

Wellbeing & Safeguarding Newsletter

Rockmount Primary School Autumn 2023

Welcome back to what has been a busy but enjoyable and eventful term. This is the first of our termly Wellbeing & Safeguarding newsletter for 2023/24. A copy of this newsletter has also been emailed to you so you can easily access any links and for future reference.

Wellbeing Ambassadors 2023/24

We are pleased to welcome this year's Wellbeing Ambassadors. The Wellbeing Ambassadors were voted for by their classmates at the end of the last academic year. The role of our Wellbeing Ambassadors is to promote positive mental health and raise awareness of mental health problems across our school community. Led by Mrs Umar and supported by the rest of the Wellbeing Team, the Wellbeing Ambassadors will help to support other pupils with health and wellbeing, organise wellbeing events and celebrate mental health awareness days.

The Ambassadors have kick started this year by helping to organise and promote 'World Kindness Day'. They have supported their class to write a poem about 'Kindness' which the Ambassadors have used to create a 'Rockmount Kindness' book.

Visit the Wellbeing section of our school website to keep up-to-date with the latest action from the Wellbeing Ambassadors and get a glimpse of our Kindness Book.



Staff Wellbeing

Many of you will have heard that Elizabeth Finn left the Mental Health Support Team this term and consequently will no longer be working at Rockmount. Liz has worked with us over the last 3 years and supported the wellbeing of many children and families during this time. We wish her all the best as she joins CAMHS.



IT'S A BOY!

We were all very happy to wish Mrs Fuller a farewell as she headed off on maternity leave this term. The Wellbeing Team organised a relaxing baby shower where we all celebrated and sent our best wishes.



Welcome to the Team

This term we welcomed Mrs Umar to the Wellbeing Team as the new Wellbeing Lead.

"I am very excited about my new role. I'm looking forward to supporting the school community with tools and strategies to achieve their very best"

Mrs Umar



Important Dates

- Children's Mental Health Week - 5th - 11th February 2024
- Safer Internet Day - 6th February 2024
- LGBT+ History Month - February 2024
- International Women's Day - 8th March 2024

Vaping

It's common for parents to worry about their children trying smoking, alcohol or drugs as they get older. However, in recent years, more young people have been using e-cigarettes, known as vaping. Children are trying vaping younger than ever and the risks are less well known than with other substances. If you think your child might be vaping or you're worried they might start, it's important to understand what it is and what the risks are so you can talk to them about it. Most children and young people do not vape or smoke on a regular basis over a long period of time, but they might try it. Keeping them informed about the risks, will help them to make healthy choices for themselves.

What is vaping?

Vaping is inhaling vapour from an e-cigarette or 'vape'.

The vape is a battery powered device which heats a cartridge of liquid. It is the vapour from this liquid that is inhaled. You can get refillable vapes where you can fill it with different flavour liquids, or disposable vapes. These come in a variety of colours and flavours making them popular with young people.

Most vapes contain nicotine which makes them highly addictive. Vapes are intended for adults who smoke to help them give up smoking, like nicotine patches or gum. They are less harmful than cigarettes because they don't contain tobacco, however they still contain harmful ingredients. If you have never smoked, you shouldn't vape.

E-cigarettes and liquids are sold in vape shops, newsagents, supermarkets and many other shops. It is illegal to sell vaping products to anyone under the age of 18 or to buy them on their behalf, however like cigarettes and other substances, young people still manage to get hold of them.

Why are children vaping?

The reasons children and young people try vaping are similar to any other drug or substance:

- To fit in. Many young people feel pressured to do what their friends are doing.
- To relieve stress. Young people are often under a lot of stress, from school, work, and relationships. Nicotine can have a temporary calming effect.
- Curiosity. They have probably seen or heard about other people vaping and want to know what it's like.
- Vaping has an extra appeal for children and young people because:
 - They come in sweet-smelling flavours and bright colours.
 - They see them as less harmful than smoking because of the messaging about them helping people to stop smoking.
 - They are more discrete than smoking because the smell doesn't last as long and they can be easily hidden.



What are the risks of vaping ?

- The short-term side effects of vaping include throat and mouth irritation, headache, cough and feeling sick.
- The long-term effects of vaping are still unknown, they are still too new for there to have been proper research.
- Nicotine is highly addictive. There is also a risk when non-smokers try vaping, they might move on to try more harmful cigarettes and drugs.
- There are also illegal vapes being sold that contain dangerous levels of lead, nickel and chromium.

How to talk to your child about vaping?

