



## Which Week?

This Week: Monday 8th July (Week 1)

Next Week: Monday 15th July (Week 2)

# Sixth Sense

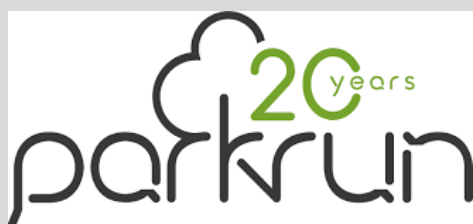
## Time to 'Elevate' in Our Penultimate Week of Progress

As mentioned last week, during Tuesday 9th July, Elevate Education will be coming in to work with us as a cohort on our study skills and exam strategy.

ALL of you are Level 3 academic student, who are required to study, and ALL of you are required to sit external assessments in the form of examinations, as the two sessions we will be participating within on Tuesday will be focussed upon this objective.

I will need to confirm the lessons within which these sessions will take place, but rest assured that they will sit within normal lesson times and will not impact upon any brunch or lunchtime session. Please keep an eye on your email for further details.

The aim is for these skills to have an impact on your studies, not just within the final two weeks of term, but as you move into your final year as our biggest and best student within the Academy as Year 13 students. Let's finish the year as we mean to go on!



## The Power of Volunteering

Regardless of your aspiration at the end of Sixth Form, whether it is to attend university, secure an apprenticeship or be offered employment, volunteering is a powerful aspect for you to be able to demonstrate to any organisation of your good 'character' and of someone of offer something extra, in addition to that of being a Sixth Form student.

Within the academy, there are numerous opportunities for you to do this within our own parents evening, evening events and extra curricular activities that take place throughout the year. To this effect I would like to congratulate our Sixth Form student who played a part in the recent production of Matilda!

Please speak to your teachers or Mr Bowers if you would like to get involved in volunteering during your study periods or after school.

For anyone who would like to volunteer outside of school time, there are also numerous opportunities open to you, one of which is Parkrun, a weekly 5km timed run that takes place at 9am in thousands of locations across the country every Saturday morning (or 2km run on Sunday morning for kids). Each event relies upon volunteers to perform several roles from acting as a timer, scanning barcodes of runners as they finish or acting as a 'marshal' at a specific point on the 5km course. Every time you do this, you are rewarded with evidence of the number of times you have volunteered that can accumulate to help you to achieve rewards!

All of this can be done by registering for free at the [parkrun website](#) where you can search for events locally to you. Based upon the address of the academy, the events most local to us are literally across the road at [Babb's Mill](#), or slightly further afield (based upon where you live) at [Kingsbury Water Park](#), [Oaklands Recreation Ground](#) and [Cannon Hill Park](#). The page for each specific parkrun has details of who to email if you would like to volunteer. Really easy to do and (as someone who has volunteered previous) enjoyable, but does not consume a large portion of the day. Would love to hear from those of you choosing to get involved!



## Why Kindness Matters & How Doing Good Does You Good

The theme for Mental Health Awareness Week earlier this year was 'kindness matters'. It was chosen because of its ability to strengthen relationships, develop a sense of community and deepen solidarity. It seems an appropriate choice given the current times.

In support of the previous Mental Health Awareness Week focus, on page 2, we wanted to help promote the message of displaying kindness and to remind you how often, doing something good can also do you good too.



# WHY 'KINDNESS MATTERS' & HOW DOING GOOD DOES YOU GOOD

'WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET. WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.'

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

THE FOCUS FOR THIS YEAR'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK IS 'KINDNESS MATTERS'. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK INTO THE BENEFIT OF HELPING OTHERS WHICH IS GOOD FOR IMPROVING OUR OWN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING. HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU THINKING:

## ALTRUISM

Altruism is acting in someone else's best interests in order to improve their welfare. When we feel compelled to donate money, shop for someone, call a relative in need or help a neighbour, we are considering the needs of others even when we may not know them. Showing kindness like this, often motivated by empathy, creates a sense of purpose, making us feel good and developing our wellbeing. Children and young people can take part in altruistic activities at home or school. They could create a video for those in isolation, fundraise for a local cause, bake cakes for neighbours or write letters to older members of the community who may feel isolated.



## GENEROSITY

In the context of kindness, being generous with our time, resources and words can provide a low-cost approach to helping others. A generous act is accessible to all. Giving compliments, for example, are a well-researched way of creating a sense of wellbeing and positivity in a community at school or with family. It helps us to recognise the positivity in others as we actively choose to notice and comment on what is valuable and meaningful in someone else. When compliments are given regularly, consistently and with meaning, the community benefits are far reaching!



## GIVE TO GIVE. NOT TO RECEIVE

Sometimes when we are kind there is no payback, which can make it more difficult to keep being kind. Our natural reaction is to shrink back and withdraw our kind act, feeling frustrated that it has either not been reciprocated or that it has not been valued. This is probably one of the most difficult concepts for children to understand and where the 'random acts of kindness' approach is helpful. If it is a random act then it is 'just because' and for no other reason than a one-off act for someone.



## HOLDING OTHERS IN MIND

By holding someone in mind we show that we have been thinking about them and that they matter to us. This act of kindness is so important now, more than at any other time, due to isolation. A simple text to say 'I saw... on the telly last night and it made me think of you!' or a quick call to say 'I was just thinking about you yesterday and was wondering how you're doing?' can mean so much. We probably all do this naturally as part of showing kindness and care to others, but perhaps may not appreciate the importance of this for wellbeing.



## COMMUNITY

When we help others in our community, it improves our wellbeing by helping us to feel less isolated as we connect with others. When we show kindness, it is something which we feel we can control, particularly when things may feel a bit chaotic and unusual. Helping others can often give us a different perspective on our own challenges and our own problems. Peer support, for example, is often overlooked as an important part of improving wellbeing. Older students can often greatly benefit from sharing similar, shared experiences and can offer a level of empathy and understanding that adults may not be able to.



## KINDNESS WITH CAUTION

There is a very helpful analogy that is used when we are in an emergency, 'we should put our own oxygen mask on before putting on someone else's'. What's helpful here is that giving to others can often improve our mental health and wellbeing. However, there are times when helping others can create stress or overwhelm us. This is sometimes called 'compassion fatigue'. So, we must balance our own wellbeing with the wellbeing of others. We should notice if we start to feel resentful or negative or if we start avoiding others, have difficulty concentrating or start experiencing unusual sleep patterns. If this happens it's a good time to take a break or ask someone for help or support.



'KINDNESS IS A SILENT SMILE. A FRIENDLY WORD. A NOD OF ENCOURAGEMENT. KINDNESS IS THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL THING WE CAN TEACH CHILDREN.'

RA KTEVIST

The National College

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



For further info, check out these online resources:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/blog/random-acts-kindness>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/get-involved>