



Inside Kingshurst

Revving-Up for Reading

And they're off! With the start of a new academic year, we are so pleased for students to now start each and every day with a session dedicated to reading, with a book that has been tailored to their specific reading age.

Reading sessions have now been imbedded for two years at the academy and involves all students, from Year 7 to Year 13 in the same process. A list of the texts that each of the year groups are reading is given below and changes on a termly basis. We very much hope that your child is able to come home and keep you updated each day with what has happened next with every increment in the story that they read.

Reading Age	Year group	Book
10 and below	7, 8	The Climbers
10 and below	9, 10, 11	The Raven's Song
11 – 13	7, 8, 9	A Monster Calls
11 – 13	10, 11	Totally Deceased
14 – 16	7, 8, 9	Secrets of the Snakestone
14 – 16	10, 11	Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry
17+	7, 8	The Secret Garden
17+	9, 10, 11	Shadow of the Wolf
	12 and 13	My Life as a Chameleon



Parent and Carer Survey from Solihull Early Help

In the summer, we wrote to parents and carers about how we continually work with external partners to ensure pupils and their families are well supported both inside and outside of the Academy. We invited those attending the summer school an opportunity to meet with colleagues associated with the Council's Early Help Offer. Following this successful dialogue we would like to gather further information from parents and carers to further enhance our understanding of contextualised safeguarding in the local area and any concerns you may have.

Can we thank you in advance for your completion of the survey linked below:

[CLICK HERE TO GO TO THE SURVEY](#)

Rewards Evening 2024



One of the highlights of the start to the new year is the Rewards Evening, recognising some of the amazing achievement of the students from Hawking, Newton, Pankhurst and Tull Colleges, and last Wednesday didn't disappoint! With each College Leader personally recognising the achievements of nominated student in addition to each of their teams of College Captains coupled with the Mr Turner sharing a touching pen-portrait of each of his four Principal's Award Winners, that this year were awarded to

George Berry, Lily Naven, Ulrich Guttner and Alex Hodgetts, it was a moment that made us, and indeed their parents/carers and friends extremely proud.

Letter from the Principal

Please find a link below to a letter from the Principal outlining the start to the year, changes within the Academy and targets for this year.

[CLICK HERE TO GO TO THE PRINCIPAL'S LETTER](#)

National Online Safety: Mental Health Conversation Starters

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, the guide on page 2 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. In the guide, you'll find tips such as talking about mental health naturally, being open and honest and asking twice.



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.



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>