

30 April 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Outwood Academy Bydales - Being Safe & Healthy

As you will be aware, alongside ensuring excellent teaching and learning to secure the very best academic outcomes for students, we encourage students to be outstanding members of society. This in part involves effectively promoting safe and healthy lifestyle choices. We would be grateful if you could find the time to discuss the information below with your son or daughter regarding physical and emotional wellbeing, to raise awareness of particular issues and the support available.

Healthy Eating

At the Academy we aim to provide all our students with a wide variety of healthy food choices. We know that when following a balanced diet, at times students (and adults) may consume sugary or fatty snacks. However, as advised by the NHS: *'If you are having foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt and sugar, have these less often and in small amounts'* and *'Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health, and can help you feel your best. This means eating a wide variety of foods in the right proportions and consuming the right amount of food and drink to achieve and maintain a healthy bodyweight.'*

We are aware that everyone deserves treats. Indeed we occasionally reward students with small treats, for example for attendance at after-school Enrichments. However, we are concerned about the portion sizes of some less healthy snacks being brought in to the academy by some students. Students should be eating the right proportions of food and drink, and therefore it is not appropriate for some students to be bringing in and consuming drinks and foods that are designed for more than one person, for example large bottles of fizzy drinks, family packs of sugary snacks, and sharer size packets of crisps.

From Monday 6 May, family sized/very large portion high sugar and fat snacks designed for shared consumption will not be allowed in the academy. We are sure that the academy, students and families can continue to work together to promote the importance of a balanced diet.

It is also worth noting that members of our community have noted the number of students drinking energy drinks on the way to the academy in the mornings. We would like to note advice from the NHS regarding energy drinks namely: *'The health risks associated with energy drink consumption are primarily related to their caffeine content, but more research is needed that evaluates the long-term effects of consuming common energy drink ingredients... The risks of heavy consumption of energy drinks among young people have largely gone unaddressed and are poised to become a significant public health problem in the future.'*

Once again, fizzy drinks in moderation are acceptable, but it is advised that energy drinks, with high caffeine content, are not suitable for children. *'Energy drinks are legally required to declare "High Caffeine Content. Not recommended for children or pregnant or breast-feeding women" followed by the exact caffeine content expressed in mg per 100ml on the label.'* Students have had assemblies in the recent term promoting healthy eating and balanced diets and have completed projects in their VMG sessions. We have also liaised with local businesses who have agreed not to sell such energy drinks, in support of our promotion of healthy lifestyle choices.

Should you require any further information about healthy eating, a wide range of information, advice and support is available at the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/>

Mental Health Website

We want to continue to ensure that our students have positive mental health and know what this looks and feels like. We want students to be able to promote this too, and be able to support each other in achieving mental wellbeing. Recently our students have had assemblies on positive mental health. Students now have stickers in their Planners with details of our newly launched positive mental health website, which contains details of the assemblies, as is an excellent starting point for discussions at home. Please visit: metalhealth.bydales.outwood.com. Students can also raise a concern with a member of the academy teaching staff, who will then get back to them.

Communicating Safely

As well as physical and mental positivity, we want to ensure that our young people are aware of how to communicate safely. In the Summer term, we will be working with Cleveland Police to share information with students regarding internet and technology safety. On Friday 3 May and Monday 20 May, our local PCSO will be lead assemblies with students in Years 7 to 10. The aim will be to raise awareness of the potential dangers of multi-media communication, and the surrounding laws. We aim to arm students with knowledge around dangers, and how to obtain help and support where needed. Part of the session includes a short five minute film called 'Kayleigh's Love Story', which includes the warning 'if shown in a cinema, this would have a 15 certificate'. The film can be found on YouTube, under 'Kayleigh's Love Story' should parents wish to view this in advance of the assemblies. Should any parent or carer have any concerns regarding their child being shown this video, please contact Vikkii Shallow, Assistant Principal by telephone or via v.shallow@bydales.outwood.com.

If you require further help, advice or support regarding your child's use of devices for communication, you can also visit the NSPCC website, which includes a section on 'How to talk to children about the risks of sexting – and what you can do to protect them.' See: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting>.

Governors' Parent Voice Forum – Monday 10 June 5pm

Further information regarding the above topics will be shared and discussed at the next Governors' Parent Voice Forum, being held at Outwood Academy Bydales on Monday 10 June from 5pm. As always, all parents are invited to attend and we look forward too seeing you there.

Yours faithfully



Vikkii Shallow
Assistant Principal & Deep Support Lead