



HOLLY PARK NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 18

Friday 5th February 2021

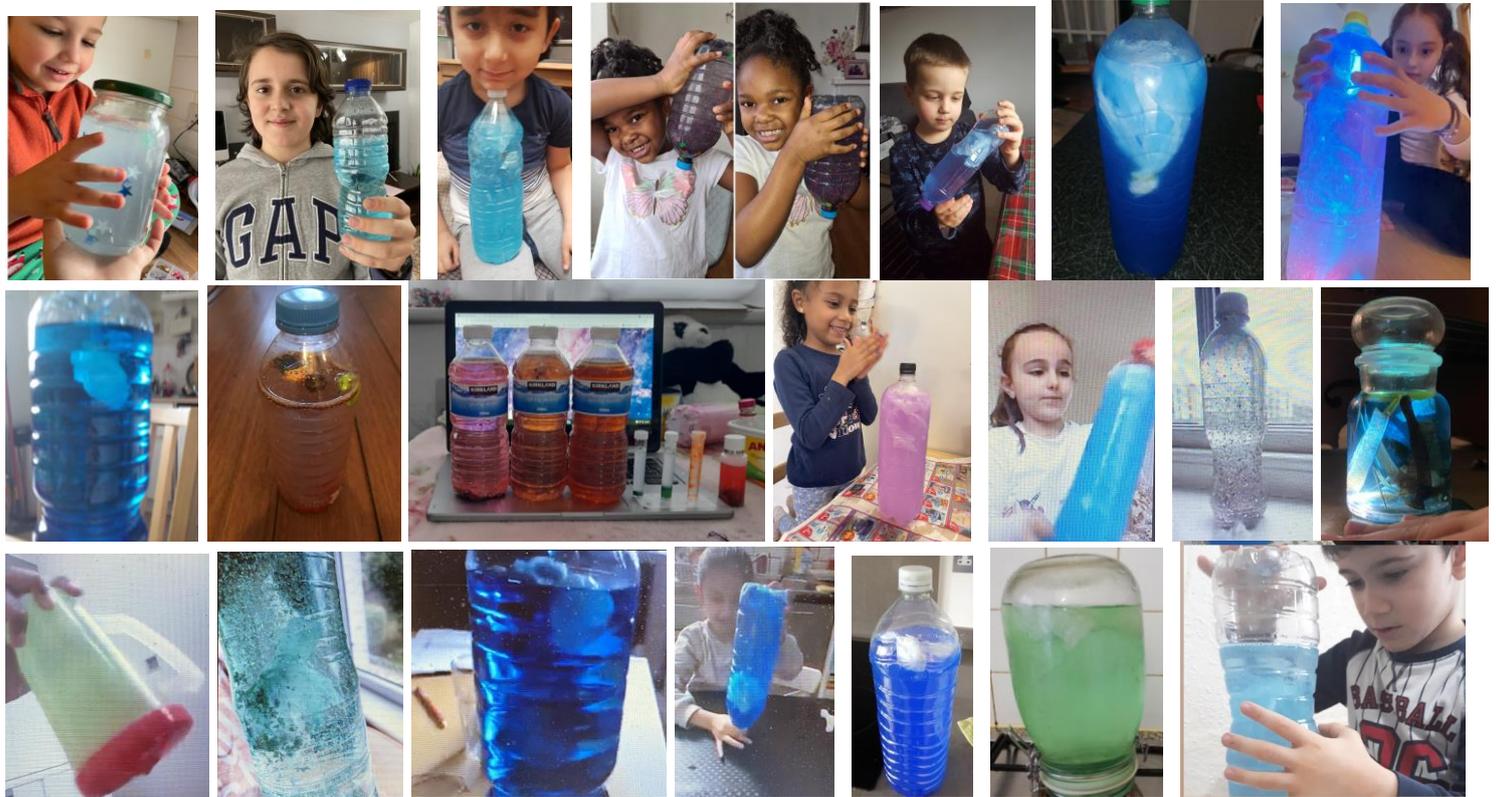
www.hollyparkschool.co.uk

Well Done and Thank You

I am not sure about everyone else, but I have found the last couple of weeks of lockdown hard, both as a parent and as a working mum. Like you, I am constantly juggling my job, my son's school work, keeping a household going etc. We are all in this together and we are all going through the same emotions whoever we are. Lockdown three seems to be harder than the last two – maybe because we have been through it twice already, maybe because we don't know when it will end, maybe because in lockdown one the weather was good and it was all a bit novel, maybe because lockdown two had the glimmer of Christmas to look forward to. This time the weather is cold and it's dark. We have been in this for nearly a year now. So I want to say WELL DONE and thank you to our parents as you are doing a great job. I know there are high expectations of getting through school work and everyone wants to ensure their child comes out of this pandemic with minimal loss of learning, but we also have to give ourselves a break and admit it is ok if one day (or even 2, if that is needed) our children don't finish all of the work set or they play on a laptop or games console for too long etc. This week is the first National Children's Mental Health Week and I think this is so important at the moment. With this in mind we have had activities for Mental Health Week this week, continued Wellbeing Wednesday and are introducing a No Screen Day next week. Please remember as parents to be kind to yourself too – you are crucial to your families and you need to look after you and think about your own wellbeing,

Wellbeing Wednesday

I hope that the children and indeed all of the family are still enjoying Wellbeing Wednesday. This week Mrs Puzey did a video showing how to make a sensory bottle. She made a jellyfish bottle and a glitter bottle. The bottles are very calming and can help children get back into a zone they want to be in. Here are some of the bottles:



