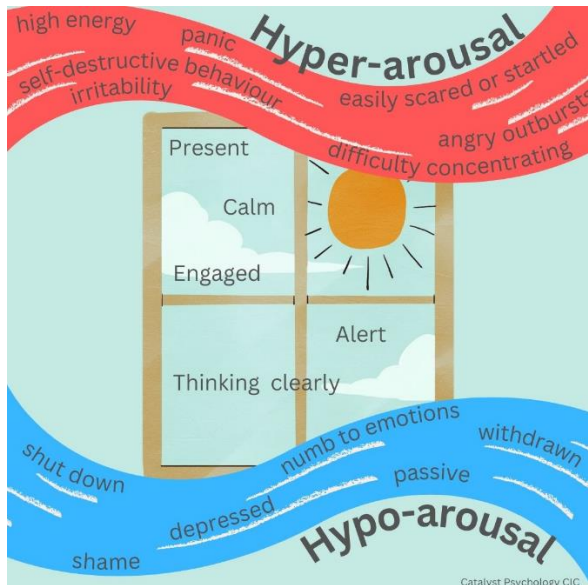


Secondary School Council Minutes

Mental Health

Date	17.12.24 TISS Training Room Period 5
Chairperson	H. Schroeffer
Attendees	Year 7: Faith, Hazel and Olivia Year 8: Chris and Lacey-May Nina (Communications Officer) Year 9: Finley Year 10: Oscar and Aden Year 11: Frankie, Vikas, Louie, Issac, and Miles Post-16: Mia and Gus Staff support: Mrs Sullivan (KS) and Miss Eastwood (FE)
Apol/abs	Toby, Leo with Miss Rogers, Alfie
Point 1	Frankie requested a meeting to discuss Pupil Mental Health Frankie opened by saying that Christmas can be challenging and overwhelming for many pupils. He shared that he has been impacted by Mental Health and wants to support pupils to speak to staff. He listed Ms Schroeffer, Mr Payne, Mr Parkin, Mr Clements, Cathy and Mr Chhanabhai as examples of people who have been supportive. He emphasised it's about finding someone you trust so things don't build up. Bullying – (following on from the last meeting) Frankie asked if people would raise their hand if affected by bullying either as a bully or on the receiving end. (The majority raised their hand.) Most bullies typically project their insecurities. Frankie was honest that his awareness has grown so he can recognise that he can be verbally and physically unkind when his mental health is not good. HS: Introduced the window of tolerance to the pupils and likened FP's anecdote to responding as a shaken can of coke when experiencing stress and pushed outside of his W.o.T. 

FP agreed and said that the metaphor of a rain collector helps him: Mental health is like a rain collector slowly filling with negative thoughts until it might burst or overflow. Frankie explained that when he looks after himself better – he conducts himself better – he is more in control.

Here is a visual representation of a similar concept with The Stress Bucket:



Miles supported the need for all pupils to have access to their trusted adult to release the pressure: “Better to erupt than explode.”

Frankie added that finding a motivation/passion helps a lot. For him, it is Army Cadets, but school could help pupils by providing access to the hobbies or interests that motivate them.

Faith shared that her class would appreciate a **Minecraft Club** but Issac explained that their were social issues with fallouts. The following pupils are going ask Mrs Wakefield to have a meeting about more opportunities to play Minecraft together and create an agreed code of conduct for the club: Miles, Louie, Faith, Chris, Olivia and Aden.

Many councillors shared that a **greater range of lunchtime and afterschool clubs** would be appreciated to form connections/find their passion.

Chris shared that pupils often need a check-in during the day. The Council discussed how to improve our current approach. Vikas agreed that all pupils may need a movement break – he gave the example of having a busy head after his mock exam and needed to release that. There are concerns that some pupils misuse the strategy while others struggle to ask. Pupils wanted regular opportunities without feeling interrogated. A digital/non-verbal check-in to start each lesson may be less intrusive and Hazel agreed, adding that it could be useful to monitor *patterns*.

The pupils identified the need for more movement breaks and practical responses to blue/yellow and red feelings. To normalise quick breaks to reset. Many pupils shared difficulties trusting and talking to adults, or talking about their feelings in front of their peers. More private check-ins (potentially interrogatory) so pupils need to identify their trusted adults and preferred communication style.

	Yr7 pupils shared that emotion boards are mostly kept on green to avoid feeling unsafe and pupils go into the bathroom to cry. Pupils honestly shared that they can fake their feelings because they don't want to be inconvenient or have been instructed by parents to go to lesson and get their work done so collaboration with families is key. Olivia explained that we can "See a smile but don't see what's underneath." Chris concurred that many pupils 'hide' in the green zone. HS asked if a Buddy system would be helpful, but most pupils disagreed. Vikas explained it can be hard for pupils to speak because others may be judgemental. He openly explained that he does not share his feelings at school, but chooses to hold it in. He says this feels better than having your feelings minimised/played down. In order for more pupils to speak out – like Frankie suggests – we need all adults to be open and non-judgemental – like Cathy, Mr Fairbrother and Mr Dunson. A pupil worried that talking about feeling sad may make them feel more sad. Frankie responded that it can feel hard before it gets better. He too had trained himself not to open up to adults but now recognises how it helps. Another suggestion was safe places around school for emotional discharges (to release pent up stress and anxiety) some pupils are resorting to screaming or crying in toilets. Summary to supporting MH at Laleham: Removing barriers to pupils checking-in with their trusted adult (Frequent check-ins during the day – every pupil having a mentor/safe person) Enabling pupils time to develop their passion (something motivational) Issac R-H: Just Dance In line with boosting mental health, Issac suggested trialling 'Just Dance' sessions like down in primary. Getting pupils out of their heads and moving their body – like a Sensory Circuit to start the day. This will be trialled by Miles, Frankie, Louie, Issac, Lacey-May, Olivia, Faith and Miss Eastwood in the Drama Room on Tuesday mornings at 8:50. Leo: Daily Mile Leo is discussing with Miss Rogers about relaunching the Daily Mile like Parkrun at least once a week – supported by BTEC Sport Leaders.
Action	Staff to consider alternative ways to improve check-ins and use of Zones of Regulation. Possible return to mentoring scheme – Post-16 recommend Wellbeing Team and HS to collaborate with parents about Zones of Regulation and strategies to support pupils. Minecraft group to meet with Mrs Wakefield Just Dance group to trial Just Dance sessions Tuesdays 8:50.

	<u>Items for next meeting in January 2025:</u> Vikas: SEN school designation changes – Press Release / Pupil feedback Facilities and Equipment Louie: Campaign ideas Chris: Lockers Memorial Climbing equipment update requested More footballs and re-do the pitch lines (AC 11AS)
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