



St Mary's took part in Children's Mental Health Week from 6-10th February 2023. The theme this year was Let's Connect.

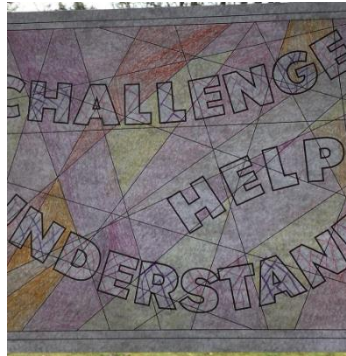
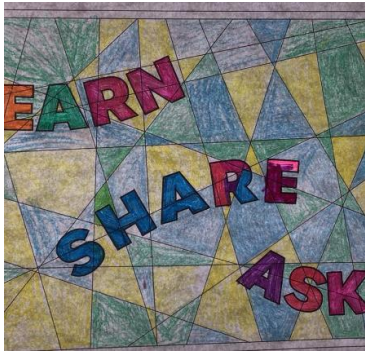
Let's Connect is about making meaningful connections. Human beings thrive in communities, and this connection is vital for our wellbeing. When we have healthy connections – to family, friends and others – this can support our mental health and our sense of wellbeing. And when our need for rewarding social connections is not met, we can sometimes feel isolated and lonely – which can have a negative impact on our mental health.

The week enabled each class to revisit all the strategies developed and discussed for their Class Mental Health Toolkits back in term 1.

Many classes across the school took part in daily 'mood booster' activities.



KS2 produced some fabulous art work on the theme of Let's Connect and were able to reflect on the process of creating the stain glass window realising that activities like this helped them to feel calm and relaxed. Mindful colouring – another strategy for the toolkit!



The older children also enjoyed playing 'Connection Bingo' and making paper chains demonstrating the links with have with others through our interests. They also worked in groups to plan events that they could put on to connect people from different walks of life.



Making connections with others

KS1 and Reception

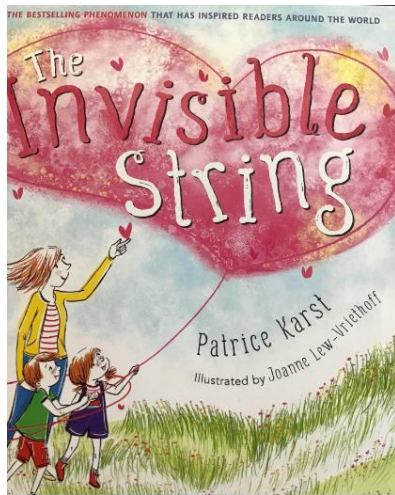
During the week the younger children really enjoyed listening to some great stories that helped them to remember that we need to keep our brains healthy as well as our bodies. Mind Hug read by Will Young helped them remember how to use breathing to feel calm and relaxed. The Colour Monster read by Amy Dowden helped the children to explore all of their different emotions and The Problem with Problems read by Tom Hardy reminded the children of the importance to share tany problems they have with others and breathe through them.



The KS1 children decided to make and create posters with advice on ways we can all work together.



Through exploring the beautiful story of The Invisible String the children were able to think about who they are connected to, by their own invisible strings. The children drew themselves and their special people and connected them with some string.



The children in Reception enjoyed learning how to colour their breath. With each breath in the children moved the pencil up and with each breath out they moved the pencil down. They experimented with their breath making it quicker and slower. This activity encouraged the children to focus on their breathing and helped them realise that it can be so helpful when they experience strong emotions.



In PE the children strengthened their connections with each other by playing a game of pass the hoop



Wow! It is weeks like this that really remind us all that our mental health and wellbeing needs to be at the forefront of our minds always.

At St Mary's we aim to be a mentally healthy school. We have a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing through the Thrive approach which helps children to flourish, learn and succeed.

