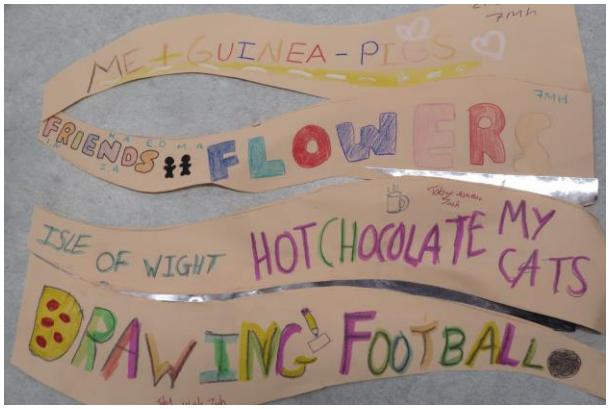
Holywell News

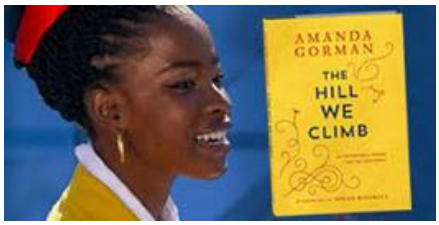
Issue No: 178
February 2025

Mr Simpson's Headlines

We are half-way through the academic year and, as the school empties and students and staff weave their way home for half-term, it is a crisp afternoon and the sun is shining. This is a welcome relief after the storms and rains of January … and it is always good to remember that at the end of every storm, there is a moment of calm and the prospect of better weather. This links well with our focus this month on mental health and wellbeing and the knowledge that, even when we're having a really tough time, there will be a better time ahead … we just need to find a way through. Reaching out for help and support, talking or sometimes, even just stopping to breathe and re-frame for a moment is all we need to do to find that way. Another way to cope with challenging times is to build up a bank of 'glimmers'. I mentioned 'glimmers' in the recent update letter about our wellbeing day – 'glimmers' are small, positive moments that can happen during simple activities which can make you feel calm, safe, and connected; they can be fleeting, but they can brighten your day … they can also help your nervous system relax. The artistic representation of students' 'glimmers' have been put together to form the basis of our latest Art installation:



Apart from this wonderful art installation and the thoughtful reflections on what makes the students feel positive, calm, safe and connected, some in-school 'glimmers' for me this half term include: the school KS3 band 'Sour Candy' representing us at the Rock Factory Band competition, Year 8 students creating circuits in their Science lesson, joining Year 7 for our annual sponsored walk through Marston Thrift, Year 5 describing their moon bases to NASA Astronaut-in-training Jack Hathaway and my Year 6 English group using their persuasive techniques to have a week off homework! All of Year 6 have been inspired by some great persuasive speeches – including Amanda Gorman's speech/poem – 'The Hill We Climb'. This was written for Joe Biden's inauguration and is all about aspiration, building on history and being the light:



"When day comes we step out of the shade,
aflame and unafraid,
the new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it."

… and that is our challenge … to be the light whenever and wherever there is darkness. We are now well into February – the month which is usually considered the last month of winter and which heralds the start of Spring. The name 'February' comes from 'februa' - the name of a Roman festival of purification held on the 15th February. So, let's take a hint from the Romans and use this as a good time to have a bit of a 'detox' or a reset …it might be the perfect time to think about the 5 ways to wellbeing:

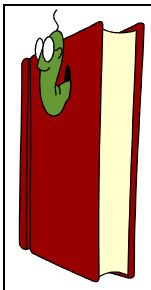
… and to do one thing under each heading over half-term … perhaps take notice of the birds in the garden as part of The great Bird-Watch Challenge, perhaps learn something new or perhaps connect with someone you haven't spoken to for a while. We'll be asking students to share their experiences after half-term. Whatever you choose to do over this half-term break, have a safe and restful week. Thank you all for your continued support.

