



West Alvington Church of England Academy

5th February 2020

Dear Parents,

As we near the end of a very unusual half term I have been reflecting on everything that has been achieved by our amazing children, families and staff and looking forward to recovering and rebuilding together in the future.



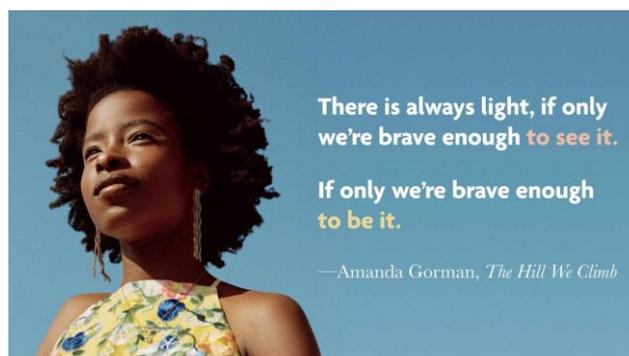
Children's Mental Health Week

This week we have been marking Children's Mental Health week. Here are some of the ways we are ensuring that Children's Wellbeing is an ongoing focus-

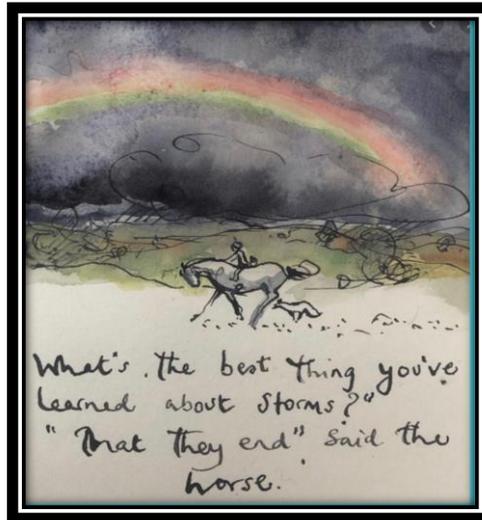
- Parent session on Mental Wellbeing for children facilitated by our SENDco Mrs Pascall.
- Teachers adding mindful breaks to their google classroom streams.
- Staff training focusing on Mental Health and Wellbeing in particular considering the impact of the pandemic on our children.
- Planning as a staff team to support children and families when schools are open more widely.
- Referring parents to sources of support and training.
- Each google classroom has a 'Keeping Safe and Well' section for children to dip into.
- As part of Relationships and Health Education children learn about Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- Staff have their own wellbeing sessions led by our Educational Psychologists and can access support through our Trust Counselling service. Staff wellbeing is a priority.

Assembly Reflection

This term we have been focusing on Hope in our virtual assemblies. The children have gathered together to reflect on the importance of Hope at this time and to look forward to the future when we can be together again. Thank you for sharing all of the lovely works of art the children have created in response to these assemblies. The words of the poet Amanda Gorman really resonate –



This week's Assembly activity based on the book by Charlie Mackesy - The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse



Your teachers and friends love seeing your pictures!

activities

- Charlie says hugs have changed during lockdown because we can't hug like we used to, but we will be able to hug soon. Draw a picture of the people you are looking forward to hugging after lockdown.
- "Remember that the storm ends" draw a storm picture and a sun coming out from behind a cloud to show the storm will be over soon.
- Charlie raised £2m for comic relief with his "Love wins" drawing. Design your own drawing for "Love wins" or a drawing encouraging people to speak up when they feel afraid.
- Why is being a bit scared together better than being scared alone? Describe how these pictures help us to be positive today.

****Non Pupil Day****

A reminder that Friday 12th February 2021 is a non pupil day. School will be closed to all pupils and remote learning will not be set as staff will be taking part in training.

Reopening of Schools - Reminder

We heard from the Prime Minister last week that, should all go to plan with the vaccine roll out, then schools will start to open from the 8th March. Further details on this roll out will be published during the week of 22nd Feb. As soon as we have the information we need to make plans for a safe reopening, we will share these with you. We are all very much looking forward to seeing all of the children in school again

Sources of Support for children families

There is an ever growing need for support for families. Below are some of the most recent offers that might be of interest to you. If you are struggling with finances, food, technology or the many challenges of life in a pandemic please contact us and we will do very best to support you.



you
our

The Hope programme - Helping people cope with lockdown

The HOPE programme in Devon has gone digital and is available (and FREE!) to anyone living Devon. The 12 digital courses running in 2021 are available to anyone struggling with a long term condition, mental illness or with lockdown in general. [HOPE Programme - Devon](#)



Free online courses to help people living in the South West to cope with life in 'lockdown'

Managing long-term physical or mental illness can be stressful, tiring and incredibly lonely at the best of times, but now more than ever.