- Find a good time to start the conversation. It might be as you walk past a vape shop or see someone using an e-cigarette.
- Ask your child what they know about vaping. You can ask them if they know of people who use them and why they use them. You might ask them if they've ever tried it.
- Listen to your child, their experience, and their point of view. Show you are interested in what they have to say.
- Then you can gently and calmly give them some facts about vaping. Ask them what they think about the facts.
- If your child is already using a vape, then have the same conversation with them and ask them what they like about it. You are not saying it's okay for them to do it, by being interested. You can still be clear about how you feel.
- If they feel pressured into vaping by friends, you can teach them helpful skills of being confident in saying 'no thanks, it's not for me'.

(Action for Children; 2023)

How is vaping taught in school?

At Rockmount, we follow the PSHE Association Programme of Study. The learning opportunities set out in the Programme of Study do not mention specific substances. However, there are explicit references to vaping and e-cigarettes in the upper Key Stage 2 curriculum under the core theme of health and wellbeing. This includes:

- **How can the media influence people?** The mixed messages in the media about drugs, including alcohol and smoking/vaping.
- **How can we keep healthy as we grow?** The risks and effects of legal drugs common to everyday life (e.g. cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vaping, alcohol and medicines) and their impact on health; recognise that drugs use can become a habit which can be difficult to break.

Click images for links to free confidential parent/ carer advice

FRANK
0800 77 66 00 talktofrank.com
Friendly, confidential drugs advice



YOUNG MINDS
fighting for young people's mental health

MENTAL HEALTH, WELLBEING & SAFEGUARDING RESOURCES

At Rockmount we have a designated team supporting the wellbeing and mental health of our school community. If you need any support, please feel free to speak your child's class teacher or any member of the team.



Helen Carvall
Headteacher



Viv Bull
Deputy Headteacher



Amber Pearless
SENCO



Donna Rankine
Senior Mental Health Lead



Waseela Umar
Wellbeing Lead



Hayley Gorman
SENCO



Amy Carvall
Mental Health First Aider



Annette Schrembi
Learning Mentor



Emotional Literacy Support
Assistants (ELSAs)

Croydon Mental Health & Wellbeing Support

The Mental Health Support Team (MHST) work within our school providing additional emotional wellbeing support to children and families. You can request one-to-one support from our Wellbeing Practitioners through your child's class teacher or you can make a self referral by emailing the MHST directly at MHST@croydondropin.org.uk or call on 07736 043796.

WELLBEING IN THE FESTIVE SEASON



ALL CAN ACHIEVE

10 TIPS FOR WINTER WELLBEING

Tip 1: Let there be light and cosiness! – Going out in the cold might seem unappealing but getting some natural light can be invigorating and really help your mood.

Tip 2: Healthy comforts – We all crave comfort, particularly over winter and it can be tempting to reach for foods high in fat, sugar and salt. Find other options that are just as pleasurable like reading, doing puzzles or baking something healthier.

Tip 3: Plan something pleasurable and also have some 'me time' – In the bad weather or if we're isolating, it's still important to take time to enjoy ourselves each day. It can also be fun to try something new, get creative or dust off an old hobby.

Tip 4: Boost your energy and your mood – Get outside for at least 20 minutes of exercise each day.

Tip 6: Celebrate the good stuff – Try to notice the good things in your life if you're feeling down, however small.

Tip 7: Get your money sorted – Plan your finances this winter – including making sure you're getting any benefits you're entitled to and getting help with any debt concerns you may have.

Tip 8: Keep connected – Don't let gloomy days drain you of your motivation to go out and see friends and family.

Tip 9: Take a break from gadgets – Technology, more than ever, over the last couple of years has been vital but it's important to give yourself some time away from devices.

Tip 10: Ask for help – If we're struggling, it's ok to ask for help. If you need to, there's always someone to talk to. Ringing or texting a helpline such as SHOUT if you're lonely can help you feel better too. Individuals can text SHOUT to 85258 to receive free, confidential support from a trained volunteer via text message.

THE CHRISTMAS HAF PROGRAMME NOW OPEN TO BOOK



This Christmas, the Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) is set to offer children across Croydon the opportunity to attend free activity clubs with healthy meals. Open to all children aged 4-16 receiving benefits-related free school meals.

To book, please visit croydon.gov.uk/holiday-activities-and-food

Online Safety Tips for Christmas



Christmas is almost upon us once again and some children will be excitedly unwrapping mobile phones, tablets or games consoles. For some of them, it will be the first time they've owned a device that connects them to the online world. Even for older children, a new device means new corners of the digital landscape to explore and unfortunately new risks to be aware of.

Read the National Online Safety Guide for top tips that can guide you and your child/ren to enjoying their new digital gifts safely and responsibly throughout the year.

[CLICK HERE FOR TOP TIPS FOR NEW DEVICES](#)



Kind Christmas Activities



Bring a little more kindness into the world in the run-up to Christmas. Click on the image opposite to download your free booklet which includes puzzles, colouring, code breakers and more. Suitable for all ages.

For more wellbeing & safeguarding information, please visit our website at www.rockmountprimaryschool.co.uk