With all best wishes
MG Simpson
Mike Simpson

World Book Day 2025

World Book Day is on Thursday 6 March. Students will be receiving a £1.00 World Book Day voucher, that can be used in exchange for one of the World Book Day books, or £1.00 off a book valued at £2.99 or more.

For more information they can visit worldbookday.com



Book Fair

We will be holding a **Travelling Book Fair** at Holywell from **5 - 12 March 2025**

There will be a wide range of books suitable for all students with an opportunity to view them during the week. The Book Fair will also be open to all children at lunchtimes. The usual reservation and order arrangements will apply.

Students will be able to use their £1 World Book Day voucher on any book worth £2.99 or more.

Comic Relief – Red Nose Day – 21 March 2025

We look forward to another day in school when our students have a great deal of fun whilst thinking seriously about helping others who are very much less fortunate than ourselves.

We have ordered a limited supply of this year's red noses and they will be on sale in the Library at lunchtimes.

News from the Maths Department – National Cipher Challenge update:

Last term, we reported that some of our students were taking part in the 2024 National Cipher Challenge run by Southampton University. The students devoted time both in and outside of school learning about the practice and study of techniques for secure communication. It was lovely to see the fun they had and watching them explore a different side of Maths to that which we usually learn in the classroom, and experiencing the elation of finally understanding a difficult cipher – a feeling that can be hard to beat! We hope the challenge also gave them a taste of how much more there is to Maths and that the subject continues to amaze and excite.

With this competition being open to individuals up to the age of 18, our hope was that they might do well on the early rounds and that would spark a desire and prepare them for further success in future competitions. (This is a competition that students can enter as part of a school or by themselves. So hopefully, it is

something that they will choose to take part in in future years, either individually, or working with others as part of a team).

And working together really was the theme this year! “Getting the right kind of people, and approaching the problem, and doing it right … it’s a beautiful thing to do something right.” Jim Simons, mathematician. We started off with several teams, and, as expected, teams and individuals started to drop out as the weeks went by, the competition progressed, and the challenges got harder. Myself, students, and parents were all getting involved, both with sharing of the maths, IT skills and researching the different ciphers, to help each other move on to the next challenge, until there was only one student left…

…a special mention has to go to Vito R in 6DM, who made it all the way to the final round, an absolutely outstanding achievement! Vito described how he stuck with it because it was fun, something new that he hadn’t done before, and how he enjoyed researching the different ciphers.

A thank you to all the students who took part and parents who were so willing to share and show their support. Well done, everyone! **Ms Mollis**

PSHE News

‘Smashed Live’ – Alcohol Awareness

All year groups in the spring term focus on the Health and Relationships part of PSHE. As part of this, On Wednesday 12th February, Year 8 attended ‘Smashed Live’ which is an alcohol awareness drama and workshop. The session starts with a play, which covers underage drinking, is followed by the students meeting the characters and being able to ask them questions and ends with the students being able to direct some scenes from the drama to change the outcome. It really gets students thinking out the possible long and short-term negative consequences of underage drinking. The students were fantastic and very engaged.

PSHE Day

Our annual PSHE day is coming up on **April 23rd**. Each year group has a different theme and we are welcoming more visitors than ever to Holywell to support the students through the activities. As part of the Year 7 day which is themed around British Values, we need your help with collecting some resources. There will be a reward for the form class that brings in the most items.

For one of the activities we need:

- 180 small cardboard boxes (approx. 20cmx10cm)
- Pringle lids
- Flesh coloured material (old bedding is ideal)
- Off cuts of colourful material **Mrs Gough**

News from the PE Department

Y6 Netball Report

The Girls have unfortunately lost their games so far; however, we have seen them really improve as they play each game. We had some great performances from Charlotte playing centre and some great points scored by Ayla.

Coaches Simpson/McEwen

Y5 Boys Football

The Year 5 Boys Football Team have made significant progress throughout the last few fixtures and have picked up some excellent victories along with a few draws. They have been a hard team to break down and have had some fantastic moments in attack. The boys have always shown our school values during their games and have been in good spirits even when losing, which is a credit to them all.

