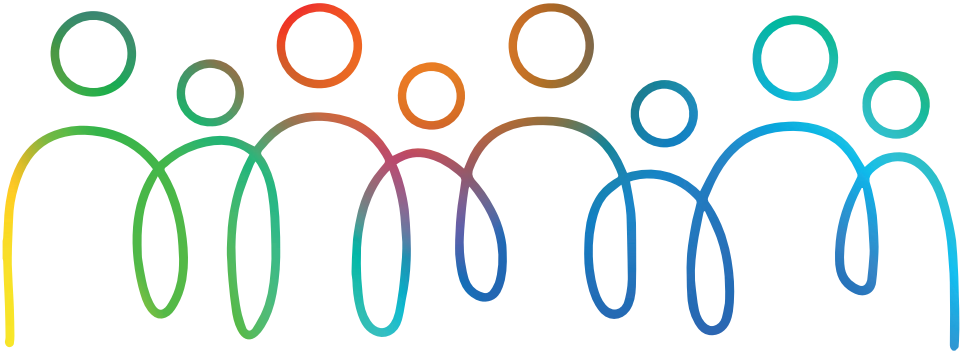
DULWICH COLLEGE

Mental Health Awareness



Communities

Welcome to Mental Health Awareness Week 2025

This is a week where we take stock of our surroundings and remind ourselves of the importance of supporting our own and others' mental health.

This year's national theme is Community. Feeling part of a community that is caring and compassionate can change our experience of the world in the most profound way.

To promote this week, we decided to make a short film to showcase the importance of community at the College. In doing so, Miss Way and I scurried around the campus with a camera looking for students having fun in groups. What we found was extraordinary. At every turn, there were friends enjoying time together in a variety of ways. Whether that was patball, five games of football seemingly on the same pitch, games of chess, quiet reading in the Library, board games, religious groups, music groups, or simply drinking coffee with some mates in the uncharacteristically warm March sun.

All were full of smiling students, forgetting the burdens of responsibility and enjoying each other's company. The importance of these pockets of solace cannot be overstated. Even if conversations are not overtly supportive, the simple act of being part of it can help ease feelings of worry or stress accumulated throughout the day.

Wherever one looks, there are small communities within communities. And thus, there is kindness and friendship in each tiny corner of our surroundings. We would all do well to remember that there are always little havens of safety and warmth, even on the loneliest of days. But sometimes you have to peer through the veneer of noisy school life to see them for what they truly are: home.

Have a wonderful week. And remember that on top of the incredible pastoral support available here at the College, there is always the warm company of likeminded people to help you through tough times and provide a sense of belonging.

Hugo Flower – Head of Wellbeing

"**'How are you?' often feels like a fleeting greeting, not a real inquiry.** We've turned a deep question into a rushed exchange. Yet, the intent is often kind, just poorly timed. We're not meant to bare our souls in passing. True connection requires more than a quick phrase. Genuine questions demand suitable moments and established relationships. Vulnerability needs trust and time.

And this brings in our theme for this year's Mental Health Week: ***Community***.

The word community comes from the Latin word ***Communitas*** which is a classical Latin word, used often by the Roman statesman and orator, Cicero, to denote community, society and fellowship, or the sense thereof. ***Communitas*** comes from the Latin word ***communis***, which means "common" or "shared by all or many".

Community is central to healthy existence. John Donne's phrase ***'No man is an island'***, found in his Meditation XVII, refers to the connection between all of humankind. Donne essentially argues that people need each other and are better together than they are in isolation, because every individual is one piece of the greater whole that is humanity itself.

No man is an island,
Entire of itself,
Every man is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less.

The ***island*** can be seen as a metaphor for isolation and remoteness. We are not made for isolation; we are made for relationship – we are made for community.

This is one of the strengths of the College – there are so many groups that we can be involved with; so many communities, all equally valued, all equally important. In our communities – wherever they may be found, as relationships develop, we find meaning and purpose.

This community element doesn't stop with just being together. It provides a wonderful opportunity for us to help ourselves as we help others. Understanding our place in community – small or large, near or far, allows for service to others. Charles Dickens said that *"no one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another". The Roman stoic philosopher, Seneca, put it another way: "wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for kindness." And the Indian Hindu sage, Mahatma Gandhi said "the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."*

Community is where we find ourselves. Community is where we help others find themselves.

May this week be a celebration of all that community means, both for our own benefit, and for the benefit of others.

Rev Tim Buckler – College Chaplain and Head of Community Action

Posters

You may have noticed a series of posters around the College to mark Mental Health Awareness Week.





These are a selection of the many wonderful comments made by students from Year 7 to Year 13 about their experiences with a wide variety of communities. They are there to showcase the importance of connection within our College community. And they are there to emphasise that mental health is important to us all.

