

LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter

Issue 15 - 12th January 2024



A Rewarding Week at St. Mary's!

Mr Johnston - Headteacher



It has been an exceptionally rewarding week at school this week as we embed the new Rewards and Consequences system successfully. I have led assemblies through the week to the whole school on the theme of 'Success in 2024' and what this means for the school community and to individual students. Our vision as a school is to achieve excellence for all, producing young people formed by our values to become responsible, compassionate and caring members of society. I reflected, with the students, upon how our Gospel values have informed the development of the new R&C system (as they inform all aspects of life at St. Mary's Catholic School). For example, in line with our values, the teachers are looking for as many ways as possible to praise and give rewards to the students.

There are two aspects that reinforce to me that we are already being successful with this aim as a school. Firstly, there have been almost **7000 House Points given out since the start of term** last Thursday, the majority of which are single House Points awarded for excellence in lessons; this is a tremendous achievement for the students. Secondly, I had the privilege of meeting the students who have achieved the most House Points (in the period before Christmas) today in the Conference Room for hot chocolate and cake to celebrate with them and reward them for their excellence engagement with our values and the opportunities that are abound at St. Marys. The positivity in the room was as impressive as their achievements! Thank you for the positive emails about the R&C received so far, next week, I will be asking for feedback from parents, students and staff on this and other matters more formally through a short survey so please do look out for that!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 18th January 2024
Year 7 Parents Evening

Weds 31st January
Pre-Ski Trip Info Evening (7pm)

Thursday 1st February 2024
Year 9 Options Evening



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Prayer Focus: Second Sunday of Epiphany

Eternal Lord in Christ,

You make all things new,
renew and refresh our hearts,
shine the light of your Holy Spirit into our lives,
that through us the light of your glory,
may shine in all the world
And bring peace in your name

Amen



Racial Justice Week

Racial Justice Week

We are holding a Racial Justice Week on Monday 22nd-Friday 26th January.

We have a number of events planned across the school week, including incorporating student's thumbprints as part of an art collage, food from around the world served in our Refectory and a Cultural Diversity Show.

The Year 12 students who are organising the cultural show aim to display the music, dance and fashion diversity within the school community. Students who are interested in participating, please complete the link below to show your interest. <https://forms.office.com/e/42UKj3Rmpv>



St Mary's Catholic School

Term Dates Reminder

Spring Term

Thursday 4th January—Thursday 28th March 2024

Spring Term HALF TERM

Monday 19th February—Friday 23rd February 2024

Summer Term

Monday 15th April—Friday 19th July 2024

Summer Term Bank Holiday

Monday 6th May 2024

Summer Term HALF TERM

Monday 27th May—Friday 31st May 2024



KS5 Student Medical Society

SMCS Medical Society (Med Soc)



Since its founding this year the medical society can boast of a large body of student participation with over 20 KS5 students joining meetings every Wednesday lunchtime.

Students lead presentations and discussions on various aspects affecting medicine in the UK, from a discussion on the problems and challenges facing the NHS and how these may be overcome, to topics such as genetic disease, treatment methods and understanding the medical structure.



Students have also worked together to raise funds for the Royal Benevolent Medical Fund with a cake sale that was fully student led.



The society is run by students for students to engage with all aspects of the medical field. Students elect the chair of the society and they ensure that meetings are orderly and organised.

This society will continue to grow over months ahead.

STUDENT CLUBS!