There have been some memorable moments over the last few weeks such as Frankie making a handful of outstanding saves, Nico pulling off some excellent blocks and tackles and last, but not least, Danny's phenomenal free kick right into the top corner. All the boys that have attended football club over the last few weeks should be extremely proud of themselves and their attitudes; it has been great to see so much improvement in such a short space of time. Keep up the great work!

Coach Inskip

Cross Country

On Wednesday 5th February, several of our students took part in the County cross country competition, held at Ampthill Park. On a challenging course, in even more challenging conditions, the students all performed brilliantly! Special mention to Connie who finished 13th and has qualified for the Regionals, Oscar E in Year 6 (7th), and Grace in Year 5, who finished 36th.

Mr Eames

Lessons

It is still cold outside so please can you continue to ensure that students bring the correct kit for their lessons - please see the PE kit section in the students' organisers. For lessons on the field, such as rugby, football and health and fitness, students will need football boots (shin pads for football, gumshields for rugby) and long, black socks. Students should also ideally bring a spare top and bottoms to lessons, in case they get muddy. HOODIES ARE NOT ALLOWED!

PE Clubs Timetable – Spring 2 - 2025

	13:05-13:35	13:35 – 14:00	15:45-16:45
Mon	**Year 5 Mixed Badminton** (SM) - Sports Hall **Y7/8 Mixed Table Tennis** (MK) – Gym	**Y7 Girls Badminton** (ME) – Sports Hall **Y5/6 Mixed Table Tennis** (MK) – Gym	**All Years Mixed Badminton** (MK) – Sports Hall
Tues	**Y5/6 Mixed Rugby** (JU/ZI) - Field	**Y8 Girls Sport & Wellbeing** (ES) - Sports Hall	*Boys rugby/Girls football fixtures*
Wed	**Y8 Boys Rugby** (ZI) - Field **Y8 Girls Badminton** (ES) - Sports Hall	**Y7 Boys Badminton** (ME) – Sports Hall	*Girls football fixtures*
Thurs	**All Years Mixed Irish Dancing** (CSI/MK) – Sports Hall	**Y6 Mixed Badminton** (CSI) – Sports Hall	**Y5/6 Mixed Dodgeball** (MK) - Sports Hall *Boys rugby fixtures*
Fri	**Y7/8 Girls Football** (MK) – Field **Y7 Boys Rugby** (ME) – Field	**Y5/6 Girls Football** (MK) – Field **Y8 Boys Badminton** (ZI) – Sports Hall	**All Years Mixed Table Tennis** (MK) - Sports hall

If your child wishes to attend an after-school club, please can they take a permission letter from outside the main school office.

All clubs start Monday 24th February

Science Department News

With great thanks to our friends at Cranfield University, a precious opportunity was afforded to our wonderful students. On Thursday 9th January 2025, we welcomed Commander Jack Hathaway, a NASA astronaut, to our school. There was a real buzz all morning in anticipation of the arrival of our special guest.

Our **Year 5** students had been learning about space and were excited to find out about Commander Hathaway's journey to becoming a real astronaut. Dressed in his NASA uniform, he was inspirational! His message to 'Dream big' was perfect!

The students had designed moon bases for Commander Hathaway and we were delighted he had the time to talk to them about their designs. As the students left the assembly, and headed back to their lessons there was a sparkle in their eyes, a spring in their step, and an ambition to reach for the stars. Mission accomplished!

In January, we welcomed Cristina Mitu from Nissan who worked with some of our **Year Seven and Eight students**. The event was an opportunity for our students to look at a career in engineering. Studying STEM subjects opens many pathways to future careers. The students had a great time working together to build bridges which sustain weight using chocolate bars and modelling air bag protection with eggs!

Mr Colbourne
Holywell Science Department

Music Update: Sour Candy Rock!

