

Rockmount Primary School

Wellbeing & Safeguarding Newsletter

Spring 2023

Keeping Myself Safe Week

(6—10 February 2023)

Teaching children simple strategies about keeping safe can help them to build confidence, resilience and empower them to be safe in a variety of situations. Keeping Myself Safe Week was a great opportunity to shine a spotlight on the importance of children staying safe. All children had the opportunity to learn about key themes throughout the week. During **Internet Safety Day**, the theme was, 'Want to talk about it? Making space for conversations about life online.' Children were able to talk about issues in the online world that really matter to them. They were able to express their thoughts on what changes they would like to see in the online world and how we can all work together to continue to make the online world a safe and enjoyable place. The theme for **Children's Mental Health Week** was 'Let's Connect'.

The message of making meaningful, healthy connections with others was reinforced with classes taking part in various activities. The children in Year 3, Pearl Class, are very proud of the poem (above) they wrote which explains how they connect with others. As part of **Road Safety Day**, the children were able to share ideas about how they stay safe on their bikes and scooters. As part of Keeping Myself Safe Week, the Wellbeing Ambassadors, Digital Leaders and the Cycling Club worked with Sparks Film School to create a film which promotes all the key messages from the week. We look forward to sharing the final film with the whole school community once it has been edited.



Pearl Class 'Let's Connect'

Love and harmony throughout,
Even though we are different.
Taking time for each other and
Sharing our thoughts and feelings.

Coming together and
Open to new ideas.
Never stop trying.
New people, new friends.
Everyone matters.
Celebrating others.
Try to connect today.



Random Acts of Kindness

This month, 52Lives are encouraging everyone to celebrate the small things we can do to really make a difference. Children are invited to take 52Lives 'Random Acts of Kindness Challenge,' which involves doing certain acts of kindness each day for five days, and writing about how they felt when they did them. Visit [52Lives Random Acts of Kindness Challenge](#) for more information to enter the competition. **Deadline for entries: 4 March 2023.** The winning child could win a Kindness Bench for our school.



Important Dates

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- **LBGT+ Month (February)**
- **Parent/Carer Workshop - Creating a positive time with your child (23rd February)**
- **Parent/Carer Workshop - Managing Difficult Behaviour (9th March)**
- **International Women's Day (8th March)**
- **World Sleep Day (17th March)**
- **Stress Awareness Month (April)**

Rockmount Wellbeing
Coffee Mornings

8.40 - 9.30AM IN THE AFTER
SCHOOL CLUB

Tuesday 21st March 2023
With Julie Lewis, our Mental Health Counsellor and Donna Rankine, school Senior
Mental Health Lead

Wednesday 24th May 2023
With Julie Lewis, our Mental Health Counsellor and Annette Schembri, school
Learning Mentor

MEET JULIE, OUR MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLOR AND MEMBERS OF THE WELLBEING SUPPORT TEAM. YOU WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER PARENTS/ CARERS AND GET WELLBEING SUPPORT AND ADVICE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.



During our assemblies and circle times this term, children have been learning about the importance of speaking out to stay safe. It is aimed to help children keep themselves safe by understanding abuse in all its forms and to recognise the signs of abuse in a child friendly, interactive

way. Children were taught to speak out if they are worried, either to a trusted adult or Childline. If you would like to know more about the Speak out. Stay safe. programme, you can find information on the NSPCC website www.nspcc.org.uk/speakout or our safeguarding team would be happy to discuss any questions that you may have. The NSPCC has also developed an adapted version of their assembly for parents/carers to use at home with their children. This can be found here: [Watch our Speak out Stay safe assembly at home | NSPCC.](#)



EYFS Wellbeing Focus

This year, mindfulness is the wellbeing focus for EYFS. Through fun, interactive activities, children are learning that looking after their mind is as important as looking after their bodies. They enjoy using 'Relaxation in the Classroom' methods as well as online programs such as [GoNoodle](#). For more support and information on mindfulness visit the [BBC Mindful Hub](#).

"I like it when the bubbles burst because it's like all your thoughts bursting away."
Skyler, Topaz Class



What are families like?

As part of the Year 3 PSHE curriculum, children are learning how families differ from each other. This includes understanding that not every family has the same family structure, e.g. single parents, same sex parents, step-parents, blended families, foster and adoptive parents. They learn that common features of positive family life often include shared experiences, e.g. celebrations, special days or holidays and how to ask for help or advice if family relationships are making them feel unhappy, worried or unsafe. We have such a diverse range of families within our community who are able to share their positive experiences as a family as well as some of their challenges. This letter is from an adoptive parent who has kindly shared their journey and how they feel our school community can support adoptive families.

A Letter from an Adoptive Parent

Parents adopt for many different reasons, but for many of us, it is not an easy journey. As with any kind of parenting, there are highs and lows; however, as adoptive parents, we are acutely aware of the trauma our children may have faced as babies and young children.

It is a privilege to parent, and when a child does not carry your DNA, you are conscious from the very beginning, that they come to you as their own person. My child is very tall, has chocolatey-brown eyes, and amazing core strength - none of which comes from me or my partner, and so it feels more objective to praise these attributes of hers. She is also very attached to us and scared of our absence. Her nervous system operates differently and so she has difficulties with some sensory experiences. This could be due to her inherent temperament, but also could be from what she experienced in utero or her time in care. Most children who are adopted have some areas they struggle with, be it, academically, socially, and/or physically. This means that they often need to access services and interventions to help and support them, through school, primary or secondary care. Sometimes our children's needs are very obvious, and sometimes they are masked as they learn how to cope in different environments without drawing attention to themselves.