On this free, 6 week online course you can meet others in the same situation, learn how to cope better, feel more in control and be more resilient.

Mindfulness	Goal Setting	Fatigue Management	Stress Management	Identify Personal Strengths
Gratitude Diaries	Dealing with Setbacks	Challenging Unhelpful Beliefs	Healthy Eating	Physical Activity

The courses start every month from **2nd February 2021**. You can complete the course at your own pace, with support from trained facilitators.

NHS

Places are limited! **First course starting 2nd February 2021**
Find out more or sign up today at <http://bit.ly/HOPESW>



The Hope Programme was developed by Coventry University and is delivered under current licence from Hope For The Community CIC.

BT Wifi Boost



BT have made a number of free Wi-Fi voucher codes available for schools to distribute to pupils aged 16 or under to support access to internet connectivity at home.

How will the Wi-Fi voucher codes work?

Each Wi-Fi voucher code will allow access to the internet on up to three devices at a time, for free, until the end of July 2021. Access will be provided through BT's network of over 5 million Wi-Fi hotspots around the country and includes comprehensive content filtering.

Please email or call the school office to ask for your Wi-Fi voucher code.

What support do families need with food poverty?

We have been asked to explore how we might improve the support given to people and families who find themselves needing help to get food and food parcels and would be grateful if you could fill in our quick survey that will help us understand the needs better.

You can fill in the survey anonymously but we are offering the chance to be entered into a free prize draw for a luxury hamper and to be entered into the draw we will need your name and contact details.. Click [here](#) to be taken to the survey.

THE EMOTIONAL CUP

Some ways that children deal with having an empty cup:

- Steal from other people's cups
- Misbehave to get your attention and show that they need a refill
- Seem to have bottomless cups, or need constant 'topping off'
- Can't sit still for refills or actively refuse them
- Bounce off the walls when they approach 'empty'
- Think they have to fight or compete for every refill

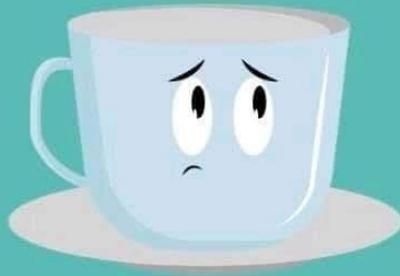
What fills a child's cup:

- Play
- Friendship
- One-on-one time
- Love and affection
- Connection
- Succeeding
- Doing what they love



What empties a child's cup:

- Stress and strain
- Rejection by peers
- Loneliness and isolation
- Yelling and punishment
- Failing
- Fatigue
- Doing what they hate



TYPES OF SELF-CARE



PHYSICAL

Sleep
Stretching
Walking
Physical release
Healthy food
Yoga
Rest



EMOTIONAL

Stress management
Emotional maturity
Forgiveness
Compassion
Kindness



SOCIAL

Boundaries
Support systems
Positive social media
Communication
Time together
Ask for help



SPIRITUAL

Time alone
Meditation
Yoga
Connection
Nature
Journaling
Sacred space

ONLINE RESOURCES

A list of websites & apps that are helpful for managing mental health

NHS Every Mind Matters

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters

This website offers a range of mental health advice as well as an interactive quiz that's designed to help you feel more in control of your emotional/mental wellbeing.

Kooth

www.kooth.com

This site contains free mental health support with their online counsellors. It is a free sign up service that has resources such as discussion boards, helpful tips/articles written by young people and an option for them to write mood journals & set positive goals.

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

A mental health charity for children & young people that has a wide variety of helpful videos, games and articles. They have a free telephone helpline (0800 1111) and message boards where young people are encouraged to share experiences and support each other in a positive way.

Papyrus

www.papyrus-uk.org

A mental health charity dedicated to preventing young suicide by providing support and resources for young people and their families. They have their "Hopeline" (Call: 0800 068 4141 / Text: 078600 39967 / Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org) for children and young people who are experiencing thoughts of suicide, or for anyone concerned for a young person that could be thinking about suicide.