Our Key Stage 3 band - Sour Candy - performed brilliantly at Band Factory – the local schools band competition. Mrs Gough and Mr Tabert said they were a pleasure to take to the event at Redborne Upper School. They competed against 8 other schools (including last year's Holywell Band – Nine Lives). They received really positive feedback on their performance of the Taylor Swift song 'You Belong With Me'. The judges said, "There were some great vocals and this was a band that showed great understanding of each other's parts. They had a lovely energy and, with some careful orchestrations, they did a great job."

Payment for Uniform, Trips and Sundries

Please note that we are now a <u>cash-free school</u> and request that <u>payments are made online whenever possible</u>, with the link on our website.

<u>Tucasi (Scopay.com</u>) For payment of the following:

Ordering School ties / blazer badges / personal organisers
Trips
Lost or damaged library books

If you have not previously logged in to Tucasi you will need an access code from the school. Please email <u>finance@holywellschool.co.uk</u> for this code.

If you are unable to pay online we have the facility to pay by credit/debit card in person at the school office or via telephone.

<u>Parent Pay</u> (Payment for tuck/school dinners)

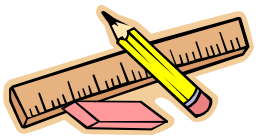
Please remember to check your child's Parent Pay account balance regularly.
For queries with regards to Parent Pay please email: <u>school@holywellschool.co.uk</u>

For web pages for the above please go to <u>https://holywellschool.co.uk/</u> Parents>online payments.

After half-term, we will be having a focus on students having the correct equipment. Please ensure that students have the following essentials:

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT – A REMINDER

- School Organiser (replacements available to order via Scopay)
- Handwriting pen
- Green pen
- Red pen
- Blue pen
- Black pen
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Mini white board
- White board pen
- Pencil Case
- Reading book
- Water bottle (labelled with name!)
- Bag (rucksack)



ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Coloured pens or pencils
- Pencil sharpener
- Calculator
- Protractor
- Dictionary

We will be following this up with a focus on uniform … especially shoes! Please make sure that students have the correct footwear for after half-term … it is time for the Air-Force Ones to be put away or saved for non-uniform days!

Acceptable shoe styles

Unacceptable shoe styles

NB> NikeAir-Force Ones or any other sports branded footwear or non-branded trainer style are not acceptable footwear

MFL News

Duolingo

This half-term, Eddie H in Year 5 demonstrated remarkable dedication, earning over 23,000 XP during the class's German competition! Ollie H in Year 5 followed closely behind with an impressive 19,000 XP. Meanwhile, Sophie B in Year 5 showed outstanding commitment by independently learning French without any prompting.

All French and German students have access to Duolingo. Their username and password details are recorded at the front of their planners. We encourage students to access the app regularly to further develop their foreign language skills. Duolingo is an app and website that uses a gamified approach to language learning, with lessons that incorporate translating, interactive exercises, quizzes, and stories.

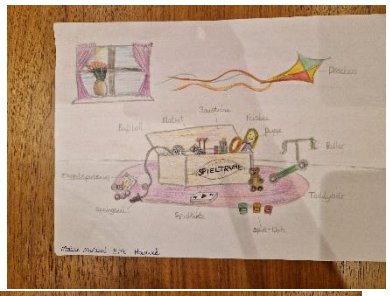
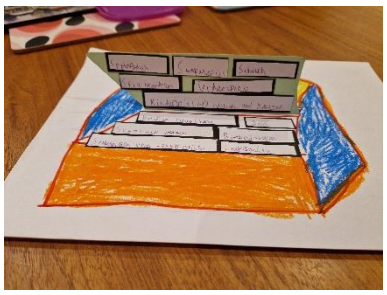
French Exchange

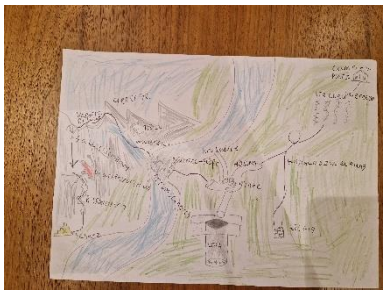
Our French pen pal exchange is thriving! New students have joined, and their first letters, introducing themselves, have been sent to our partners in Chaumont.