Student Activities: 28 April - 3 May 2025

Throughout the Week

Seedling Swap
Wodehouse Library

Please visit the Wodehouse Library for our seed and seedling swap for all gardeners and allotment holders.

Music Outside the Christison Hall

There will be a selection of the College's finest musical groups performing outside the Christison Hall during lunchtimes throughout the week. The lunch queue is a place where students congregate every day. Let music make waiting for lunch more enjoyable!

Chinese Classes

Chinese classes will get in a meditative frame of mind by trying their hand at "sutra copying", tracing out ancient Chinese Buddhist texts while listening to monastic chanting

Economics Classes

The Year 12 Microeconomists studying Inequality will be discussing recent UK government policies to reduce spending on mental health welfare.

The Mad Hatter's Tea Party



'We're all mad here.'

In Drama and Dance we believe in the celebration of neurodiversity and this Mental Health Awareness week we are telling it like it is: ***Welcome to Wonderland***; a topsy turvy, off kilter, immersive experience created especially for Year 8 in the Edward Alleyn Theatre. In a world where there is no such thing as normal and neurodiversity is given its rightful status as a super power; become Alice and follow a curious creature who just can't stop checking the time down the rabbit hole. Enter a world where some well-loved characters are about to be reimagined and dance your way through Wonderland. A very angry Queenie is here to tell us that our brilliantly, beautiful, bizarrely connected brains are all fabulously unique and nothing at all like normal, you had better believe it or: 'Off With Your Head!'



Monday

Offline Café: Connect, relax, and have fun!
LG1
1.15pm-2.30pm

Come and unwind at the Offline Café – a space designed just for students to connect, relax and have fun. Whether you are looking to connect with pupils from different year groups, challenge someone to a board game, try mindful colouring or dive into a good book, there is something for everyone. Feeling competitive? Join our French charades and Pictionary games and put your French skills and creativity to the test!

Psychology Society – Neuroscience Behind Mental Health
BY06
1.45pm-2.30pm

An introduction to the brain structures and neurochemical processes which underlie common mental health conditions, including discussion of the role the environment has in shaping these.

Further English – Alice in Wonderland Syndrome
N201
4pm-4.45pm

Further English will explore this fascinating neurological condition through discussion of Lewis Carroll's *'Alice in Wonderland'*

Tuesday

Bookmark Making and Readaxation
Wodehouse Library
Periodicals Room
1.15pm-1.45pm

Spend a quiet lunchtime reading and enjoying bookmark designing and making with a cup of hot chocolate!

Philosophy Circle – The Philosophy of Psychology
S101
1.45pm-2.30pm

Guided Relaxation
EAT
2pm-2.30pm

A shorted guided relaxation (20 mins) creating awareness of stress and tension in the body and finding/ creating your own place to escape to and reset.



Wednesday

Middle School Art Club - Clay
Studio 3
1.45pm-2.30pm

Enjoy the therapeutic act of working with clay.

Lego Workshop
N103
1.45pm-2.30pm

One of the world's most enduring and fun activities. Come along and enjoy the opportunity to enhance your mental health through Lego.

Upper School House Cricket
The Cricket Pitches
2pm-4pm

The Upper School come together to compete for the coveted Cricket Cup.





Thursday

Bookmark Making and Readaxation
Wodehouse Library
Periodicals Room
1.15pm-1.45pm

Spend a quiet lunchtime reading and enjoying bookmark designing and making with a cup of hot chocolate!

Economics Society
LG3
2pm-2.30pm

Join the Economics Society as the Year 12 Social Enterprise Team present their award winning business proposition.

Aerospace Engineering Society
PH06
1.45pm-2.30pm

Join Aerospace Engineering Society for a talk with an aerospace engineering influencer!

Leavers' Concert
Auditorium
7pm-9pm



Friday

Geography Society – The Impact of Geographical Environments on Mental Heath
S102
1.45pm-2.30pm

Join Nicolas Pinell Morell and Doanh Cat for an insightful talk on The Impact of Geographic Environments on Mental Health. Explore how urban and rural settings influence wellbeing, the psychological benefits of nature, and key research on place-based mental health disparities. Don't miss this fascinating discussion on geography's role in mental health!





Saturday

parkrun 9am
Dulwich Park – College Road entrance

parkrun is a free, timed, community 5k walk/jog/run that takes place in parks and other spaces throughout London, the UK and the world every Saturday at 9am. Junior parkrun is for children aged 4-14, is 2k and takes place on Sundays at 9am. The College community is invited to take part.