Extra Curricular Clubs ~ Spring Term

St. Mary's Extra Curricular Clubs- Spring Term



	Lunchtime (Early lunch / Late lunch)	Afterschool
Monday	Italian GCSE Language Lab (T12) Spanish Spelling Bee (T13) 	Drama Club (Hume) Football (All years) GCSE Music <u>Catholic Composition Club</u> (Catch Up club) Music Block) <u>Lexia</u> A Level/ GCSE DT Support Club (C4) Portuguese Club (F5) Science Club (H7) 
Tuesday	<u>Yr 7 Japanese Club</u> (D3) 	<u>F24 Greenpower Race Club</u> (C4) KS4/5 Business and Finance Support club (C1) <u>Lexia</u> (A3) Chess Club (Library) Netball (All years) 
Wednesday	French GCSE Language Lab (T12). Yr11 Geography drop in club (D3) Mathematic Society Club (T02) KS5 Medical Society (H6) 	Homework Club (A1) <u>Lexia</u> (A1) A level Sociology Club (T22) Debate Club (E5) Orchestra Club 
Thursday <i>Breakfast Club (During am registration)</i>	Games Club (k8)  <u>Sparx Homework club</u> (Library)	Homework Club (A1) 
Friday	<u>Sparx Homework Club</u> (K1) Knitting and Crochet (H3) <u>Yr 11 Spanish revision Club</u> (T21)	Fitness Fun (All Years) Books & Biscuits Club (Library)



House System ~ Student of the Fortnight

The following students achieved the highest number of positive House Points over the last fortnight of the Autumn Term. As a reward for this excellent achievement, they will receive an Achievement Postcard including an invitation to the Headteacher's Tea this term.

Junior Inter House Competition

Year 7

Marco A 7A	53
Massimo M 7A	47
William C 7T	46
Rafaela R 7A	37
Isobel K 7B	37



Year 8

Isabel M 8B	35
Grace H 8B	34
Banky O 8J	33
David C 8M	32
Riley R 8T	32

Intermediate Inter House Competition

Year 9

John A 9R	45
Alexander M 9K	35
Olivia F 9R	33
Zion D 9R	33



Year 10

Efua W 10B	30
Daniel W 10M	17
James K 10B	17
Brigid N-M 10T	16

Senior Inter House Competition

Year 11

Janey B-T 11M	16
Molly G 11T	15
Marie S 11T	14
Rebecca S 11M	14

Year 12

Niamh R 12T
Alex L 12A
Vivian I 12A

Year 13

Gabrielle A-A 13T
Chinasa D 13T
Paraneethan M 13T
Aloysius G 13T



Artist in Focus

ARTIST IN FOCUS: Kristen R, Year 13



Why do you study or love Art?

Tell us about your journey and who you are...

I enjoy studying Art as it gives me the opportunity to express myself. I find it exciting to watch my work develop from outlines to a piece with form. Realism has been my main focus throughout this journey which allowed me to develop and showcase my skills with a range of drawing media.

Who inspires you?

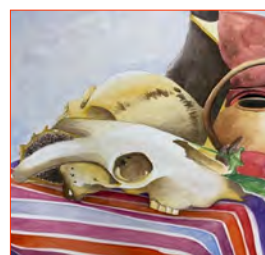
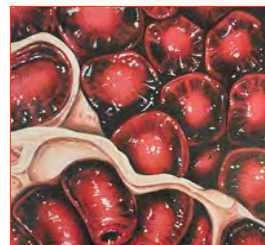
I take my inspiration from a variety of realism artists however my main inspiration is Cynthia Poole. Her hyper-realistic style encourages me to carefully build my work with detail and precision.

Where do you want to go and what do you want to do when you leave St Mary's?

I wish to study Economics at University after leaving St Mary's however I will definitely keep Art as a hobby to relax and release pressure off myself which it also helps me to do currently.

What advice would you give aspiring artists here at St Mary's?

My advice would be to push yourself and try new things. You may develop new skills and find something different to enjoy. Art is about finding your style and experimenting will help you to find that.





St Mary's Catholic School Careers Bulletin

Year 11 Mock Interviews

On Thursday 7th December our Year 11 students had their Mock Interviews and I can honestly say it was a great success!

19 external interviewers kindly donated a day of their time to come into school and interview our students. These mock interviews prove to be essential in getting young adults prepared for their next steps and ready for sixth form / college interviews and future job interviews.

The students were excellent and the feedback received from the interviewers clearly showed how wonderful our Year 11 students are. All Year 11 students should be extremely proud of how well they performed.