Our existing students have written to their pen pals about their hobbies and we are eagerly awaiting their replies!

Oxford German Olympiad

Students in Years 5 and 6 studying German were invited to participate in the prestigious Oxford German Olympiad. It is an annual competition organised by the Oxford Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages in collaboration with partners like the Oxford German Network. We received stunning entries from our talented students and are now eagerly awaiting the competition results, which will be announced at the end of March. Successful participants will be invited to a special prize-giving ceremony at the University. Fingers crossed for their success! A huge thank you to everyone who took part.



Arabic Competition

We are excited to announce that some of our students have been entered into the Arabic Language Reading Competition 2025, an initiative aimed at promoting Arabic language awareness at Holywell School and celebrating the achievements of our Arabic learners. Organised by the Arabic Teachers' Council in London and Southern England, this competition provides a fantastic opportunity for students to enhance their Arabic reading skills and develop a love for reading.

In May 2025, our students will participate in a virtual judging session via Zoom, where they will read aloud to a panel and answer questions. The winners will be announced in June 2025 and if successful, they will receive a £100 voucher as a prize. We wish our students the best of luck!

Celebrate Speaking by British Council

<u>Deadline: Wednesday 26th February.</u>

Students are invited to participate in the Festival of Languages, an exciting event organised by the British Council to celebrate linguistic diversity and the many languages spoken across the UK. This festival is a wonderful opportunity to share a love of languages and showcase creative talent. To take part, students can present a

short poem, sketch, or dialogue in their favourite language. Please see Mrs Morey in room 3, if you are interested in participating.

The British Council and its partners will select their favourite performance, and the winner will receive a special invitation to a live virtual celebration in March 2025, hosted by the British Council with a VIP guest. We encourage all language enthusiasts to get involved and celebrate the power of multilingualism!

Happy Valentine's Day

- **French**: Joyeuse Saint Valentin
- **German**: Alles Liebe zum Valentinstag
- **Indonesian**: Selamat Hari Kasih Sayang
- **Italian**: Buon San Valentino
- **Japanese**: Shiawasena Barentaindee
- **Portuguese**: Feliz Dia dos Namorados
- **Mandarin**: Qingren jie kuaile
- **Spanish**: Feliz día de San Valentín
- **Swedish**: Glad Alla hjärtans dag
- **Thai**: Sook San Wan Valentine

If your child is away from School

A telephone call or WEDUC message is required on the <u>first day of absence, before 8.30 am</u>.

The Office Staff prepare the official registers and need to know the reason for **<u>all</u>** absences. It is therefore important that they are made aware of absences and they will inform your child's Form Teacher.

Emergency Contact Details

Please remember to inform the school office of any changes to your contact details. This includes **change of your home address**, **telephone numbers** (even temporary changes) **and doctors' details**.

This is very important, as it enables us to reach you in case of emergency. Thank you.

Dropping Off and Picking Up

We ask parents <u>not</u> to drive their vehicles onto the school grounds at the beginning and end of the school day. This is for safety reasons, due to the presence of large numbers of students and the school buses arriving and departing.

Please also drive carefully and considerately around the area of Red Lion Close, as students often dash across the road for their "lift" home without taking the usual care. **Please also ensure that you do not block residents' driveways at any time.** Thank you.

No Aerosols Please

Please remember that aerosols / sprays (deodorants, hairsprays, etc.) are <u>NOT ALLOWED TO BE USED IN SCHOOL</u>. We have students and staff with severe allergies to the gases and spraying such aerosols can cause severe allergic / medical reactions. Please be considerate. Thank you.

Attendance and Holidays in Term Time

Parents / Carers should be aware that under current government guidelines **we can NOT give permission for any holiday in term time.** Holidays will be classed as **unauthorised absence** for your child.

