



Dream big, shine bright
St NICHOLAS
C of E Primary School, Alcester

These newsletters are published monthly and highlight upcoming events, celebrate success and relay important messages. Copies can always be found on our website.

Issue 143

St Nicholas C of E Primary School – Newsletter

January 2024



Welcome to the Spring term and to 2024!

With January coming to a close we can feel the beginnings of spring with the days becoming noticeably longer and hints of 'what's to come' with some spells of milder weather.

You will notice that the cladding on the front of the building is nearly complete, these works will continue to the higher levels and back of the building now. The community pantry is accessible again and will be up and running for donations again after half term. The new hygiene room (attached to the pool) is coming on and starting to look like an actual room now. The swimming pool is finally filled with water, we are testing the equipment, reinstalling the hoist and getting water tested ready for swimming to start again after Easter.

Lots to share in this month's newsletter...

Mrs Laura Newell, Head of School



DIARY DATES AUTUMN TERM

Friday 2nd February 3.15pm Bake sale on KS2 playground	Thursday 7th March Reception measurement programme (school health) World book day
WB 5th February Year 5 Bikeability	Monday 11th March Year 2 school trip
6th February Safer internet day Reception litter pick	Tuesday 12th March Year 1 trip
Friday 9th February Paddington Day for year 1 Break up for half term	Friday 15th March Red Nose Day
WB 12th February Half term	19th and 20th March Year 3 trips to the Heart of England
19th February Children return to school for second half of the Spring term	Wednesday 20th March Year 4 to Edgmond Hall
20th February Year 1 Phonics workshop (info to follow on studybugs)	Thursday 21st March Year 5 Easter service
Friday 23rd February Disco	Friday 22nd March Break up for the Easter holiday
Tuesday 27th February Year 6 Annual Health needs assessment (school health)	
Friday 1st March Cricket sessions for year 1 and 2	
Tuesday 5th March Year 5 and 6 Girls football at Stratford Town FC Reception stay and play	

St Nicholas C of E Primary School

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Opal Newsletter

We have completed our first term of OPAL play. It has been a great success – more children are loving being outside, no matter what the weather, as there is now so much more to do. Whether it is playing with tyres and planks, digging in the sand pit or enjoying imaginative play in the mud café. OPAL is offering a creative and exciting alternative to the regular activities on the playground.

Through this kind of play not only are children more active, they are also having the opportunity to further develop life skills such as cooperation, team work and problem solving. They are becoming motivated and enthusiastic builders, engineers, explorers and designers.

Thank you for your support with:-

- Sending your child in with appropriate warm/waterproof clothing and wellies.
- Donating small world creatures, cars, pots and pans etc. for the creative play.
- Supporting OPAL by asking your child about their play and accepting that they may get dirty... Some parents have been sending in spare clothes with their child – please feel free to do this.

RESOURCES

We are continually collecting resources for Opal. If you have anything that may be useful, please let us know.



SCOOTERS - We also need scooters for our new 'Scooter Zone'.

INCLUSION



Tuesday 20th February 2024

9am – 10:30am

Approx. – 1.5 hours

Our coffee morning gives us the opportunity to catch up and come together. If you're a new family joining our school, a parent/carer of a child with additional needs or member of the school community looking to build their social network, please feel free to pop along. Meet new people in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Dates for your diary...

Tuesday 19th March	1:30-3pm
Thursday 18th April	9-10:30am

SPEND

Support for **P**arents of children with **E**ducational needs, **N**eurodiversity and **D**ifficulties.

SPEND is a monthly parent/carer support group for people caring for children with additional needs who feel isolated or overwhelmed in Alcester, Bidford, Studley and surrounding villages.

Come and spend time with people who understand.

**NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2024 - 9.45-11.15AM
AND ON THE 2ND FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH**

The Depot, Eric Payne Community Centre
off St Faith's Road, Alcester, B496AG

If you are unable to make our coffee mornings, there is a wonderful new opportunity for families in the community.

Support for parents of children with educational needs, neurodiversity and difficulties.

