



Mental health and Well-being Booklet

Mental Health and Wellbeing for BUH students

We are currently experiencing and living through a period of time that none of us could have ever predicted and one in which none of us were prepared for, and that's fine. We, as humans, have learnt how to adapt and continue regardless of uncertain and unprecedented times throughout history! Don't worry, we are all in this together.

Ultimately, I have created this booklet to help whoever needs it, whether you skim through it and pick up one thing from it or whether you read it word for word and you aim to try everything I have highlighted. It doesn't matter to me, I just want to help, to be a calming influence during this strange period of time.

Whilst you're not at school, it is very easy for us to 'fall-out' of our rigid routine and structure that school provides us with 5 days a week. therefore, I have created this booklet to help minimise this from happening as much as possible and to hopefully help you with your own mental health and well-being throughout the next few weeks and months.

Your teachers are never more than an email away and they will be here throughout all of this to help you as much as they possibly can, so please don't feel like you're burdening us because I promise you, you are not!

I hope this helps, if only slightly. Stay safe and continue to be positive.

Sleep

We have already mentioned how important physical activity is for both our physical and mental health, but sleep is just as important for our well-being.

Each night, try and get around 7-9 hours of undisturbed sleep. This will allow you to feel refreshed, well rested and ready for to tackle anything the day ahead may throw at you. A lack of sleep can lead to bad mood, lack of concentration and undue stress.

Miss Teale's top tips to a good night sleep

Create a bedtime routine and schedule

Each day, try and go to bed at similar times. This also creates a regular routine and you know that this is your downtime and a time for you to rest and recuperate.

We have already highlighted the effectiveness of mindfulness and meditation, so take the time to create a routine that allows your mind to know that it is nearly time for you to hit the hay. By doing this, your body and your mind will automatically start to default to sleep mode, ultimately helping you to fall asleep a lot earlier and a lot quicker.

All-nighters are a big no-no

We've all been there! We've all been so engrossed by a TV series that we keep hitting that 'continue watching' button on Netflix when it asks whether we are still watching and then the next thing you know, it's 2am and you're still watching. Don't lie, I know you've done it. But this can massively impact on your concentration levels and ability to function properly the following day. As already stated, you need about 7-9 hours per night so make sure that's what you're getting!

Avoid caffeine, eating and drinking before bed.

I know most of you won't drink coffee but avoid drinking things like energy drinks before bed at all costs! Caffeine stimulates the brain, making you feel more alert and you will therefore find it much more difficult to switch your brain off and fall asleep.

Eating and drinking before bed also 'confuses' the body's internal clock and also, your body has to work to digest your food, keeping your mind awake.

Your rooms need to be quiet and dark

Falling asleep with the TV on goes against both of these points. Having a light, noisy will disturb your sleep even if it doesn't wake you up throughout the night. Plus, if a really loud scene comes on the TV and you're fast asleep, you're going to jump out of your skin and struggle to get back off to sleep after that (again -speaking from experience). By intentionally turning the TV off, making sure

the lights are off and your room is quiet and dark, your making your body aware that it is time for you to go to sleep.

[How to sleep well](#)

[How to trick your brain into falling asleep](#)

[Can't sleep – do this](#)



Meditation and Mindfulness

Mindfulness and Meditation is essential for you to clear your mind; relax your body; focus on your breathing; focusing on nothing else but being in the moment, helping you to forget about all your stresses. Take time to allow your mind to do nothing. You need this time and you need this head space. – try and let go of all negative thoughts and any other thoughts other than your mindfulness session. I promise it will be useful. Try and set 15 minutes aside each day to complete a mindfulness exercise. Do it when you need to relax, do it first thing in a morning to help you set the mind right for the day, or do it before bed, it's completely up to you but it will help.

It is essential that during times of uncertainty and confusion that you give your mind and body a rest; this will help you to de-stress and will reduce feelings of anxiety. It is imperative that you try to keep yourself in a good headspace and you keep your mind and body as active as possible. If you are experiencing any uncomfortable feelings, you're starting have feeling that aren't 'normal' (whatever normal is to you), please talk to someone, feel free to email any teacher but do not suffer in silence.

Use the links below to access some mindfulness and informative clips which may prove beneficial for your mental well-being.

