



PSHE - Mental Health



As part of our PSHE topic - Marvellous Me - we have spent some time considering what mental health is, why it is just as important as our physical health and how we can take care of our own, and other people's, mental health.

As a class, we came up with our own definition of what mental health meant. This is what we decided:

We think that mental health is something that other people cannot see. It is all about our brains: it is our thoughts, feelings and actions. We can have good mental health and we can have poor mental health: everyone's mental health changes frequently.

While discussing mental health, we touched on the fact that there has previously been a stigma attached to it, and anyone considered to have poor mental health was thought to be unstable, dangerous or unreliable. When we delved deeper, we realised that the symptoms of poor mental health (anger, depression, anxiety, eating problems) have happened to every single one of us at some time in our lives. We now know that having a worry, feeling angry or low is nothing to be ashamed of and it is totally normal.

As a class, we thought about positive mental health and how it can appear, feel and what it can result in. Some of our answers are below:

- * smiling / laughing
- * Being chatty
- * Confidence
- * Positivity
- * Resilience
- * Relaxed appearance

We also thought about how it could appear and feel when we are experiencing symptoms of poor mental health. Interestingly, because we believe that mental health is something others can't see, we weren't sure that people would display any signs as sometimes, people can look totally fine on the outside, but they could be feeling angry, anxious or depressed on the inside. That being said, we came up with a list of ways we might feel and act if we were feeling low, angry or worried:

- * Quiet / withdrawn
- * No motivation to do things we enjoy
- * Changes in body language (hunched shoulders, furrowed brow, gritted teeth, clenched fists)
- * Crying / emotional
- * Feeling like the whole world is against you
- * Huffing, screaming or mumbling

- * Changes in hearing
- * Fast breathing

We discussed how not everyone would exhibit the same symptoms as we are all different, but we agreed that everyone has these feelings from time to time. We learned that this becomes an issue when it affects our day to day life and stops us from living our lives to the full. We also talked about lots of ways we could help other people (and ourselves) when these feelings come along.

- * Talk to parents
- * Talk to friends
- * Talk to teachers
- * Visit your GP
- * Complete breathing exercises
- * Mindfulness activities (colouring in, meditation, listening to music)
- * Writing down / drawing what is bothering us
- * Helping make someone smile or laugh
- * Distracting people
- * Reminding people of the positives
- * Share fond memories
- * Give a hug or a smile
- * Give compliments
- * Tell someone how special and loved they are
- * Advise someone to speak their doctor/ parents / teachers