New monthly carer support group for the Alcester & Studley areas.

Follow their [Facebook Page](#) for information.

Act for Autism FREE Webinars

January – February – March 2024

8-9pm

FREE – Online Zoom



act for autism
WEBINAR SERIES

CASS (Community Autism Support Service)

Are you the parent, carer or family member of an autistic, or undiagnosed autistic, child?

If you live in Coventry or Warwickshire, you can access free, 1 hour topic-based online sessions through the Community Autism Support Service (CASS). Lots of our families have accessed these sessions and have shared lots of positive feedback.

Find out more and book on here:

[Afternoons 1-2pm](#)

[Evenings \(see below\)](#)



Parent/carers autism toolbox sessions

Fortnightly Tuesdays, 7pm–8pm

1 09 Jan 2024 Introducing therapeutic parenting	2 23 Jan 2024 Talking about autism to your children	3 06 Feb 2024 Masking: when others don't see autism	4 20 Feb 2024 Spiky development	5 05 Mar 2024 Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA)
6 19 Mar 2024 Sensory processing	7 09 Apr 2024 Friendships	8 23 Apr 2024 Parent/carers wellbeing	9 07 May 2024 Autism and sleep	10 21 May 2024 Avoiding meltdowns
11 04 Jun 2024 Sibling relationships	12 18 Jun 2024 Self-esteem	13 02 Jul 2024 Going on holiday	14 16 Jul 2024 Screen addiction	15 30 Jul 2024 Gender identity
16 13 Aug 2024 Toilet troubles	17 27 Aug 2024 Autism and ADHD	18 10 Sep 2024 School struggles	19 24 Sep 2024 After-school meltdowns	20 08 Oct 2024 EHCPs
21 22 Oct 2024 School exclusions	22 05 Nov 2024 Food inc. ARFID part 1	23 19 Nov 2024 Food inc. ARFID part 2	24 03 Dec 2024 Thriving at Christmas	25 17 Dec 2024 Plenary and clinic

RISE Updates



Update from the Neurodevelopmental Team

The Neurodevelopment Team is continuing to work hard, in partnership with our external partners, to reduce the waiting times for Autism assessments. We are currently contacting people who were referred in August 2023, so please look out for an opt-in letter. If you were referred before that date, please check for any communication from us, including in your junk mailbox. Don't worry if you have been delayed in responding to us, we attempt to contact you four times before sending a closure letter. Please get in touch if you're concerned you've missed contact from us. You can contact us at Neurodevelopmental.Team@covwarkpt.nhs.uk.

Our ADHD waiting list remains long and we are working very hard internally and with commissioners to try and streamline this pathway and reduce waiting times.

We have also been working on updating our webpage where you will continue to find useful resources and links. Please also visit the Dimensions webpage for trusted information and signposting as well as the 'Information for Neurodivergent people and their families'.

Introducing the new accessible, all-age version of the Dimensions of Health and Wellbeing tool



The Dimensions of Health and Wellbeing is a free online tool that provides self-care information to support adults, children, and young people in Coventry and Warwickshire. You can rate yourself or another person against Dimensions related to health and wellbeing, and create a report that provides information about self-care, local services, and support.

<https://dimensions.covwarkpt.nhs.uk/>



Looking for ways for your younger ones to burn some energy and have some fun at the same time?!

Jump In trampoline park in Warwick offers Jump In SEN sessions with numbers capped so there are less people, no music and reduced lighting to avoid glare.

Find out more and book at:

<https://gojumpin.com/adv.../sessions/sen-trampoline-session/>

Have you checked if you are eligible for free school meals? 🍴

Free school meals not only provide your child with a free meal, it also means your child's school can access funding to support their education. Children in reception to year 11 can also access the holiday activities and food (HAF) programme.

Check eligibility and apply online:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/fsm>



If you are in receipt of free school meals and your child/ren are Pupil Premium, you are entitled to access one after school club each term. Please speak to the office for more information.

REMINDERS...

