



Parent Newsletter
Friday 29th January 2021

Dear Mums, Dads and Carers,

What a week! I hope you all had magnificent fun in the snow and I will be thinking of you all this weekend as it is due to snow again! It was certainly a welcome break for many of our families – something novel in a time when nothing changes. A few bits of news from this week and information about next week's focus on mental health.

Lateral flow testing

Staff working in school now have access to lateral flow testing (LFT). LFTs are one of the new tools being used to help detect and fight COVID-19. They are quick and convenient for staff to administer at home to identify COVID without symptoms. They will be used in combination with our other control measures such as high levels of cleaning, regular washing hands and social distancing.

Face Coverings

For parents coming onto the school grounds, please remember to wear a face mask if you are able to do so.

Distance (Remote) Learning

We have now published our Distance (Remote) Learning guidance on our website. There isn't anything new on there that you aren't already aware of but do feel free to have a read:

http://www.leavesden.herts.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Distance-Learning-Remote-education-provision_information-for-parents.pdf.

Making small changes to your day

Some parents have shared with us that they have found this week particularly challenging. It is not surprising that we all have ups and downs. When you're feeling down or unproductive, try to make small changes. Here are some suggestions that helped some of our families this week:

- Grab a colouring book and turn on the radio – this can be very therapeutic, even for adults
- Ask a friend in your class for a video call and complete one of your home learning tasks together

- Don't try to complete everything that day – choose two tasks and do them really well so you feel proud
- Reorganise your timetable so you're starting the day with something different
- Add extra PE sessions into your day so you can get up and about more often
- Order a pack of playing cards and plan a games evening
- If none of the above works... take a morning or an afternoon away from the classroom to refresh yourselves – do something that doesn't involve a screen

Mental Health Week

Next week (starting Monday 1st February) is Mental health week and the theme this year is 'Express yourself'. A grid of activities linked to this theme will be available on your child's Google Classroom. Select one of five activities suggested each day and share your photos and ideas with your child's teacher. There will also be a little surprise for your children at the end of the week (more info to follow). Even more ideas and activities can be found through this link:

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers/>

Knowing how to sustain good mental health can sound abstract but here are five ways to wellbeing which help to break it down:

Connect

There is strong evidence that indicates that feeling close to, and valued by, other people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to functioning well in the world. It's clear that social relationships are critical for promoting wellbeing and for acting as a buffer against mental ill health for people of all ages. *Suggestion: why not try to connect with someone you haven't spoken to in a long time.*

Be active

Regular physical activity is associated with lower rates of depression and anxiety across all age groups. Exercise is essential for slowing age-related cognitive decline and for promoting well-being. It doesn't need to be particularly intense for you to feel good - slower-paced activities, such as walking, can have the benefit too. *Suggestion: make sure you use your daily opportunity to leave the house for exercise.*

Take notice

Reminding yourself to 'take notice' can strengthen and broaden awareness. Awareness of your surroundings enhances your self-understanding and allows you to make positive choices based on

your own values and motivations. Take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you. *Suggestion: find a new route to the shops.*

Learn

Continued learning through life enhances self-esteem and encourages social interaction and a more active life (learning isn't just for children). *Suggestion: Set up an online book club (for you and your friends or your child and their friends).*

Give

Participation in social and community life has attracted a lot of attention in the field of wellbeing research. Individuals who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy. *Suggestion: Make something and send it to someone to make them smile.*

Free WiFi

BT are offering free Wi-Fi to families who are in receipt of free school meals. Access is provided in the form of a unique user name and a unique password which once logged in, gives access to BT's UK network of over 5 million hotspots until July 31st 2021. Please check coverage before applying. We expect BT Wi-Fi will reach approximately 20% of UK premises. Access is dependent on being in range of an available BT Wi-Fi signal and is subject to [BT's Wi-Fi Acceptable Use Policy](#). You can check if you are within range of a BT hotspot using this link: <https://www.btwifi.com/find/>. If you wish to apply for an access code, email the office: admin@leavesden.education.

Other ideas for home...

What art and music. Suggestion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxQXJF1fGQk>

Have a lovely weekend everyone!

Mrs Lyon and the Leavesden Team