



North Oxfordshire Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

Wednesday 6 March 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

As part of the Oxfordshire Public Health Directorate's campaign to improve young people's mental wellbeing, year 8 students will be watching a performance of *Under My Skin* presented by Pegasus Theatre.

The play addresses the growing nationwide issue of self-harm in adolescents. Its aim is to raise awareness of self-harm and reduce the stigma that surrounds it, whilst providing young people with information about coping with difficult emotions, stress, anxiety and low mood. It also aims to identify support networks; such as the School Health Nursing service, school counsellors and other local and national services that can help young people deal with the issue.

Under My Skin follows the story of Bella, an adolescent girl with a crush on Sean, the most popular boy in school. When Bella discovers that Sean is self harming, instead of obsessing over him, she becomes his friend. After a series of well-meaning mistakes and false starts, Bella learns the value of listening and Sean takes the first step towards getting some help.

The story will be told directly to the audience through a series of naturalistic scenes. The handling and discussion of Sean's self-harming will be approached sensitively and honestly and no self-harming will be shown on stage. The play will last for approx. 45 mins and culminate in a post show discussion about the issues raised. Teachers, the school health nurse, mental health workers and staff from Student Support Services will be present at the performance to offer further advice.

The performance will take place on **Tuesday 19 March @ 8.45am.**

If you have any further questions, or would like your child to opt out, please contact the head of safeguarding at school directly.

Best wishes,

Sara Billins
Principal

Principal: Sara Billins

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