Here is a reminder of support for families:



Service	Contact Details
Family Support Worker 9am-4pm (apart from Bank Holidays)	Duty Line 01926 412 412
Family Support Drop in Sessions	Click here for the website
Family Information Service	Duty Line 01926 742 274
Parenting Programmes	Click here for the website
HAF Program Queries	Email: hafprogramme@warwickshire.gov.uk
Childline	0800 1111
RISE CRISIS Team	08081 966798
RISE Navigation Hub	0300 200 2021
Adult Mental Health CRISIS	08081 966798
National Centre for Domestic Violence	0800 970 2070
REFUGE	0800 408 1552

If you have an immediate safeguarding concern please contact:

Children & Families Front Door: **01926 414144** or the emergency services as appropriate.



Book of the Month

January's book
Of the month is...

<https://youtu.be/iFROP8tWeel?si=IPc1Jrh7aSHrgIMq>



Read by
Mrs O'Hanlon

Online Safety Newsletter

January 2024

WhatsApp

You must be at least 16 years old to register for and use WhatsApp.

WhatsApp is a free messaging app that allows you to send messages, voice notes, photos and videos.

What should I be aware of?

Group chats: One of the key features is the group chat function. Everybody in the group, even if they are not one of your child's phone contacts, will be able to see all messages within that group. If your child is added to a group with someone that they have previously blocked, that person can still see their messages and send them messages within the group chat. In settings, you can change who can add your child to groups. You can leave a group chat at any point so talk to your child and encourage them to leave any chat that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Location sharing: you can share your location on WhatsApp. Talk to your child about when this would be appropriate to use but also the potential danger of sharing their location, for example with strangers.

Blocking/Reporting: Show your child how to block and report other users or inappropriate content. You can find out how to do it based on your child's device here:

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/1142481766359885/>

Further information

NSPCC provide further advice and tips to help keep your child safe:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/2023-01-12-is-whatsapp-safe-for-my-child/>

New devices

If your child has a new device, have you set up parental controls?



Consoles

All consoles offer parental controls such as limiting the time spent on the device or restricting who your child can communicate with. Find out the specific settings below:

- **PlayStation:** <https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/psn-safety-parents-guide/>

- **Xbox:** <https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/family-hub>

- **Nintendo Switch:**

<https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-1183145.html>



Mobiles/Tablets

You can set up parental controls and restrictions on most mobile devices, which can limit what your child can access. Additionally, make sure appropriate settings are applied on the apps your child is using.

- Apple devices: <https://www.apple.com/uk/families/>
- Android devices: <https://families.google/familylink/>

Further information

Internet Matters provide a checklist here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/e-safety-checklist-getting-your-kids-tech-devices-set-up-safe>

LEGO Fortnite – PEGI 7

Lego Fortnite is free to play (in game purchases are available though). The game has been rated as PEGI 7, meaning that the content is suitable for children over the age of 7. However, you should be aware that this game can be played with up to seven people (or solo). Lego Fortnite is only accessible on Fortnite, so you must download the main game. When setting up an account, if your child is under the age of 13, then they will be given a 'cabined account,' therefore certain features will be disabled (such as communicating with other players) unless you override them.

Please ensure you set the parental controls as appropriate for your child, we also recommend setting the appropriate settings on the console itself.

There are two worlds available - Survival or Sandbox, you can find out more about each world here so you can decide which would be best for your child:

<https://www.lego.com/en-gb/themes/fortnite/lego-fortnite-parents-guide>

YouTube is intended for users over the age of 13 (however, children of all ages may use the Service and YouTube Kids if enabled by a parent/legal guardian).

What if my child is under the age of 13?

If your child is under the age of 13 then your child should use either YouTube Kids or a Supervised Account. Which option you choose, will depend on your child's age and your requirements.

- **YouTube Kids** – this is a separate app that includes a smaller selection of videos based on the age you select:

- Preschool (ages four and under)
- Younger (ages 5–8)
- Older (ages 9–12)

- **Supervised accounts** – this is a parent-managed version of YouTube. You can select one of the following options, again depending on your child's age and your requirements:

- **Explore** - Generally for viewers aged 9+.
- **Explore more** - Generally for viewers aged 13+
- **Most of YouTube** - This setting includes almost everything on YouTube except for videos marked as 18+ and other videos that may not be appropriate for viewers using supervised experiences.