Mrs Knight, Careers



OPEN EVENINGS



Tuesday 6th February 2024 -17:30 to 20:00

Thursday 25th April 2024 - 17:30 to 20:00



NEXT OPEN DAY
Saturday 13th of January



13 FEB
5-8 PM



Saturday 27th January 2024 - 10:00am-12:30pm



Wednesday 07th February 2024 (6pm to 8.30pm)



Open Event
Thursday 25th January
5-8pm

Student Feedback:

"The interview went well and helped me understand what a real one would be like"

"It was better than I expected, I felt like I didn't need to be nervous"

"It helped me understand how providing proof from your CV is useful"

"I felt confident and answered the questions, if I did it again I would project my voice more"

"It was a very fun experience, I definitely know what I should do in the future now and I feel prepared for real interviews"

"My interviewer helped me and gave me advice on how to improve my CV"



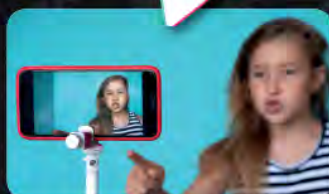


TikTok is a video-sharing social media app available on iOS and Android which lets users create, share, and view user created videos much in a similar manner to Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. It's main draw, however, is that users can record and upload bite-sized looping videos of themselves lip-synching and dancing to popular music or soundbites, often for comedic effect, which can then be further enhanced with filters, emojis and stickers. TikTok has been designed with the young user in mind and has a very addictive appeal. At the beginning of 2019 it skyrocketed in popularity to become the iOS store's most downloaded app with over 33 million downloads. Estimates suggest that it now has anything between 500 million and over 1 billion monthly active users worldwide.



What parents need to know about

TIKTOK



MATURE CONTENT

On the iOS store, TikTok is listed as 12+. On the Google Play Store it is rated as 'Parental guidance recommended'. When signing up for the app, it's possible to be about your age without any form of verification. As children scroll through their feed, most of the videos they're likely to come across are lighthearted or funny takes on dance routines which are designed to make people laugh. However there has been a slew of videos which have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm and sexual content, including young teens dressing overtly sexually and behaving suggestively. Given the deluge of material uploaded to TikTok every day, it's impossible to moderate everything and it can be quite common to come across explicit content on the 'for you' feed when logging into the platform.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC

TikTok revolves around creating music videos through lip-synching and dancing. Inevitably, some of the music featured by users will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the undeniably young user base, there is a risk that children may look to imitate the explicit language they hear or the suggestive actions they see when viewing others users' videos on the app.

TIKTOK FAME

TikTok is very image focused and there is a notable preoccupation with appearing cool and attractive. Many teenagers now attempt to go viral and become what's known in-app as 'TikTok famous'. TikTok (and its predecessor Musical.ly) has spawned its own celebrities - social media stars Loren Gray and Jacob Sartorius have been catapulted to fame through their initial exposure on the app. Obviously, most budding influencers looking to become the next big thing will be disappointed, but this may have the knock-on effect of making them go to more and more drastic lengths to get noticed.

ONLINE PREDATORS

As a social network, TikTok makes it easy to connect with other users. This includes the ability to comment on and react to other user's videos, follow their profile and download their content. Be aware that by default, any user can comment on your child's video if their account is set to public. Most interactions are harmless enough but as an app, TikTok is prone to predators because of the abundance of younger users.



ADDICTIVE NATURE

Social media is designed to be addictive and TikTok is no different. It can be fun and hugely entertaining. However, it is also because of this that it can be hard to put down. In addition to the short, punchy nature of the looping video format, the app's ability to keep you guessing what will come on screen next makes it easy to turn a five-minute visit into 45-minute visit.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Aside from the content, there's also the option to purchase in-app extras called 'TikTok coins'. Prices range from £0.99 for 100 coins to an eye-watering £93.99 for 10,000 coins. TikTok coins are used to purchase different emojis to reward content creators that a user finds funny or entertaining. In the iOS version of the app you can disable the option to buy TikTok coins but this sadly doesn't seem to be a feature in the Android version.



Safety Tips For Parents

TALK ABOUT ONLINE DANGERS

Assuming your child is above the age limit to use the app, make sure you also take the time to talk to them about what they are seeing on the app. Have a dialogue, get them to give you their opinion on what is appropriate and model the correct behaviour for them. Go over why they shouldn't give out private information or identifiable photos and be positive and understanding of them. In the long run, getting them to think critically about what they're seeing goes a long way to keeping them social media savvy.