Calm Harm

An app to help teenagers manage/resist the urge to self harm by providing a wide range of distraction techniques.

Combined Minds

This app contains psycho-education for parents, families & friends with practical advice on how to provide mental health support to children & young people.

Cove

A relaxing musical app that helps people try to capture their mood and express it by making music within the program and capturing it in a journal format. Note: you do not need to know how to play an instrument to use this app.

Stem4

www.stem4.org.uk

A charity that promotes positive mental health in teenagers as well as encouraging them to build resilience and manage difficult emotions via online resources.

YoungMinds

www.youngminds.org.uk

A mental health charity that gives help and advice for young people, as well as encouraging them to get involved in fundraising/campaigning to raise awareness for children & young people's mental health.

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org

A charity that offers mental health support & information online for everyone. Their helpline is free and available to all ages. Call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org 24/7.

Child Bereavement UK

www.childbereavementuk.org/young-people

A site which has resources for young people who are grieving, as well as providing information & advice to families/professionals on how to best support a young person who is bereaved. A helpline is also available on 0800 028840.

Clear Fear

An app to help children & teenagers manage anxiety through distraction & helpful activities.

Calm

A mindfulness app that includes various relaxing sounds to listen to as well as "sleep stories" & some guided meditations.

Headspace

A mindfulness app that has more of a "podcast feel" to it with various talks, guided meditations and helpful videos available.



Midlands Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust
A Keele University Teaching Trust

Please find below some of the ways that your local library can help to support your literacy curriculum while many of your students are learning from home, and the services we can currently offer to some of your more vulnerable families.

Virtual Library Visit

We have created a 14-minute video <http://bit.ly/Virtual-School-Visit-Exeter>, and accompanying downloadable activity sheet (attached), that will take children on a virtual tour of our largest library in Exeter. Through the video, children will find out about the resources they can access through all our 54 libraries across Devon and Torbay, what it means to have a library membership card and much more. The accompanying activity sheet enables them to answer the questions posed through the video with some additional fun activities on the back. Families without access to a printer will be able to simply write their answers down on a bit of paper. The video is most suitable for children in Y2 - Y6.

Our hope is that you will be able to use this as a resource to support your literacy activities both in the classroom and for children learning at home. Please let us know if you use it, and if there are any improvements that could be made to make it more relevant and easier for you to use.

We are also keen to explore if schools might be interested in further resources like this. We could look at creating videos to help children learn more about different library skills, how to choose a good book, writing book reviews etc? Or something aimed at KS1 to include stories and rhymes? If you have other ideas about how we might help you, please let us know.

Lifeline Services

Although our libraries are currently closed for browsing, we are offering a few lifeline services and we would be grateful if you could promote these to your families:

Digital Library

We have been increasing our catalogue of eBooks and eAudiobooks for children including our Beginner Reads collection. This means that families who do not currently have access to books from school can find new things to read via their laptops, tablets, eReaders or smartphones.

For the grownups, in addition to eBooks we have free access to eMagazines and newspapers, and other digital resources such as Ancestry Online.

You will need to be a library member to access these resources but joining online is free and easy via our website: [Devon Libraries](#)

Choose & Collect

If you are unable to access our online resources and need to borrow physical books, some of our libraries are open for Choose & Collect. This service is currently strictly by appointment to make sure everyone stays safe. If you would like to arrange to collect a bagful of books handpicked for you by our library staff, then please contact your local library at kingsbridge.library@librariesunlimited.org.uk

If there are any other ways that you think we might be able to support your **families in need**, please let us know.

Arts Award

Finally, in a couple of weeks we will be launching a webpage that will enable children aged 5-12 to achieve their Arts Award (Discover) from the comfort of their own homes. We have partnered with a variety of local artists to create some simple arts challenges that only use resources currently found in most homes already. These activities will be freely available for anyone to take part, but families wishing to receive an official Arts Award certificate will need to pay £6 to cover the costs (although in some cases we will be willing to waive this fee for families where this cost presents a barrier to taking part).

If you might be interested in working with us to enable your pupils to achieve their Arts Award (Discover) in this way, please email Kate Mackenzie, Service Development Manager, at kate.mackenzie@librariesunlimited.org.uk

We look forward to working with you and helping all our children to continue to read and learn.

Best wishes,

Isobel Jarvis
First Assistant

Kingsbridge Library
Libraries Unlimited