Google have created a table to show the differences between YouTube Kids and a Supervised account to help in your decision:

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/10315420>

Posting videos

You should be over 13 to post videos. If your child does post videos on YouTube, ensure they understand what information they should keep private and what to do if they receive negative comments. Talk to them about the different settings available -

1. Public: anyone can view the video.
2. Private: video can only be viewed by users that you select.
3. Unlisted: only people who have the link to the video can view it.

YouTube have produced these safety tips for teens when posting content:

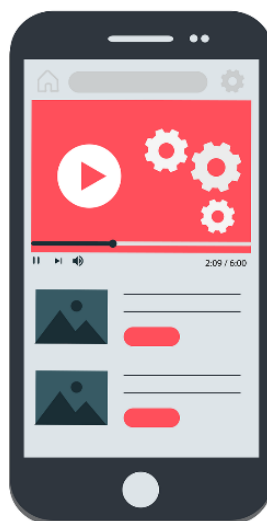
<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802244>

How can I make YouTube safer?

- **Explore YouTube together** and see what they like to watch. Make sure your child understands that they can **talk to you** if they see anything that makes them feel uncomfortable online.

- **Restricted mode** - is an additional setting (when logged in via a Google account) to restrict the availability of mature content.

- Ensure your child knows how to **report inappropriate content/comments**. Find out more here: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2802027>.



A Guide to the Online Safety Bill

The Online Safety Bill is a new set of laws to protect people online. The laws will make social media companies more responsible for the safety of their users on their platforms. The Government have created a guide to the new laws detailing how the laws will protect children and adults. For example, the new laws mean social media companies will have to show how they are enforcing age limits.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/a-guide-to-the-online-safety-bill>

YouTube Content Warning

The INEQE Safeguarding Group have published a report warning about the YouTube cartoon series called Jeffy. Due to the content being animated, viewers may believe that it is suitable for children to watch when in fact the content is inappropriate. You can find out more here:

<https://ineqe.com/2023/11/09/safeguarding-update-youtube-cartoon-jeffy>

World Events

There are a lot of distressing events happening around the world, which your child may see online. Childnet have published an article discussing how you can support your child when they see something worrying or upsetting online. The article also directs you to other organisations that you can contact if you require further help and support:

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/navigating-violent-online-content-from-global-events/>

Dream Big Shine Bright

Courageous Advocacy in action!

These children from year 5 have created a new group called The Amazon Protection Society. They have been so keen to share their passion *and* their message about protecting the Amazon. So, they planned and delivered a whole school worship to the children and have organised a bake sale too.



What wonderful advocates for a great cause!



Follow the link to a powerful video that the team shared as the finale to their presentation

<https://youtu.be/ZKumZJPClec?si=GJRbpmnrCTY8xeCF>



Dream Big Shine Bright

Chess club

Thank you to William for inspiring so many of our children to play Chess on a Thursday lunchtime.

William has been teaching and coaching children of all ages during his lunchtime – last week there were over 30 children playing and watching the matches!

Well done William!



Year 5



everyone



you



Ways of showing love...

