**World Mental Health Day 2024 – Mental Health in Children**

On Thursday 10th October 2024, we marked World Mental Health Day, a global event that raises awareness of mental health and highlights the importance of looking after our emotional wellbeing. The day provides an opportunity for children and adults alike to talk openly about mental health and to reinforce the message that it is always okay to ask for help and support.

At Aston Rowant School, mental health is not treated as a one-off event. While World Mental Health Day gave us a shared focus, wellbeing is a thread that runs throughout the school year. Children regularly explore mental health through PSHE lessons, practise a Growth Mindset approach across all subjects, and are given time to pause, reflect and reset during our weekly Wellbeing Wednesdays.

*"Mental health is important because everyone has feelings, even if they don't always show them."*
*"Wellbeing Wednesdays help me slow down and think about how I'm feeling."*

We will revisit this focus again during Children's Mental Health Week in February, further strengthening children's understanding of how to care for their own mental health and how to support others with kindness and empathy.

**Suggested Activities for Children**

As part of our work on World Mental Health Day, children were encouraged to explore practical strategies they can use every day to support their wellbeing, including:

- Feelings Check-In – naming and discussing emotions using age-appropriate language
- Mindful Moments – short breathing or grounding exercises to help children feel calm and focused
- Kindness Challenges – small acts of kindness to support positive relationships and belonging
- Positive Self-Talk – recognising negative thoughts and replacing them with encouraging ones
- Reflection Activities – drawing, writing or talking about what helps them feel happy or calm

*"Breathing slowly helps me feel calm when my worries feel big."*
*"Talking to someone makes problems feel smaller."*

These activities help children develop emotional literacy, self-regulation and confidence in managing their feelings. World Mental Health Day and our ongoing wellbeing provision strongly support our focus on Development judgement, particularly by ensuring that pupils:

- Learn how to recognise and manage their emotions
- Understand that mental health is part of overall health
- Are taught how and when to seek help, both inside and outside school
- Develop resilience, confidence and self-belief
- Show empathy, kindness and respect towards others

The school provides a safe, supportive environment where pupils feel listened to and valued. Mental health education is age-appropriate, well-timed and woven throughout the wider curriculum, helping pupils build skills they will need both now and in later life.

**Support for Parents and Carers**

We also signpost families to wider support. Oxfordshire Youth offers free online Mental Health Awareness Sessions for parents and carers of children and young people living in Oxfordshire. These sessions aim to support understanding of mental health and equip parents and carers with strategies to support their children.
Sessions are free and can be booked here:
https://www.eventbrite.com/e/an-online-mental-health-awareness-session-for-parents-and-carers-tickets-296940455897

By working in partnership with families and external services, we continue to place pupils' wellbeing at the heart of school life.

**Personal Development Impact Summary**

**Intent:**
To ensure pupils understand mental health, feel confident expressing emotions and know how to seek support.

**Implementation:**
- Regular PSHE lessons and wellbeing discussions
- Growth Mindset embedded across the curriculum
- Dedicated time for reflection through Wellbeing Wednesdays
- Engagement with national awareness events

**Impact:**
- Pupils articulate feelings using appropriate language
- Increased confidence, resilience and emotional awareness
- Positive pupil voice demonstrating emotional security and wellbeing