USE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Undoubtedly, the easiest way to safeguard your child on TikTok is to make sure their account is set to private. This means only those users your child approves can view, like, and follow their content. Setting the account to private may clash with your child's goal of social media superstardom, but it will keep their account secure from strangers. This setting can be enabled under the privacy and safety menu by pressing the ellipsis in the 'me' tab of the app. To be extra safe, there are additional controls available to toggle such as who can send comments and messages, among other options.



ENABLE RESTRICTED MODE

In the digital wellbeing section there's the ability to turn on restricted mode using a PIN. Restricted mode filters out content that is not age appropriate although it should be noted that this isn't always 100% fool proof. When enabling restricted mode, parents should still be vigilant to what their child is watching and take note that the algorithm moderating content is not infallible.



EXPLORE AND LEARN YOURSELF

Understanding and learning the app yourself is a great way to get to grips with TikTok. You could then even use the app with your child and watch some videos with them. If you are the parent of a teen, even if it does not make you popular, keep a close eye on what they're viewing and sharing. That said, it's a brilliant chance to turn it into a bonding opportunity with your child also. You could even unleash your inner performer and make videos with them while (more importantly) keeping them safe online.



LEARN HOW TO REPORT AND BLOCK INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

With the proper privacy settings in place, TikTok can be a safe space for your child to express themselves. However, just in case something does manage to slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report content that isn't appropriate and get them to come to you about what they have seen. TikTok allows users to report offenders and comments within the app. You can also block individual users by going on their profile.



MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child moderate their time on the app by making use of the digital wellbeing section. Under the screen time management option, you can limit the daily allotted time allowed on the app in increments ranging from 40 to 120 minutes. You can also lock this preference behind a PIN number which has to be inputted in order to then exceed the daily time limit. This way your child can get their daily dose of memes without wasting away the day.



Meet our expert

Pete Badh is a writer with over 10+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been pivotal in successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.





Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust

Children's Wellbeing Practitioner Workshops (January-March 2024)

Workshops are open to all young people & parents/carers of children and young people who attend a school or are registered to a GP in Hertfordshire. A referral is not needed to access a workshop.

All workshops are currently being delivered online via Microsoft Teams.

For more information about what each workshop covers and to book a place onto a workshop, visit the Children's Wellbeing Practitioner Eventbrite page:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-school-nursingservice-hertfordshire-33494371787>

Workshop	Date & Time
Emotional Wellbeing (For Young People 11-16) A workshop focused on adolescents managing their own emotional wellbeing and things parents/carers can do to help.	Thursday 25th January 10am-12pm Monday 4th March 6-8pm
Supporting Adolescents with Self-Esteem A workshop focused on adolescents improving their self-esteem and what parents can do to support.	Wednesday 10th January 6-8pm Tuesday 19th March 6-8pm
Supporting your Child's Self-Esteem A workshop focused on parents/carers supporting their child to improve their self-esteem.	Thursday 8th February 6-8pm
Supporting with Sleep Difficulties A workshop supporting children and adolescents with managing their sleep difficulties and how parents/carers can help.	Tuesday 13th February 10-12pm
Supporting your Child's Resilience A workshop focused on parents/carers supporting their child to improve their resilience.	Monday 15th January 10-12pm Wednesday 27th March 6-8pm
Developing your Child's Emotional Literacy A workshop focused on parents supporting their child with developing emotional literacy.	Tuesday 9th January 6-8pm Friday 9th February 10-12am Thursday 21st March 6-8pm
General Emotional Wellbeing and Regulation Tips for Parents A workshop focused on parents supporting their child's general emotional wellbeing and emotional regulation.	Tuesday 23rd January 10-12pm Monday 12th February 6-8pm Monday 11th March 10-12pm
School Transitions A workshop supporting children and adolescents with managing school transitions.	n/a
Exam Stress A workshop supporting children and adolescents with managing exam stress.	n/a



LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

#DedicatedtoExcellence

JANUARY 2024

POTENTIAL KIDS

BOOKINGS:

www.potentialkids.org.uk/activities

Date	Sessions	Time
2nd Tue	Fun Zone	19.00 - 20.45
4th Thu	Trampolining 5 yrs+	16.45-18.00
9th Tue	CREATE Group 4-11yrs	16.30 - 18.00
10th Wed	Bushcraft 8 - 11 yrs Bushcraft 12 - 16 yrs	12.30 - 14.00 14.00 - 15.30
11th Thu	STEAM Home Education	10.30 - 12.00
12th Fri	Community Connect Drop In - Warm Spaces	11.00-13.00
12th Fri	Youth Group 16+	18.30-20.30
13th Sat	Family Football - Drop In	16.00-17.00
14th Sun	Minecraft On site & Remote	13.00-15.00
17th Wed	Bushcraft 8 - 11 yrs Bushcraft 12 - 16 yrs	12.30 - 14.00 14.00 - 15.30
18th Thu	Trampolining 5 yrs+	16.45-18.00
18th Thu	STEAM Home Education	10.30 - 12.00
19th Fri	Community Connect Drop In - Warm Spaces	11.00-13.00
19th Fri	Minecraft On site	18.30-20.30
20th Sat	Soft Archery 7yrs+	16.00-17.00
23rd Tue	Craft & Chat Social Group 12-16yrs	16.30-18.30
24th Wed	Bushcraft 8 - 11 yrs Bushcraft 12 - 16 yrs	12.30 - 14.00 14.00 - 15.30
25th Thu	STEAM Home Education	10.30 - 12.00
26th Fri	Community Connect Drop In - Warm Spaces	11.00-13.00
27th Sat	Family Football - Drop In	16.00-17.00
31st Wed	Bushcraft 8 - 11 yrs Bushcraft 12 - 16 yrs	12.30 - 14.00 14.00 - 15.30

OCN
London

Approved Education
Centre Delivering
Nationally Accredited
Qualifications



Opportunities for Dulce of
Edinburgh DoE and
Work Experience

Learning, Social &
Communicational
Support for everyone
through our inclusive
programmes

PK Hub & Garden



PK Garden

Therapeutic Gardening
1:1 & Group Sessions

Contact us for details
of our PK Offer

Tutoring
Teaching
Mentoring
Therapies
1:1 & Group Work
Alternative provision
EOTAS



Neurodivergent
PK TECH TEAM



MINECRAFT

Danecroft Stables

1:1 Horse Riding
Groundworks/Care
Equine Therapy
Sessions



Contact us for further information on any of our Activities or
Educational Services at info@potentialkids.org

the gallery
BOUTIQUE SHOPPING

COMMUNITY
FUND



SPORT
ENGLAND



We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Click Here For Latest Vacancy Information

<https://www.stmarys.net/vacancies>



>>> NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS/CARERS

DSPL3

Delivering Specialist Provision Locally

DSPL 3 has links with many family support groups and services across Hertfordshire. Here you will find links to many of their websites containing contact lines, training, local support groups and more.

January 2024



DSPL3 covers East Herts – Bishops Stortford, Sawbridgeworth, Buntingford, Ware, Hertford and all surrounding villages

>>> HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Hello and Happy New Year. We would like to introduce ourselves to you. Our names are Adrienne Viall and Laura Gilpin and we have temporarily taken on the DSPL3 managers role until March 31st 2024. We will provide monthly newsletters for you. You can contact Lisa Lee who is your SEND lead on llee@wormleyprimary.co.uk or us your DSPL3 managers on dspl3manager@gmail.com. Please note that these email will not be in use after the 31st March.



>>> HERTS PARENT CARERS

HPCI – Herts Parent Carer Involvement – is a parent carer forum recognised by the Department for Education, Hertfordshire County Council, Herts and West Essex ICB as the parent carer forum for Hertfordshire. Information, surveys and training can be found on their website. [https://hertsparentcarers.org.uk/about/..](https://hertsparentcarers.org.uk/about/)

>>> NEURODIVERSITY SUPPORT HUB

The Hub is staffed by experts by experience, they can answer any questions to do with Neurodiversity, however big or small, or just be a listening ear. Please note, no diagnosis is required to access the support and the helpline is open to parents, carers and professionals. The Hub can be contacted by phone Mon-Fri 9-1pm on 01727 833963, with an answerphone facility for out of hours or by email at supporthub@add-vance.org.



