

Welcome to our Mayfield SEND & Well-Being

NEWSLETTER!



Hello and welcome to the second edition of the newsletter for 2023! It's been a busy term and as we now approach the Easter holidays it's lovely to look back on some real successes of the past weeks. Our senior and our primary Dance Live contestants were absolutely magnificent this term, with our seniors coming 3rd and our primary (years 3-6) coming 1st in their heats – onwards to the final! What a brilliant achievement – and testament to the sheer hard work and resilience of our children and young people. #teamayfield #believe.achieve.succeed

This term also saw World Book Day, when our primary children were to be seen sporting some fantastic costumes and really getting into the spirit of things. Staff across the entire school also took part, with Mrs Rogers being seen in not one but two outfits, having completed a costume change part way through the day. An excellent effort!

In this edition of the newsletter, you'll find some information about the city's Neurodiversity team and who to contact should you need to – including some info about a coffee morning that we are hosting with them. There's also an article about the ways in which morning light directly sets our internal body clocks, and also some info about what's on in the city over the Easter holiday.

First up, we are going to look at why we should be making the most of the extra daylight hours that we've got now that the clocks have sprung forwards ...



Extra Daylight –

What Does it Mean for Us, and What Is an Equinox?

The clocks changed on the 26th March and we have therefore gained an extra hour of daylight. It's that time of year when things can begin to feel a little more positive and less as though we are living our lives in perpetual darkness!

On 20th March, it was also the Spring Equinox. This is the day when we experience an equal number of both daylight hours and, conversely, hours of darkness; so 12 of each. The word 'equinox' comes itself from the Latin for 'equal night', and just as we have an equinox in the spring, so we have one in the autumn. After each, the balance is tipped – autumn means further darkness, spring ushers in further light.

If as human beings we did not have electricity or artificial lighting, then there is every chance that we'd naturally wake and sleep according to the levels of light outside. These days, we can put up blackout blinds, wear eye-masks, or ear-plugs to help us ignore the fact that the world is waking up earlier outside our windows (wildlife and tweeting birds included!) However, there is some scientific evidence to say that rather than sleeping in, we should be getting up and at 'em. The Guardian newspaper recently ran an article in which it quoted Dr Christine Blume as saying that we developed as a species by sleeping under open skies. Our biological clocks then are set by daylight. Morning light in particular, due to some complex scientific shenanigans, actually sets this clock in advance to then make us start feeling sleepy earlier in the evening, to ensure a good night's sleep because we were up earlier, rather than our staying up late according to what our battery-powered clocks tell us the time is (or what's on Netflix!)

Morning light is also thought to be a highly efficient anti-depressant. When sunlight enters our eyes, our bodies produce serotonin, which is what medical anti-depressants contain, only the natural variety in our bodies obviously has no nasty side effects.

So, much as many of us know we feel better when gardens start blooming, evenings begin to lengthen, and the dark gloom of winter lifts a little, it's also worth bearing in mind that this extra daylight – particularly the morning kind that contains high-energy blue light that sets our body clocks – also releases our own in-built natural anti-depressants. So, rather than blacking it all out once it finally begins to lighten, perhaps we should instead (to misquote the famous song by Elbow) throw those curtains wide; a few days like this a year might see us right!

SEND Spotlight – Portsmouth's Neurodiversity Team

The city's Neurodiversity (ND) Team now have a phone number and a website that is being constantly updated. Portsmouth's Neurodiversity Team (0-19) consists of family support workers, child and adolescent clinicians, an educational psychologist, speech and language therapists and occupational therapy and service leads.

The team has been developed to support the city's new neurodiversity pathway which aims to improve early identification of neurodiversity and offer increased support for families and professionals, meaning children and young people may not need to go through the lengthy assessment process to get their needs met.

The Neurodiversity Team will provide:

A single point of access for parents, carers and professionals who require additional support and/or training to meet a child or young person's needs.

Consistent support for families, children and young people.

An extended offer for more complex cases which may include assessments, diagnoses, and focused support, but this is dependent on each case.

A child or young person's needs will initially be identified through the ND Profiling Tool. The profiling tool can be completed with the family by a member of staff at their place of education or by an agency practitioner that are working with the family and know the child or young person well. The tool is a visual document that assesses nine developmental strands of a child or young person and suggests types of strategies that can be put in place to help manage those needs in different areas of life, such as at home, whilst in education or in the community. If the strategies are not working, families and professionals can contact the Neurodiversity Team for support.

There is no need to be referred by school (or indeed anyone else), you can just call the team and get immediate advice. Nor does your child need to have had an ND profile completed, or have a diagnosis of any kind, for you to call them. Contact details are:

Email address: Neurodiversity0-19Enquiries@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Telephone Number: 02392 606051



Neurodiversity Coffee Morning!

Please be aware that Mayfield will also be hosting a coffee morning in early May for parents and carers of children who are neurodivergent. The city's ND team will be at the coffee morning so you can ask for advice, get support, and chat with other parents and carers. There will be drinks and biscuits available and a sign-up form will come out in advance so that we get some idea of numbers. It will be hosted in the primary section's Oldfield Library, so a nice location for everyone to meet. We very much look forward to welcoming you! Please keep an eye out on our social media and Class Charts for further information after the Easter holiday.



Easter Holiday Activities Around the Local Area

What? *Easter Colouring Competition*

Where? *The Mary Rose, HM Naval Base*

When? *1st April – 8th April 2023*



What? *Little Adventures Step into Spring*

Where? *Queen Elizabeth Country Park*

When? *4th April 2023*



What? *Staunton Easter Trail*

Where? *Staunton Country Park*

When? *1st April – 16th April 2023*



What? *Fossil Day at Gilbert White's House & Garden*

Where? *Selborne*

When? *10th April 2023*



Learning Support Department

Should you have any concerns regarding your child, then do please contact us. The folk below can help!



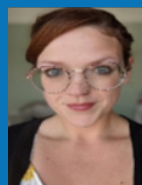
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