There may, however, be events that a student takes part in out of school which require him / her to miss a school day – we will continue to consider that sort of request. However, it is clear that the government and external authorities will want a very persuasive argument for us to be allowed to record any absence as a permitted time out of school. **No leave will be authorised during the first two weeks of the school year or during exam periods.**

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence are required to fill in a **Leave of Absence Application Form at least 4 weeks in advance** of the proposed absence and before making any travel arrangements (available from the school office and to download from the school website). We always take a reasonable, supportive approach to requests (especially with regard to fines) however, there are an increasing number of families taking 'the odd day' here and there … this is having a HUGE impact on learning.

Did you know…..?

- **There are 175 non-school days a year, 175 days to spend on family time, holidays and visits.**
- **Being 5 minutes late every day means 3 lost days a year of your child's education.**
- **Arriving after the register closes, without a valid reason, is recorded as an unauthorised absence.**

Getting your child to school really matters.

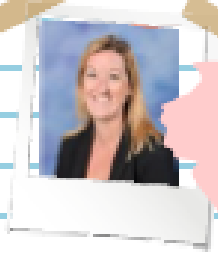
If your child's attendance during the school year is …..	Your child would have lost approximately…..	Your child would have missed approximately….
95%	9 days	50 lessons
90%	19 days	100 lessons
85%	29 days	150 lessons
80%	38 days	200 lessons
75%	48 days	250 lessons
70%	57 days	300 lessons
65%	67 days	350 lessons

Absence = Lost Learning

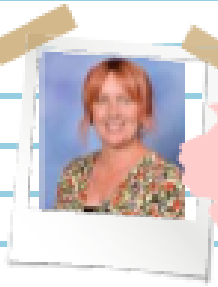
Holywell Safeguarding Newsletter

February 2025
Issue: 4

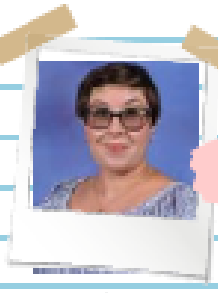
MEET THE TEAM



Mrs Stewart-McAlpine
Deputy Head & DSL



Mrs Johnson
Family Support / Deputy DSL



Miss Collins
Student Support / Assistant DSL

Welcome to our Safeguarding Newsletter.
We are hopeful you will find it useful.
The Safety and Wellbeing of our students are a priority to us!
We hope that we can connect you
to local and national support, if you need it for you and your families.

Our focus this edition of our newsletter is providing information about organisations and support available both during term time and school holidays, we have detailed information on a number of websites that we hope will prove useful!

If you have a topic you would like us to cover, or you are in need of support, information or advice, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of the team!

Useful Websites

F4YP or Fun for Young People are an amazing local organisation that offers support to children and families via a variety of avenues, activity clubs and coffee mornings for parents and carers!

F4YP offers Holiday Clubs available during Half Term, Easter and Summer holidays for children in Yrs 1-8

www.f4yp.org/holidayclubs

Young Minds is a fantastic organization that supports children and young people with their wellbeing and mental health.

The Young Minds website can be accessed by young people looking for support in addition to parents and carers looking to support their children.

www.youngminds.org.uk

HOW YOU FEEL MATTERS

Getting help in Bedford Borough IT IS IMPORTANT TO TALK

Talk to your school/college mental/health support, a counsellor, doctor, friend, family or a trusted adult.
IF SOMEONE TALKS TO YOU: Help them get help and get support yourself if you need it.

Child And Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) (NHS) ONE PLACE TO GET HELP

A trained NHS mental health professional will respond to enquiries relating to getting help from the NHS child and young people mental health service and emotional wellbeing service. They can also provide self-help resources on how to understand and self help your own mental health. Enquiries, please call 01234 893362

1: INFORMATION

YoungMinds
Mental health charity with a wide range of resources and information
https://www.youngminds.org.uk/

CHAT HEALTH
Service for young people to confidentially ask for help on a range of issues. Talk to a school nurse https://chathealth.nhs.uk/
TEXT: 07507 331450

SCHOOL NURSING SERVICE
Providing support on a range of issues, 1-1 virtually or in school
https://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/Bedfordshire/services/school-nursing
TEL: 0300 555 0606