Spending time with someone

Praying for each other



Being kind

Bringing to help

taking turns

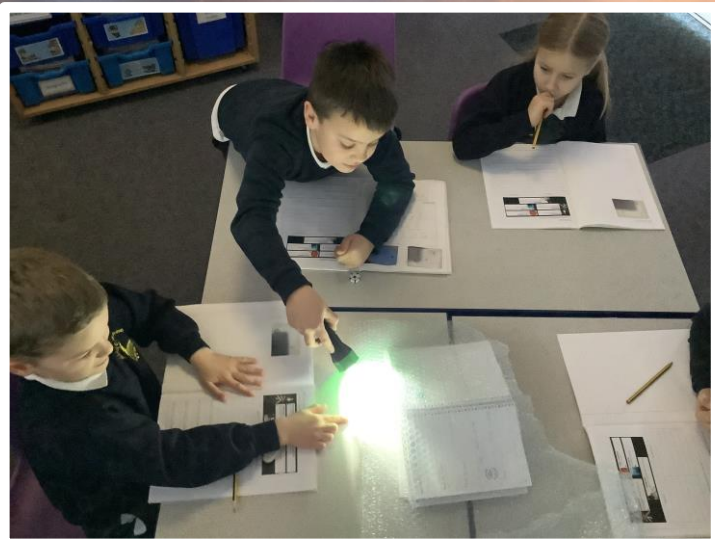
Churches of the Alcester Minster

LIVING LIFE IN ALL ITS FULLNESS
IN RURAL WARWICKSHIRE

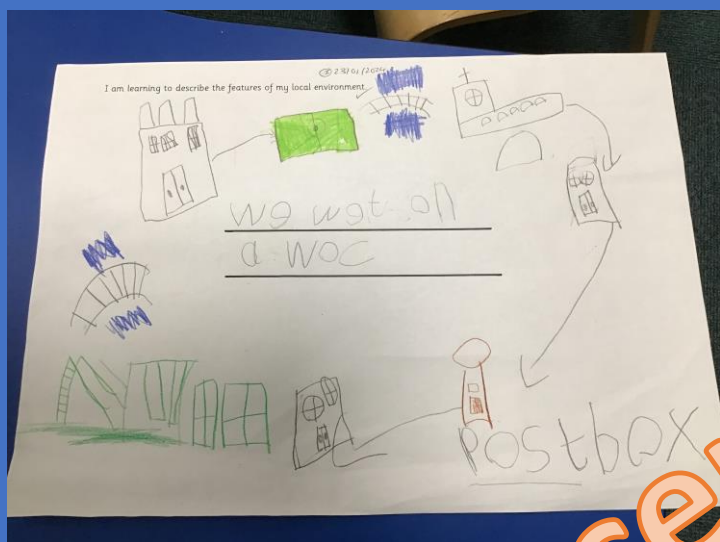
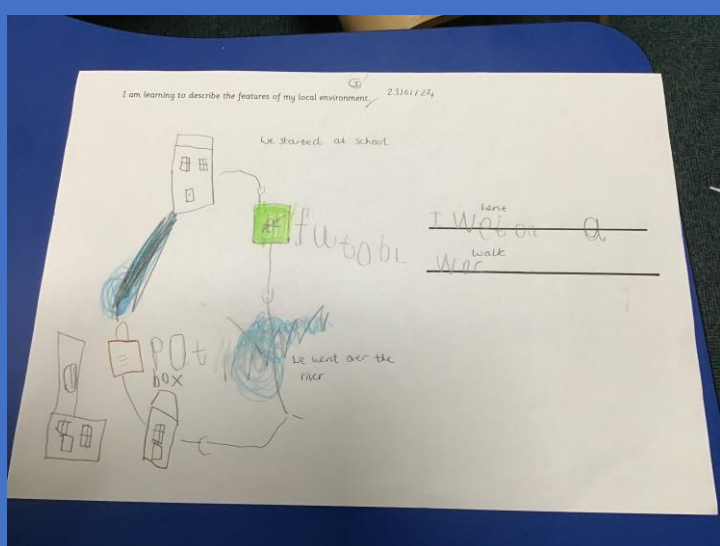
With support from Jen, Children and families worker for Alcester Minster Churches, the year 5 children collaborated to create a display for Alcester's Window Wanderland.

The display looked fantastic in the window of Church House.

