

More information / Activity Ideas



School Support - How one school made a difference

(This is partly based on a real example from a school in Cornwall who kindly allowed us to use their fantastic 'signpost poster' created by staff / students together).

'Kernow School'

In 2017 'Kernow School' were very disappointed to see that their results for **School Support** in their WMF were **red** (worse than average) for all students who took part.

The adults in the school felt they had lots of good things in place to support students so asked themselves what might have been happening.

They decided to ask students their thoughts. They asked lots of different students a number of questions e.g.:



"If you were feeling lonely / worried about your school work / upset because a family member was ill / you were being bullied / wanted to harm yourself or concerned about a friend — do you know where / how to get help or who to ask in school?"

They also asked students ***"Do you feel confident to ask for help and if not, why not?"***

From the answers it was clear that students:

- thought support was only for some students
- thought they would be seen as weak by asking for help
- didn't think some of the things they were worried about (falling out with a friend; a pet dying) were worth asking about
- didn't know who to ask or where to get information
- were confused about the different things going on
- were unsure about asking for help for all sorts of reasons including:
 - * uncertain about what would happen next
 - * if someone would have to tell their parents
 - * they would get into trouble
 - * not being taken seriously

Questions

- Check out the results of this question in your school and for Cornwall as a whole. How does your school compare
- If you asked students in your school these questions do you think you'd get similar answers?
- Are there students in your school who don't know how to find help or who don't feel confident to ask for help?
- What could be done to help those students? How could other students / get involved help?

Start Now.

School Support - How one school made a difference

The staff were a bit taken aback by what they heard when they spoke to the students.

So they asked students to help them.

A group of students from all year groups including students who were already getting help from support staff got together. They identified all the different people who could help students and all the ways students could ask for help.

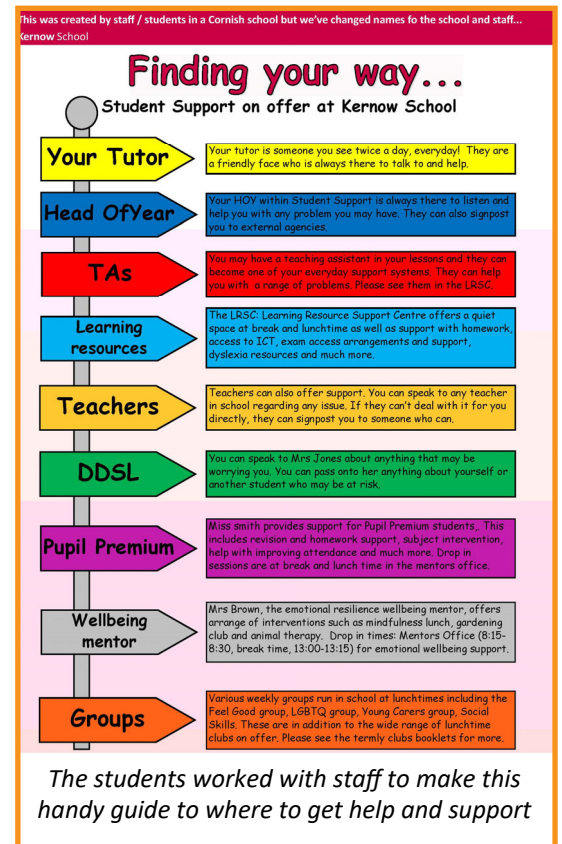
They made a poster to use round the school explaining who these people were and how they could help.

The students worked with the staff to make sure there were wellbeing noticeboards around the school and information on the school computers that all students could access.

Staff went to assemblies and told students about the information / help available and tutors reminded their classes too.

Staff included 'getting help' in PSHE or SMSC lessons. Teachers explained things like confidentiality.

The school also used some of the **Start Now resources** like the brilliant film made by students at Cape Cornwall School called **"It's OK not to be OK"** which is all about talking about mental health and asking for help...



Check it out on the Start Now You Tube Channel
[Start Now Cornwall](#)



And students have now made their own fab film called 'I wish they understood...'
[Start Now Cornwall](#)

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What is wellbeing?

Some of the questions in the WMF are about: *'emotional difficulties'*; *'positive wellbeing'* and *'coping with stress'*...