EARLY HELP (BEDFORD BOROUGH)
The Local Offer holds a wide range of information regarding services and support available, including early help support.
https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/mentalhealthhub
TEL: 01234 718 700

SEXUAL HEALTH
ICaSH Provides all aspects of sexual and reproductive health including STIs and HIV testing & treatment, contraception.
www.icash.nhs.uk

DRUG & ALCOHOL SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
Aquarius offer specialist services for children & young people who use substances or gamble and those who are affected by a parent or carers substance misuse www.aquarius.org.uk
TEL: 0330 008 3925

2: GETTING HELP

SHOUT
Free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope. https://giveusashout.org/
TEXT: SHOUT to 85258

BEDFORD OPEN DOOR
Free, confidential counselling for young people aged 13 to 25.
www.bedfordopendoor.org.uk
TEL: 01234 360388

SORTED
Free, confidential counselling for children and young people aged 5 to 25. www.sortedbedfordshire.org.uk
TEL: 01582 891435

SAMARITANS
If you want someone to talk to, they listen, do not judge and do not tell you what to do
www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/
TEL: 116123

CHUMS
Bereavement mental health and emotional wellbeing support for children and young people. https://chums.uk.com/
TEL: 01525 863924

HEALTHY WEIGHT
MoreLife provide weight management programmes for all ages.
www.more-life.co.uk **TEL: 0808 208 2340**

BEAT
National eating disorder charity with lots of resources and support. https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/

3: NEED MORE HELP

CAMHS - Emotional & Behavioural Team
Provide assessments, support and treatment for children and young people up to the age of 18 for moderate to severe mental health problems.
For further information, please visit:
NORTH BEDFORDSHIRE CAMHS
https://www.elft.nhs.uk/services/north-bedfordshire-camhs
TEL: 01234 893301
SOUTH BEDFORDSHIRE / LUTON CAMHS
https://www.elft.nhs.uk/camhs/where-we-work/south-bedfordshireluton-camhs
TEL: 01525 638613
PCAS: You can also ask your GP to refer you to the Primary Care Access Service for mental health support.

4: URGENT SUPPORT

Call 111 Option 2 - 24/7

A free helpline for people of all ages who need urgent mental health support. Young people can talk to a CAMHS professional directly who can arrange additional support.

IN ANY EMERGENCY, DIAL 999

Updated FEB 2025

Holywell Support this Half Term

At Holywell we have been fortunate in accessing some wellbeing support for our students from outside agencies both one-to-one and in small groups.

Holywell are delighted to still be working with Brook, an organization that support children with their mental health and wellbeing. Charlie from the organization has led two groups about taking care of your mental health for both Keystage 2 and Keystage 3.

The Safeguarding Team facilitated this years extremely successful Wellbeing Day which included a Drumming workshop, Circus Skills, Boxing workshop, the Thrift Walk and a variety of art, craft, baking activities. A big thank you to Mrs Stewart-McAlpine and Mrs Johnson for organizing the day.

Holywell has been able to continue working with Kerry, an incredible wellbeing coach and boxing coach. We have been lucky enough to have Kerry work one-to-one with a number of our students.

Holywell School is now LIVE across Social Media Pages

@HolywellCoE

Holywell School Bedfordshire

@Holywellcoe

Please like/follow to receive updates

www.holywellschool.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SPRING TERM 2025

Half Term – Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February
End of Term – **Friday 4th April**

SUMMER TERM 2025

Closure Day – Tuesday 22nd April
Term Begins – **Wednesday 23rd April**
May Day – Monday 5th May
Half Term – Monday 26th May to Friday 30th May
End of Term – **Tuesday 22nd July**

Please note that dates may differ from other schools

SUMMER TERM TEST DATES 2025

Year 6 Students
Key Stage 2 SATs
Monday 12th May - Thursday 15th May 2025

PLEASE DO NOT BOOK HOLIDAYS AT THIS TIME

Term Dates for the next academic year (2025 – 2026) are listed on our school website

A REMINDER THAT STUDENTS RETURN TO SCHOOL ON:
MONDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2025