[Calm Mindfulness YouTube Page](#)

[The Mindfulness Project](#)

[5-minute meditation you can do anywhere](#)

[Using mindfulness to help with daily pressures – TED Talk](#)

Mindfulness has amazing capabilities and contributes (but is not limited to) the following benefits:

- 1) Lowers stress and anxiety
- 2) Improves self-esteem and confidence
- 3) Enhances and improves positive thoughts and mood
- 4) Strengthens self-control and emotional regulation
- 5) Promotes better decision making
- 6) Improves social and communication skills
- 7) Helps to regulate sleep
- 8) In some cases, has even been shown to treat heart disease

When you sit down to meditate, you allow yourself to become very still, relaxed, and alert. And then you focus your attention on one thing. Technically, it can be anything. But traditionally it's something like your breath or a mantra (a word or phrase) which you repeat over and over again for the duration of your meditation.

When you first try meditation or mindfulness, you will find it very hard for your mind to switch off, this is absolutely natural. Practise over and over will eventually allow you to enter into a highly relaxed and focussed state of mind. Science has shown that these types of exercises can ultimately have extremely beneficial psychological and neurological impact.

Use this website <https://www.mindful.org/how-to-meditate/> as a guide for your first meditation attempt.



Physical Activity

During a time where you are not taking part in regular, weekly PE lessons (it's very sad I know), it is essential that you are constantly keeping yourself as active as possible and taking part in regular physical activity. This is imperative not just for your physical well-being but for various other benefits:

- Reduce feelings of anxiety and depression
- Enhance and boosts brain function and concentration
- Reduce level of stress
- Increased well-being
- Improve sleep
- increased energy levels
- Promotes and improves fitness levels
- Improves self - confidence and self-esteem

It is advised that children aged 5-18 years old should

- Aim for an average of **at least** 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a day across the week
- Take part in a variety of different types and intensities of physical activity across the week to ensure that they are developing movement skills and promoting muscle and bone development
- Reduce the time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity. Aim to spread activity throughout the day. All activities should make you breathe faster and feel warmer.

Why not try and be active for 15 minutes every hour throughout the day? By doing this, you're breaking up the periods of sedentary behaviour, you're regularly taking part in 'moderate intensity' exercise and you will fulfil the 60 minutes per day criteria. It will enhance your concentration and hence, boost brain power and therefore your academic study will also benefit.

Follow the tasks and use the resources we have provided you with you via email and the school website to do this.

You can also be creative with your physical activity, use household items, run up and down the stairs, run with the dog etc. Don't forget to share your physical activity stories with us – just email across to a member of the PE staff or tag us on Twitter.

Some useful links for keeping yourself physical active and highlighting the benefits of physical activity on the body:

[Joe Wicks 9AM Fitness](#)

[Yoga for teens](#)

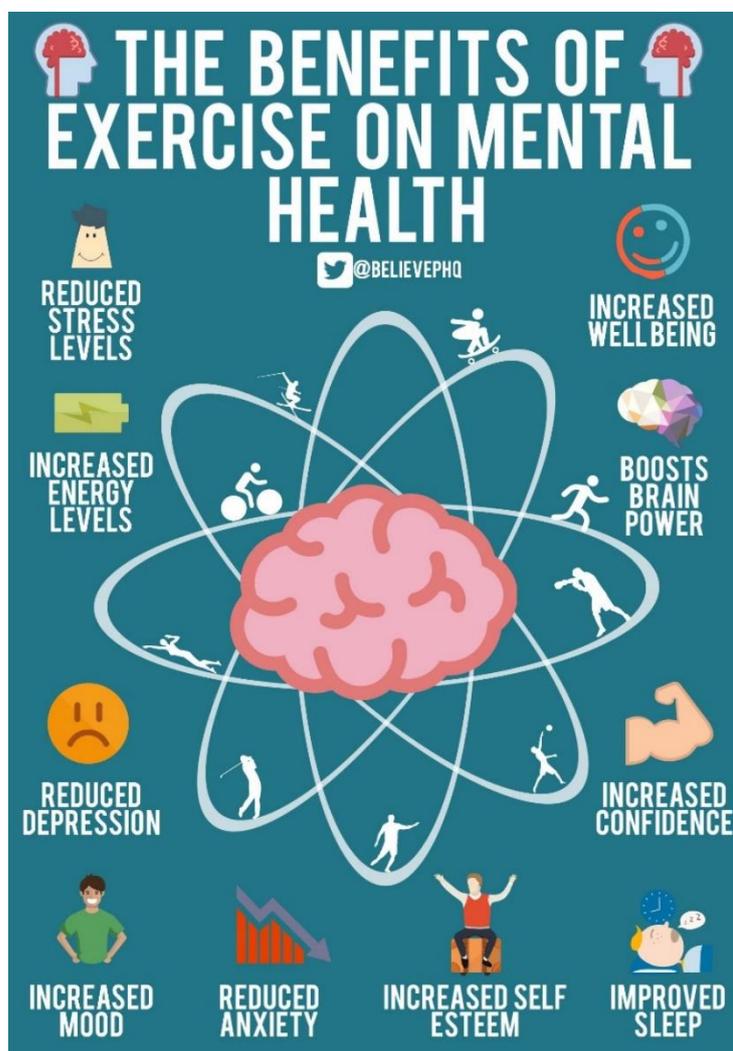
[30-minute Hip Hop Workout](#)