We all have mental health in the same way we have physical health.

Sometimes:

You feel great!

You're just about OK

You can be a bit down and you're not OK

Sometimes your mental health can get to the point where it's not OK at all and it's important to get some extra support.



But it's not a straight line. Our wellbeing can change with ups and downs happening depending on what's happening to us and around us. Sometimes it can feel a bit like being on a roller coaster!



Lots of different things can affect our mental health and emotional wellbeing.

The affect can be positive or negative.

Changes in our wellbeing can happen at different times in our lives and sometimes we can have a really bumpy rollercoaster ride in just one day!

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Things that can affect wellbeing:



What other things can you think of that might affect your wellbeing?

There are two things that can really help overcome challenges to our wellbeing:

- 1. Resilience** is about **'bouncebackability'**. It is the ability to cope when facing setbacks. Resilience is something we all have to some degree. Having a **'Wellbeing toolkit'** is a great way of building resilience. In your toolkit can be things like knowing **how to look after your own wellbeing and mental health** and to:
Be aware when you need help, **know where** to get it and **be confident to ask**.
 - 2. Protective Factors**—can help too. Protective Factors include **support** at home, at school & from friends...
- With a little help, anybody can bounce forward and up through tough times.**

Being OK is about having the **'tools' and support** to overcome the difficulties and challenges we can all face at times in our lives, and knowing when and where to get help.

Being mentally healthy is also about having **confidence and self-esteem**, to be able to make decisions and to **believe in ourselves**.

Being OK is
not about how
fast you run
or how high
you climb but
how well you
bounce!



Have a look at **"Chris and Sam's story"** to explore this.

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Things that affect my wellbeing

Things that affect my wellbeing **positively** (make me feel more positive about my wellbeing)

Things that affect my wellbeing **negatively** (make me feel less positive about my wellbeing)

Start Now.

Meet Chris and Sam

Both are perfectly ordinary, everyday students in Year 11 at St. Kernow's College, Cornwall.

Pen portraits

Chris

Aged 16. Sporty, likes hockey and football. Not brilliant at school work but if he sticks at it he should do OK in his GCSEs. Doesn't get into trouble at school. Chris lives at home with mum and dad and younger sister, Sally. He follows Chelsea football club, likes surfing, computer games and current music. Chris has been going out with Sam since Year 9.



