could mean a lot.

**6. VIDEO CALL YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY**

It can be easy to be consumed by daily routine. Using apps like Zoom, FaceTime or WhatsApp are great for connecting with others far away and shows you're thinking of them even though you can't physically meet them in person.

**7. TELL SOMEONE YOU'RE THINKING OF THEM**

We can't always tell how people are feeling online and just dropping somebody a message to ask if they're ok or that you're thinking of them could literally make their day.

**8. SHARE POSITIVE POSTS**

If you see something online that inspires you, share it with people you know. An inspirational quote, a beautiful photo or a motivational video can lift spirits, improve self-esteem and help make people feel better about themselves.

**9. HOST AN ONLINE QUIZ**

Video conferencing apps are a great way to get friends and family together. If you know someone who is feeling lonely, host an online quiz and invite them to join in. It could really cheer them up.

**10. THINK BEFORE YOU COMMENT**

Sometimes thinking before you act can be just as significant as acting in the first place. Showing thought before you comment could stop you posting something hurtful, offensive or negative. It's always better to post positively or post nothing at all.

**11. BE COMPASSIONATE & UNDERSTANDING**

Being empathetic towards others and their situation is often an act of kindness and selflessness that gets overlooked. If you notice someone who is upset, drop them a message and offer to listen.

**12. CONNECT FRIENDS & FAMILY WITH SIMILAR INTERESTS**

You may know two people amongst your friends and family who you trust and know well who have similar interests and likes. Introducing them can be a great way for them to make new friends but remember to always ask their permission first.

**13. RECOMMEND SOMETHING YOU ENJOY DOING TO OTHERS**

If you enjoy doing something online, such as playing a game, or if you've found a great learning resource, share it with others. Even if you've watched a good film, letting others know can be an act of generosity that brings them excitement or pleasure at a time when they might need it the most.

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**14. PRAISE OTHERS FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS**

Sometimes your friends or family might post something online that they're proud to have done. It might be an exam they've passed, learning a new skill or just completing a task. Either way, it's always kind to recognise hard work and effort through praise and celebration.

## Head Teachers Message

Dear Parents and Careers,

As we approach our final week before the half term I'd like to thank everyone for your dedication to learning and your diligence in staying COVID safe.

Although guidelines have changed recently we remain cautious as we have had many cases over the past two weeks. We are now, finally, returning to a much reduced level and attendance is once again looking healthy.

Next week you will have the opportunity to discuss learning and progress with your class teachers. To ensure that COVID numbers remain low, parents meetings will be via a phone call, please let the school office know if you have not yet booked a time slot yet.

Have a lovely weekend

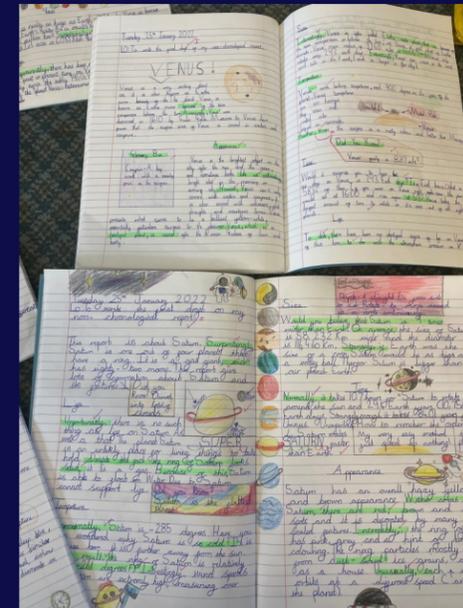
Stay Safe, Best Wishes



Mrs Dedman



God of love,  
Give us the strength and courage to follow your Son Jesus in all that we say and do. May our words and actions spread your message of love for all people.  
Amen.



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When pupils arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson. This can significantly reduce achievement, regardless of academic ability. Children may also feel awkward arriving to the classroom when everyone else is settled. Furthermore, when one pupil arrives late, it disrupts the entire class and



## Attendance

Year	Attendance %	Year	Attendance %
Mrs Bailey	84.28	Mrs Bailey	90.71
Mrs Spencer	95.38	Mrs Spencer	95.38
Mrs Cartwright	88.50	Mrs Cartwright	94.00
Mrs Abel	85.26	Mrs Abel	90.52
Miss Standish	71.57	Miss Standish	90.52
Mrs Darby	92.50	Mrs Darby	98.21
Mr Challoner	86.12	Mr Challoner	86.12
Mr Skye	81.93	Mr Skye	93.22
Miss O'Gorman	81.00	Miss O'Gorman	89.66
Mrs Murray	89.06	Mrs Murray	94.68

## Diary Dates

Parent Meetings (Telephone)	Monday 7th February
Safer Internet Day	Tuesday 8th February 2022
Non Uniform Day	Tuesday 8th February 2022
End of Lent 1	Friday 11th February 2022
School Opens	Monday 21st February