[Kickboxing workout](#)

[HIIT boxing workout](#)

[Two weeks shred challenge](#)

[The brain-changing benefits of exercise](#)



Nutrition

Miss Teale's top tips for healthy eating and nutrition

Always have Breakfast – it's the most important meal of the day

A good meal at Breakfast time sets me up perfectly for the day ahead. I've had a good night sleep, I've fuelled my body and now I am able to function well. If I miss Breakfast, I feel lethargic, nauseous and I feel as though I'm lacking in the effort and the energy to do anything productive.

Make sure you get up in good time to be able to sit down and enjoy your meal, it won't have the same effect if you have to rush it.

Also, make sure your Breakfast is nutritionally packed and well balanced. Having a chocolate bar and a packet of crisps all washed down with a Lucozade doesn't quite cut it.

Portion size effectively

To avoid eating too much of even the healthiest foods, keep track of how much you're eating. For most people, meat servings should be about the size of a deck of cards and other servings vary by the type of food.

When it comes to nutrition, it is essential that your diet is well-balanced. Even eating too much of one fruit may have negative implications. In order to combat this, make sure you keep track of everything you eat in a day. Use the eat well plate to help you understand this more.



[Eat well guide](#)

Snack healthy

Snacks don't have to be in the form of junk food. Make sure you have plenty of healthy snacks in your room or wherever you are working. These could be nuts, fruit, seeds and many others. If you have these in view, you're more likely to snack on these rather than junk food. If these aren't available, this is when you start to reach for the crisps and chocolate. Graze regularly to keep your metabolism boosted but remember these are only snacks and not full meals

Avoid boredom

This may seem odd but by keeping yourself and your mind occupied, you are less likely to snack. Boredom leads to mindless eating, so keep yourself active and engaged.

Drink water (and lots of it)

Hydration is important to our physical and mental health. Drink water and keep drinking it. Again, like everything else, drinking plenty of water boosts your concentration by keeping your brain hydrated. It also keeps you feeling fuller for longer and therefore you're less likely to snack on unhealthy food. There are so many benefits to keeping yourself hydrated so make sure you've always got a glass or bottle of water by your side.

Get your five a day

You should be attempting to eat a minimum of 5 fruit AND veggies a day. I don't need to explain the benefits of this – just make sure you do it!

Never skip a meal

Keeping your metabolism boosted is essential for healthy bodily functioning. When we skip a meal, this is when we are more likely to snack on unhealthy food so make sure you're eating your breakfast. (My year 9 girls, this is mostly aimed at you!)

It is ok to indulge every once in a while.

If you never allow yourself a treat, you're more likely going to revert back to unhealthy foods. You can't just cut everything out altogether. A little treat now and then is a great way to reward yourself for eating a healthy diet. Give yourself a break and enjoy that chocolate bar!

Use these useful links below:

[BBC Good Food](#)

[Change4life](#)

[Eating well – Cooking with kids](#)

[Food Network – Eating healthy](#)



Daily Goal Setting

What shall I do today?

Goal setting is an incredibly important skill for success in life. When done effectively, it drives motivation and reduces stress. It serves as a measurement of your progress, pushes you towards one direct focus and contributes to a continuation of your efforts. Set yourself little daily goals or challenges that you can do. You could categorise these goals into the following subheadings:

Academic/school work goal – Complete the work outlined by your teachers. You could stick to your academic timetable that you used when you were at school to ensure you're completing the necessary work for that day. **This is not an excuse to do nothing – this is not an extended holiday!**

Social goal – Talk and check in with your friends, family, classmates (and teachers).

Physically active goal - Complete one of the workouts from the resources we have provided you with; complete the weekly PE challenges highlighted on the PE home learning PowerPoint and on Twitter (BUH.PE or MissTealePE) OR research a home workout using YouTube, Twitter or even Instagram. It is essential that you keep yourself active and we have provided you with more enough material for you to do this.

Stay safe and see you all soon! 😊

Miss Teale