Sam



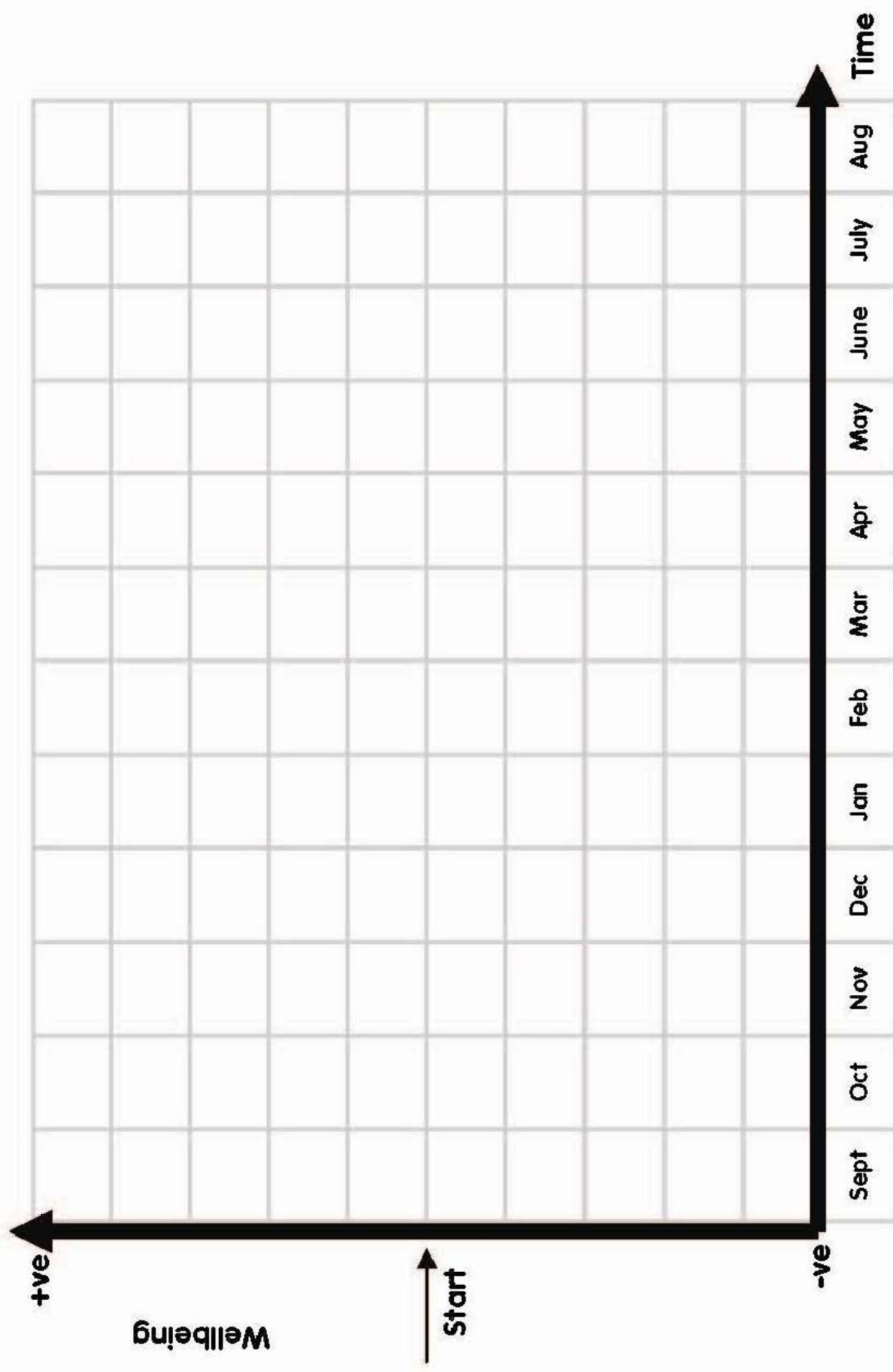
Aged 16. Likes surfing and swimming but hates other sports. Very bright and should get top marks in her GCSE's, if she can be bothered. Quite often in trouble at school for being late, answering back and mucking about. Lives at home with mum and step-dad, older brother and two step-sisters (both younger than she is) including baby Jess.

Recently Sam seems to have been having lots of rows with her parents. Likes current music and films. Sam has been going out with Chris since Year 9.

Because they are perfectly ordinary, everyday individuals their wellbeing is "OK". In the course of everyday life things affect their wellbeing both positively and negatively. Let's have a look at their experiences and their wellbeing over the course of Y11...

Below are lists of events in Chris's and Sam's lives over the course of Year 11. Use the graph below to chart how these events might affect their wellbeing over the year

