

## Children's Mental Health Week at Ribston

Commencing the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 was Children's Mental Health Week with the exciting theme 'Express Yourself'. At Ribston we chose to celebrate this important event for the whole month of February, organising a range of virtual activities to get people involved and raise awareness.



Lots of useful information was shared by Miss Dobson via email. The 'Iamme' app was introduced to students, explaining its use for those needing help or reassurance with their health and wellbeing. Claire Libby, founder of the app, kindly sent out a video that explained how 'Iamme' works and its aims. Being equipped with tools to better cope with challenges is extremely useful in the current lockdown where lots of people are feeling stressed about the future. Posters were also sent out about 'Bounce', a mental health service for 16-25-year olds. They provide young people with 1-2-1 counselling and practical support, either face-to-face in the community or virtually. The school are very aware of how stressful life can feel at the moment and want students to have the resources to seek support.

The wellbeing ambassadors were asked to speak with family and friends about how people express themselves. Danielle Veluz says she enjoys writing and playing songs on her kalimba whilst Lucy Good recommended texting yourself with your thoughts and feelings. Rebecca Allen had an interesting idea after speaking with her dad that seeing parts of yourself shine through in other people can be a form of self-expression. For example, hearing someone repeat a joke that you told because they found it so funny.

Key Stage Three have gotten involved by discussing inspirational quotes and completing wordsearches. They've also been encouraged to wear something that makes them step out of their comfort zone. Students in Key Stage Four and Five have been considering the question 'Does social media help promote self-expression?'. In addition, they've completed a reflective task that involved using image and colour to express the passion in their lives as symbolised by the four elements. The February Action for Happiness Calendar has been shared with the whole school, encouraging people to complete acts of kindness and connect with others during this difficult time. Finally, students across the school have been listening to songs ranging from 'Roar' by Katy Perry to 'Born This Way' by Lady Gaga and reflecting on the messages behind this music.



Mental wellbeing has always been a central focus at Ribston, and this month has been a great opportunity to remind people of the importance of taking care of themselves and others. The current changes to normal living have naturally made lots of people worried so this has also been a great chance to provide students with resources for seeking support. Ribston's social media pages are regularly updated with more wellbeing information so don't forget to stay tuned!

Written by Lauren Smith, Deputy Head of Wellbeing