

LARS WINDHORST FOUNDATION TO PROVIDE MENTAL WELL-BEING SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS RETURNING TO SCHOOL

11th June 2020, London

The Lars Windhorst Foundation, established by the German entrepreneur to provide support and opportunities to disadvantaged young people, today announces a package of well-being measures to support teachers and students as they go back to school.

In response to the concerns felt by many teachers and pupils during this uncertain period, the Foundation is offering training and support to help address anxiety around returning to school and the impact of the virus, as well as the challenges of adapting to the new circumstances.

In association with Light Education Training, the Foundation is this month launching a four-part support package for schools. Designed by Vanessa Hardy, Director of Light Education Training, the initiative will be led by a highly qualified team of child and family psychologists.

The four elements of the package can be accessed by schools individually or together as a comprehensive programme which includes:

TEACHER TRAINING

- Teachers will be offered in-depth training to help them navigate the emotional aspects of returning to school, and to support the students with this transition. Topics covered will include fear, control, perspective, acceptance, and dealing with the unknown. Ongoing support can be provided to teachers and staff to help with any issues that may arise among staff or students.

LIFESKILLS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: A COMMUNICATION SYSTEM FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL

- A simple and effective whole-school communication system whereby students can check in and communicate their level of well-being in a safe and structured way, giving them confidence and validation. Body connection and awareness exercises are taught, and practical tools are offered to support students who are feeling challenged.

SAME SEA, DIFFERENT BOATS: A THERAPEUTIC ART PROJECT

- A therapeutic art project which uses storytelling to help children and teachers to express their experiences, make sense of them, understand others' experiences and help them to create a ritual to capture the history in the making. The art project is based on the idea that we have all been in the same sea but we have all been in different boats. It offers the opportunity to create space for making sense of and expressing different experiences in a contained and managed way.

REDUCING ANXIETY IN THE TRANSITION BACK INTO SCHOOL

- A training session for school staff to provide ideas on how to help the children return to school physically, how to address the fears of what it will be like, how it will be different and how it will still be connecting and enjoyable. The session will explain how to discuss this with children and young people and collaborate with other teachers for ideas.

Further information about the package of measures and free resources that all schools and teachers can access can be found here: www.sameseadifferentboats.com

The Foundation is continuing to work with a number of state schools across London to provide support during COVID-19, including the Future Zone Collaboration (a network of 21 primary and secondary schools in Islington), as well as supporting the Ralph Allen School in Bath.

This builds on the Foundation's previous support to schools during Covid-19 including providing teaching material and equipment to both parents and schools as well as toys, supplies and resources for the children of key workers, and a programme of wellbeing sessions for parents and teachers.

Lars Windhorst, Founder of the Foundation, said: "As we start to move into a new phase of Covid-19, providing support to those who have been affected by it continues to be incredibly important. The Foundation believes it is critical to help young people through this difficult time and ensure the impact on their lives and education is minimised as much as possible. We hope that by offering this very practical support we can help make this challenging period easier for pupils, families and teachers."

Hannah Flemming, Assistant Head, Ralph Allen School said "We are extremely grateful for the generous offer of wellbeing support being offered to our staff, families and students during these unprecedented times. As a school we are committed to supporting the wellbeing of our whole community and the current crisis is affecting many young people and their families in ways that may have long term consequences for their mental health. The wellbeing sessions we have been able to offer, for free due to the generous support of The Lars Windhorst Foundation, have been welcomed by staff, parents and students".

Vanessa McHardy, Director of Light Education Training, said: "For children and teachers, returning to school can represent an anxious time and this programme will give them the tools to help them manage this and share their concerns with each other in a safe space. We thank the Lars Windhorst Foundation for their practical support in helping us grow and support our school communities."

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Notes to Editors

The Lars Windhorst Foundation

The Lars Windhorst Foundation provides disadvantaged young people with experiences and opportunities that empower them to reach their full potential by providing single and multi-year grants to charities, social enterprises and other organisations and partnering with charities with relevant expertise to bring its own initiatives and projects to life.

The Foundation's activity is focused around four key areas:

- Education: projects which seek to provide young people with opportunities to further themselves through education
- Enterprise and Leadership: projects which seek to provide young people with new skills critical for life success
- The Arts: projects which seek to open up access to the arts for young people and the wider public
- Healthcare: projects which seek to improve the health and well-being of society.

The Foundation was founded by the German entrepreneur, Lars Windhorst, in 2017. He passionately believes in supporting young people and giving them opportunities to thrive. Mr Windhorst is a strong advocate of the power of philanthropy to drive positive social change and started his foundation to help bring together charities and organisations to support this endeavour.

For more information, please visit <http://larswindhorstfoundation.com/>

Light Education Training

Light Education Training Ltd is an organisation that specialises in providing schools, families and corporations with practical ways to develop Life Skills for Mental Health and Well Being. It has developed award-winning programmes to facilitate school environments that help children to thrive, mentally, emotionally, physically, creatively and academically.

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