Year 3 Science

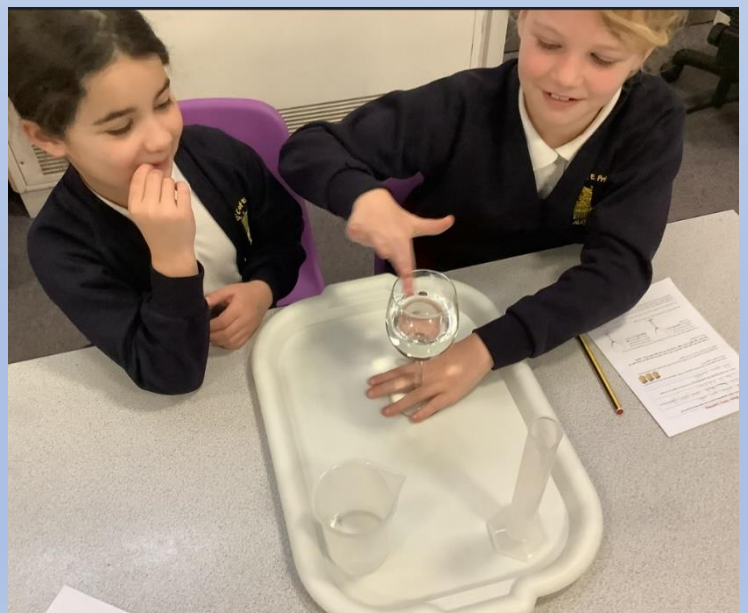
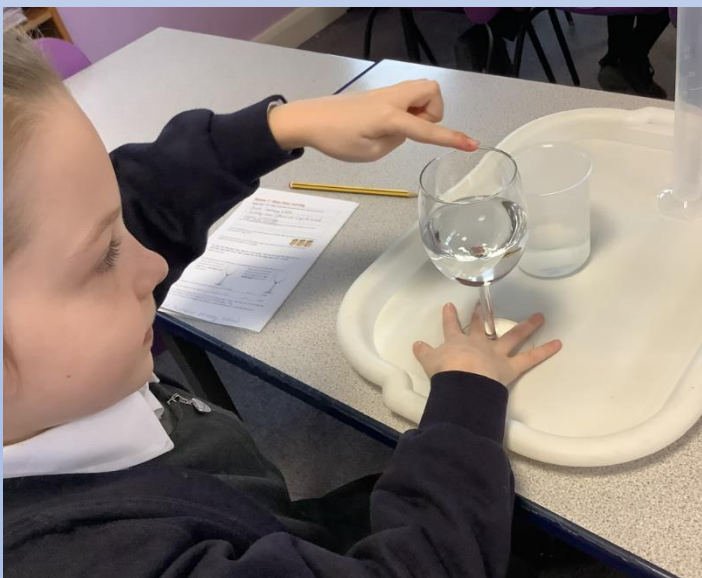
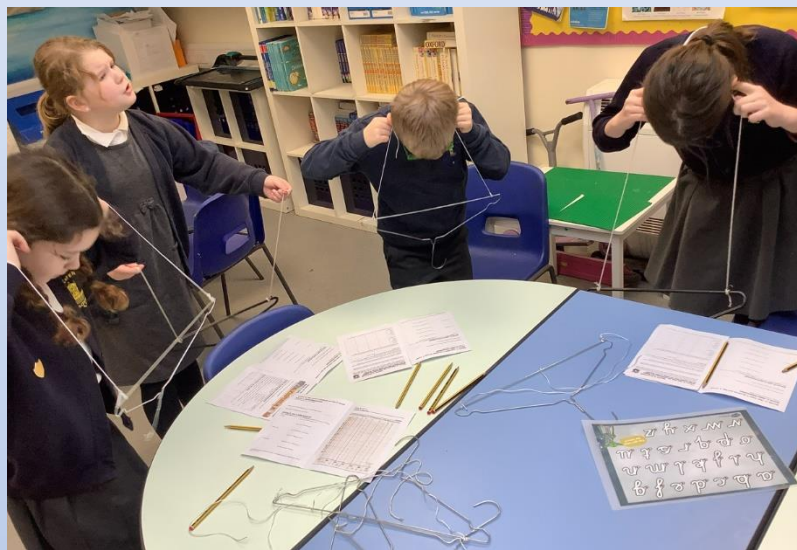
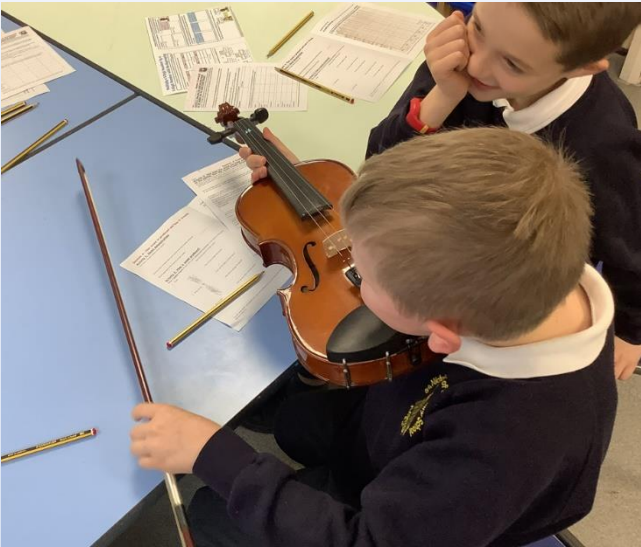