A group of staff will be participating in the Dulwich parkrun and we extend a warm invitation to all to join us. Runners are encouraged to complete their 5km at a time that suits them best!

Please note that this is not a staff-supported trip, but we're enthusiastic about promoting this initiative for the benefit of all. We kindly ask that both staff and pupils wear an item of Dulwich sports kit so we can cheer them on during the event.

Drop in to the Wodehouse Library



Seed and seedling swap
all week in the Inner Room of the Wodehouse Library

Readaxation and bookmark decorating
Tuesday 29 April and Thursday 1 May, 1.15pm-1.45pm
in the Wodehouse Library Periodicals Room (with hot chocolate!!)

We will also have **displays** all week.

And **Sways with recommended reading:**
Lower School: https://sway.cloud.microsoft/g9Ces2YZHL1pWe4Q?ref=Link

Middle and Upper School and staff fiction:
https://sway.cloud.microsoft/DgBmW6X2V1cXGAZ5?ref=Link&loc=play

Middle and Upper School and staff non-fiction:
Mental Health Awareness Week : Nonfiction

Lower School Library
Come to the Lower School Library to see the wonderful display of books specially prepared for Mental Health Awareness Week.



Lower School Competition

In support of Mental Health Week, you will find 20 numbered posters around Lower School. Each poster will have a quote that is relevant to the theme of ***mental health and community***.

For those who seek to participate, a question sheet - available from the Lower School office - can be filled in.

On the question sheet are 20 clues relating to the 20 quotes, all in random order.

Place the correct quote number next to the correct clue!

The first three returned will receive a £5 Neds token!

Happy collecting!



DUCKS

In the Infant School, we teach children essential skills to support their emotional wellbeing, personal safety, and understanding of relationships. Through the ***Centre of Emotional Health*** programme, we explore important questions such as why we are here and, through games and circle time, develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Using stories and props, our young learners begin to use their ***Personal Power*** to recognise other people's body language and how they may behave.

An understanding of ***choices and consequences*** runs as a golden thread throughout the Kindergarten and Infant School. Linking directly to our values, children learn that their choices have consequences and that good choices usually lead to happier times. Through adult-supported play, children are taught strategies to help manage feelings of anger and understand that we have choices about how we express it. Sessions also focus on understanding the difference between gentle touch and hurting touch, helping children to recognise that no one deserves to be hurt. They learn to distinguish between good and bad secrets and identify trusted adults who can help when they feel unsafe. Our value of being ***Unique*** is celebrated through activities that explore ***Glad to be Me***, where children explore and identify their personal strengths.

Building on this strong foundation, throughout Mental Health Week, we will explore these familiar themes that are integral to our Wellbeing Programme. Using, ***RULER***, children will revisit their class charters to reflect on how they would like to feel at school, what they need to thrive, and the behaviours and language that help create those feelings. Our learners are encouraged to recognise and understand their emotions, label them, and continue developing the skills to express themselves and self-regulate. These important themes will be explored through play, writing, drawing, painting, listening to music and poetry, going on nature walks, relaxation, breathing exercises, and yoga — ensuring children have many opportunities to connect with themselves and each other.





Junior School

The Junior School pupils will be involved in a range of activities throughout the week to help them better understand that being part of a safe, positive community is key for their mental health and wellbeing.

Year 3 and Year 5 pupils will take part in movement yoga workshops within their classes, working together to support each other in various yoga poses to emphasise connection, teamwork, and trust-building.

10-minute slots throughout the week will be dedicated to collaborative relaxation, where the whole Junior School community will simultaneously take time to think, reflect and be calm.

Through the clubs' programme, there will be opportunities at lunch breaks and after school to develop deeper connections and learn more about our community – for example, the 'Dulwich Mile' (a walk around the College campus on Monday lunch break) will give pupils the chance to find out how the grounds staff contribute to making our campus a friendly and aesthetically pleasing place to be.

Also, Wellbeing lessons and assemblies will focus on the theme of 'community': how we thrive when we have strong relationships with others and how these environments give us a greater sense of purpose.

Staff Activities

Returning to Work with Children
Masters' Library
Wednesday, 1.45pm-2.30pm

Join other likeminded parents of children young and old, and share experiences of balancing a school and work life over a cup of tea and cake. All most welcome.

Dusters Cricket
Main cricket nets
Thursday, 4.15pm-5.15pm

Join the staff cricket team for a fun net practice after school. All abilities welcome!

Refreshments in the Common Room
Friday, 4pm

At the end of the week, come together as a community in the Common Room for refreshments and snacks.



Staff Spin Classes
Exercise Classes
Swimming
Badminton

For more information and to book a class, call reception on **02082999292** or visit: www.dcsportsclub.co.uk/membership/opening-times/