| Y11 | Chris | Sam |
|-----------|--|---|
| September | Saves up enough money from helping dad over the Summer to get a new games console and some games. Picked for hockey and football first teams. Means lots of training and matches. | Decides she needs to do better this year after a tough year last year in school and at home. Picked for county swimming squad. Mum and dad really pleased and take her out for a special meal to celebrate. |
| October | GCSE work piling up, getting a bit stressed. | Gets her act together and starts getting work in on time |
| November | Gets 'Man of the Match' in big cup game after scoring twice and helping his team to a win over their arch rivals. Hasn't got a lot of time to go out with Sam. | Fed up with Chris because he's always busy with football / hockey or gaming with his mates. Meets Mark, who's new to the area, at swimming club, likes him and realises he fancies her. |
| December | Really good Christmas. Mum and Dad take him and Sally on holiday. | Starts going out with Mark behind Chris's back. |
| January | Finds out about Sam and Mark, splits up with Sam. | Really happy with Mark. Doing really well in county swimming team, getting picked for every competition and winning lots of her races. |
| February | Mum and Dad tell him and his sister Sally that they're getting a divorce. When Sam asks him if he wants to talk about it he tells her to get lost. He thinks he can't talk to anyone, boys don't do that. He doesn't want anyone to know and laugh at him. | Hears about Chris's mum and dad and feels sorry for Chris. Asks if he wants to talk about it. He tells her to get lost. Feels stupid for asking but still worried about Chris. |
| March | Is really angry and hurt about his mum and dad. Gets sent off for fighting in a big hockey match when somebody tackles him badly. Gets suspended from the team. Gets into trouble at school about work. | Gets injured and can't swim in big meet so will miss a chance to try out for a really big national competition. Really upset about it. |
| April | Gets kicked out of football team for missing loads of training. Feeling really angry all the time. Getting in trouble more and more in school. His PE teacher realises Chris needs some help and persuades Chris to talk to the school counsellor about what's been happening and how he's feeling. Gets some study support from his tutor and other teachers and tries to stay out of trouble and get on with preparing for his GCSEs | Goes on holiday with Mark and his family over Easter. Really good time. Still can't swim yet but puts time to studying for GCSEs. Mum and dad really pleased with how much Sam seems to have grown up this year. |
| May | Chelsea win the Champions League. Football coach gives Chris another chance and tells him he's good enough to try for the county youth team next season. His mates are glad to see him back in the team and are really supportive | Really works hard for her GCSEs. |
| June | Does OK in his GCSEs. | GCSEs go really well. |
| July | Decides to stay on in the school 6th form next term. | Back in swimming team, comes second in regional competition. |
| August | Starts training with the county youth football team. | Is really looking forward to going to sixth-form college (with Mark). |



Chris and Sam's Y11—questions for discussion

- What were the high points for Chris during the year?
- What were his low points?
- Why was Chris reluctant to get help?
- What could have happened if Chris hadn't got help when he did?
- What were the high points for Sam?
- What were the low points for her?
- What were the 'protective factors' (the things / people) that helped them both over the year?
- How 'resilient' do you think Chris and Sam are?

Start Now.

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand how someone else is feeling or to understand the situation they are in. It is the ability to “**put yourself in someone else’s shoes**” and to understand the way a situation might make them feel.

Check out this short You Tube video on Empathy

<https://youtu.be/HznVuCVQd10>



Reflection

- Do you know what empathy is? (if not check out the box below)
- What is empathy, and how is it different from sympathy? List some actions that show the differences between empathy sympathy.
- What does this saying mean? *“Don’t criticise someone until you’ve walked a mile in their shoes.”*
- Why do you think it’s easier for some people to empathise with others? What makes it difficult to show empathy?



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Take 5 - The Five Ways to Wellbeing

The 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' are a great addition to a **Wellbeing Toolkit**:



Get moving

Moving makes you feel good! Science tells us that physical exercise changes the chemicals in your brain and releases happy hormones! Even better if you get moving outdoors! The important thing is doing exercise and activity you ENJOY!

Take time for you

You're special. So it's important you take time for you and the people / things you love.

Each day, even when you're really busy with things like homework / revision, take time out to do something you enjoy just for fun. Play can help recharge your batteries and make your study more effective!



Connect

Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, and neighbours. At home, school or in your local community. Building connections will support you every day.

Stop and take notice

Whether you are walking to school, eating lunch or talking to friends. Take a moment or two to be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Pausing to really take notice like this can be very relaxing and calming. Some people call this 'being Mindful' or 'Mindfulness'.



Give to others

Do something nice for a friend, help out home, thank someone, smile, volunteer your time, join a community group, look out, as well as in.

Any acts of kindness, whether small or large can make you feel happier and more satisfied about life.

Start Now.

Stop and take notice - 1 minute idea

Let's take a mindful minute...

Mindfulness means "being aware of what's happening right now and how you feel about it."

A mindful minute is a quick way to relax and calm yourself—perhaps before an exam, or any other stressful situation

Start Now: Sit quietly, close your eyes, and...

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Breathe | Take deep breaths, and let them out slowly. Think about how the |
| Listen | Listen to the sounds around you. How many can you hear / name? |
| See | look at one item around you; and think about its shape, colour, texture, and how it is made. |
| Touch | Use your fingertips to feel an item or the area around you. Think about how it feels & words you could use to describe it. |
| Smile | Open your eyes, and enjoy the world around you. |



Start Now.