This term in Science, Year 3 are learning about Light. We have enjoyed investigating which materials are reflective and which are not. We discussed which jobs would be required to use reflective clothing and why wearing reflective clothing is important.



Reception have been very busy this half term. We have been learning all about China and Chinese new year. reception went on their trip to China. We have also been learning all about our local environment. We went on a walk around Alcester and then the children have been creating their own maps of our journey.

Year 4 Ogden science



On Tuesday 23rd January, Year 4 hosted a Science Sound Day. We were visited by some children from other schools within the Ogden Trust, and we all took part in a range of activities related to sound. The children had such a fun and educational day learning all about how sound is produced, how it travels and how you can change it.



Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST)

Tips For Wellness:

INCLUSION/BELONGING

We all wish to belong and feel valuable. It is about honouring and embracing people; regardless of race, gender, disability, medical, or any other need. Being included can help you develop a sense of belonging, acceptance and self-worth. Feeling like you belong motivates you to participate in school, after school clubs, community groups etc, and fosters a deeper connection.

Helping others to feel included, and forming friendships with people who are different from you, can help others feel connected too, boosting their happiness and overall wellbeing. Being the person that makes others feel included can also make you feel happy and raise your self-esteem.

Tips for Inclusion

- Reach out to others. Get to know a new person in your class, or sit next to someone different at lunch.
- Be patient and kind. Listen to others and allow them to express themselves.
- Ask a friend "What makes you unique?". Remember to listen and respect their answer. We are all unique.
- Respect someone for their specific skill set and contribute to shared goals.
- Challenge yourself to learn something new. Read stories about interesting people and role models from different and diverse backgrounds.

#ThanksKids recognises the efforts and kindness of children and young people, and thanks them with personalised #NHSStars certificates. If you know a child or young person that deserves recognition for going above and beyond, don't wait, nominate!

thankskids@covwarkpt.nhs.uk

MHST are available to support you and your school throughout the school year including term time and school holidays. Please contact your school's Mental Health Lead for information and advice.



RISE

MHST

Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST)

Tips For Wellness:

GIVING TO OTHERS

Giving to others has a positive effect on our mental wellbeing. When we do things for people in our lives, feel-good chemicals are released into our body which can increase our mood, self-esteem, and happiness. This also reduces stress. It can even help us live longer!

Giving means putting yourself in someone else's shoes, thinking about what they might need, and acting to help them in some way.

Sometimes small things can be just as effective as big gestures. Try helping others for a week and see if it makes a difference to your own wellbeing

- Holding a door open
- Smiling and saying hello
- Checking on someone who is alone
- Picking up something that someone has dropped
- Listening to someone who needs to talk
- Helping to do chores around the house
- Making a cup of tea



Five reasons for giving!

Top Tip: Don't over-do it. Giving must start with yourself. You can only give your time and energy to others if you have enough left for yourself.

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