School is a great place for children to thrive, but it can also be difficult. One easy way to be considerate to adopted children is to encourage your child never to use, "you must be adopted" in jest or as an insult, as this can be deeply offensive to an adopted child who may already feel alienated. Another way is to teach children to celebrate differences, including how families are comprised. In this way, we can all learn how to live as a community in a more trusting and understanding way. For more information, please go to: <https://www.adoptionuk.org/>

Extremism and Radicalisation

How children, young people and adult learners become vulnerable to radicalisation:

There's no single way of identifying whether a child, young person or adult learner is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology or vulnerable to radicalisation. The process of radicalisation is different for every individual. It can take place over a long period, or it can be very quick.

Children, young people and adult learners who are vulnerable to grooming for sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation or county lines, may also be vulnerable to radicalisation. Factors could include things like being a victim or witness of crime, abuse or bullying, or having personal or emotional difficulties. Adverse childhood experiences, combined with specific influences from family and peers or online connections, may make someone more vulnerable to radicalisation.

Extremist influences could include, but are not limited to:

- Staff members of an education or community setting promoting an extremist ideology
- Family members having direct contact or involvement with extremist or terrorist groups
- Peers promoting an extremist ideology or sharing extremist material
- Access or exposure to online extremist material via social media or the internet - for example, propaganda including pictures, videos, blogs and fake news exposure to extremist, terrorist or other violent activity in overseas settings
- Access or exposure to extremist leaflets, magazines or stickering exposure to extremist groups hosting marches, protests or stalls

Spotting the signs of radicalisation

Radicalisation can be really difficult to spot. Signs that may indicate a child is being radicalised include:

- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- Unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespectful attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use

Extremists might target children and young people and tell them they can be part of something special, later brainwashing them into cutting themselves off from their friends and family. However, these signs don't necessarily mean a child is being radicalised, it may be normal child/ teenage behaviour or a sign that something else is wrong.

How we teach children about radicalisation and extremism

From July 2015 all schools (as well as other organisations) have a duty to safeguard children from radicalisation and extremism through the government Prevent strategy. This means, we have a responsibility to protect children from extremist and violent views the same way we protect them from other dangers. Importantly, we can provide a safe place for pupils to discuss these issues so they better understand how to protect themselves.

Many of the things we already do in school to help children become positive, happy members of society also contribute to the Prevent strategy.

These include:

- Exploring other cultures and religions and promoting diversity
- Challenging prejudices and racist comments
- Developing critical thinking skills and a strong, positive self-identity
- Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, as well as British values such as democracy
- Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation, for example using filters on the school internet to make sure they cannot access extremist and terrorist material, or by vetting visitors who come into school to work with pupils.

For more support, including how to talk to children about radicalisation and extremism visit <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/protecting-children-from-radicalisation/>



Mental Health, Wellbeing and Safeguarding Resources

[Click images for a link to resources](#)

Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA)

ELSAs are teaching assistants who have had special training from educational psychologists to support the emotional development of children in school. ELSAs have regular professional supervision from educational psychologists to help them in their work. We are lucky enough to have three trained ELSAs; Ms Wrigley, Ms Smedley and Ms Byrnes. They have been trained to plan and deliver programmes of support to children who are experiencing temporary or longer term additional emotional needs. The majority of our ELSA work is delivered on an individual basis, but sometimes small group work is more appropriate, especially in the areas of social and friendship skills. Sessions are enjoyable as they use a range of activities such as: games, role-play with puppets or arts and craft. ELSA sessions take place in our Wellbeing Room which provides a calm, safe space for the child to feel supported and nurtured.

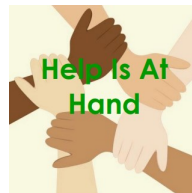
Through ELSA, we aim to provide support for a wide range of emotional needs:

- Recognising emotions
- Self-esteem
- Anger management
- Social skills
- Friendship skills
- Loss and bereavement



Children are usually referred for ELSA support by their class teacher, Senior Leaders, SENCo or sometimes by parents/carers. Parents who wish to refer their child should talk to the class teacher in the first instance.

Are you a parent, carer or guardian living in the borough of Croydon and struggling with your or your young person's mental health?



Help Is At Hand (HIAH) is here to support you.

HIAH is a phone based service that offers immediate crisis support for parents, carers and guardians without having to leave their homes. Their experienced team will assist with the immediate mental wellbeing of any parent or carer and provide a focus, to better understand how they can manage themselves, their young person or their child.

Their phone lines are open from 12pm to 6pm,
Monday to Friday 07592 037 823
Alternatively you can contact them via email on:
outreach@croydondropin.org.uk



Talkbus is a mobile information centre offering support to young people where they can receive information, advice and guidance from their Outreach workers!

On Fridays and Saturdays, Talkbus becomes your Safe Space!

Safe Space aims to create an environment for children and young people who may be in crisis, to receive help and advice through Croydon Drop In services with support from SLAM, CUH, LBC and the ICS. This service will help ensure that young people have access to appropriate care and support in the community.

Talkbus Helpline 07592 037 823

1pm - 4pm

Monday to Friday

Get the Talkbus Timetable on your phone by scanning here!



When is a good time to check in with a young person about their mental health?

- Over a meal or a snack
- When they are visibly enthusiastic and happy
- When they are withdrawing, bored or visibly upset
- During an activity like playing sport
- On the way to/from somewhere
- When you notice a change in behaviour
- When they want to chat

Top tip: Before checking in with a young person, check in with yourself - are you ready to have this conversation?

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