>>> HERTS LOCAL OFFER – WEBINAR

'The Local Offer website lets parents, young people and professionals know what special educational needs and disabilities services are available in Hertfordshire, and who can access them. There is so much more than that, too. www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer

Webinar Tuesday 16 January 8pm – 9pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)



»» ADVICE AND GUIDANCE



<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>



<https://www.kids.org.uk/east-hub>



SENDIASS

<https://www.hertssendiass.org.uk/home.aspx>



<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/>



<https://sossen.org.uk/>



<https://hertsparentcarers.org.uk/>

»» ISL SPECIALIST ADVICE LINES



Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

01442 453 920

Thursday 9.30am - 12pm

Speech, Language, Communication and Autism Needs

01442 453 920

Tuesday and Wednesday 1.30pm - 4pm

Early years (0 - 5)

01442 453 920

Wednesday 9am - 12pm

and Thurs 1.30pm - 4pm

Physical and neurological impairment team (PNI)

01442 453 920 every Monday (term time only). 1.30pm - 4pm

Education Support for Medical Absence (ESMA)

01442 454 802

esmaenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Neurodiversity Hub

01727 833963

Monday to Friday 9am - 1pm



»» EHCP SUPPORT

EHCP - HERTS LOCAL OFFER

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/education-health-and-care-plans/education-health-and-care-plans-ehcp.aspx>

IPSEA - INDEPENDENT PROVIDERS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVICE

<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/pages/category/education-health-and-care-plans>

SENDIASS - HERTS SEND INDEPENDENT ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE

<https://www.hertsparentcarers.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/EHCA-NA-Booklet.pdf>





EARLY YEARS - BEST START HERTS



Hertfordshire County Council's Facebook page and website for parents/carers of children up to age 5.

- <https://www.facebook.com/beststartherts/>
- hertfordshire.gov.uk/earlyyears

POST 16

Post
16

Mission EmployAble (training for young people aged 19-25 with a learning disability)

Mission EmployAble is a new charity based in Chorleywood which runs an 11-month supported internship programme for young people with an EHCP

Full details are available at: www.missionemployable.co.uk or by emailing training@missionemployable.co.uk

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE



To contact the children and young people's therapy (CYPT) service:

Call: 01923 470 680. choose option 3. then option 1 for children not known to the service or option 2 for children known to the service

Email: hct.cytherapies1@nhs.net

Twitter/X: [@Herts_CYPT](https://twitter.com/Herts_CYPT)

Facebook:

facebook.com/HertsCYPT

<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/children-and-young-people-speech-and-language-therapy-parents>

AUTISM AND ADHD



<http://www.spaceherts.org.uk/>



<https://www.add-vance.org/>



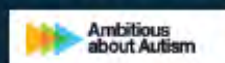
<https://www.autism.org.uk/>



<https://www.pdasociety.org.uk/>



<https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/>



<https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/>

PARENTING AND HEALTH



<https://www.familiesinfocus.co.uk/>



<https://www.supportinglinks.co.uk/index.html>



School Nursing Duty Line

Tel: 0300 123 7572

Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm

<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/service-details/service/school-nursing-56/>

Children and young people's therapy services

01923 470680 - Option 3

hct.cytherapies1@nhs.net

<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/children-and-young-people-occupational-therapy-parents>



Hertfordshire Partnership University
NHS Foundation Trust



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

CAMHS

<https://www.hpftcamhs.nhs.uk/>

EMWIE

<https://emwie.tfemagazine.co.uk/novemberdecember-2023>

SANDBOX

<https://sandbox.mindler.co.uk/>

DSPL3 Interim Managers: Adrienne Viall and Laura Gilpin
DSPL3 Interim SEND Lead: Lisa Lee