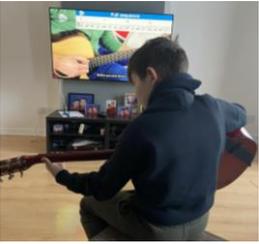
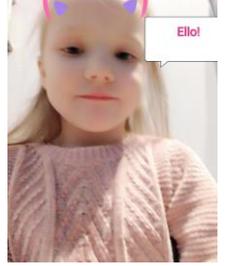
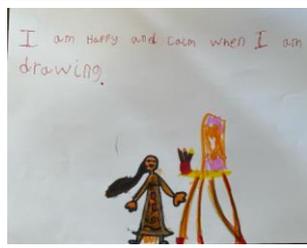


There was also an activity to help children to hold on to a happy memory by using their hand as a template. The happy memory is put in the centre of the palm and then the five fingers recall the 5 senses surrounding the event that help children to recall the event. The idea is that when children are upset or sad or scared or worried, they can recall a happy memory to help them get through their immediate emotional state. Here are some hands:



Children's Mental Health Week

It has been Children's Mental Health Week this week. The theme this year was 'Express Yourself'. By talking openly about mental health from a young age, children can learn to better understand their emotions, break down stigma, and feel safe enough to reach out for help when it's needed. One way to look after our mental health is to notice and share how we are feeling. Expressing ourselves in creative ways can help us do this. Creative activities can also help us to feel calm and happy and express ourselves in ways that we might find easier than talking about them. On Tuesday Mrs Fitzpatrick talked about this in assembly and then the children will be asked to do a creative activity such as drawing, painting, dancing, singing, making a sculpture or any other way that will help them to express themselves. Children at Holly Park did art work, dancing, singing, construction, meditation, cooking, construction and played instruments to express themselves. Here are some of their activities to express themselves:





Today as part of Mental Health Week we are having Inside Out Day – our feelings are on the inside and we need to let them out and talk about them. I hope that you have talked about this at home and how important it is. Wearing our clothes inside out highlights two things

- That we should talk about our feelings. Let them out, don't keep them inside.
- That we should be kind as we don't know how others are feeling on the inside

Children in the HUB today came with their uniform inside out!



Parents on Google Classroom

The staff are really appreciating all the kind words of appreciation they are getting through the phone calls that they are making to parents and messages through email. This is really giving the staff a much needed boost to carry on the great work they are doing with enthusiasm and energy.

A reminder again, that Google Classroom is not a chat facility for parents. Please do not post messages in the stream unless you have a real need to. The Classroom is predominantly for teachers and children. The odd message is fine for clarification but we do not want parents posting messages constantly on here. Please can I ask that if you do write something that you think before putting something into writing on the stream, especially if it may come across as critical - think about the tone you are using and how this comes across to staff and other parents who will read it. More importantly please remember that 30 children might possibly read it too. It is not a social media site. Staff are working extremely hard in a completely different way than they are used to, they are out of their comfort zone (as we all are) and they care deeply about getting it right for the children in their classes. We are constantly reviewing what we do, researching different ways of doing things for the children and sometimes it might not be perfect and mistakes can happen, but we learn and adapt and strive to do our best. On a different note, if your child has struggled with an activity, found it difficult or not understood - you (or they-if they are older) can add a private message to the teacher in the private comment box when the work is uploaded.

Local Charity Day

Next week is our Local Charity day. We are supporting BEAM. BEAM helps people who are homeless by paying for them to have training so that they can learn to do a job and then it helps them to find a job. Beam supports homeless people to gain the relevant skills and training for jobs and also supports them to find employment. The charity was founded by Alex Stephany. He was inspired to start the charity after getting to know a homeless man at his local Tube station. The man had spent many years out of work. Alex would buy him cups of coffee and pairs of socks, but could see that things were not getting better for this man. When the man had a heart attack, Alex asked himself: "What could we do to make a real difference to that man's life?" The answer lay in giving him the skills to support himself. Alex knew that would cost much more than a coffee. He decided to set up Beam to enable others to help.

There will be an activity for the children to do on Google classroom connected to this and we are asking families to donate £1 via school money to this charity.



No Screen Tuesday – 9th February

Next Tuesday will be No Screen Tuesday. This day is about doing activities that are educational, fun and different to the norm and don't require a screen. Several schools are doing this as a special day every few weeks. We thought it would be a great activity to do that all the family could enjoy which would hopefully take the pressure off the school curriculum for a day, It is also a day to rest and recharge. We have sent out the activities ahead of the day so that you can prepare for the day with any necessary art and craft resources, baking ingredients, seeds etc. We are asking children to do each activity for about 30 minutes and that they do between 6 and 8 of the activities listed. Our only requirement is that children send evidence of what they have done at the end of the day back on Google Classroom. We would ask you to ensure that

children are not using screens such as TV, ipads, laptops etc on this day. The activities are at the end of the newsletter and have been emailed to parents.

Safer Internet Day

The 9th February is safer Internet Day. As we are having our no screen day that day we are having an online safety lesson on another day that week. During this week, each year group will be doing an Internet safety activity based on online safety from their year group curriculum expectation - so it will be age group appropriate. Internet safety is very important and is not just about older children. Just like when we teach children to cross roads safely – doing it slowly with parental guidance and step by step – this is how developing online safety needs to be. Children start from a young age and can learn some do's and don'ts about being on all kinds of devices and using the Internet, Apps, games, social media etc. Do look out for this lesson next week.

Dates

Some upcoming dates for your attention:

Tues 9th Feb- No Screen Day (no music, Spanish or Google Meets)

W/k of 8th Feb - An Online Safety activity this week for Internet Safety Day

Fri 12th - Local Charity Day – Miss Michael will have an activity to do

Half Term - A reminder that the school will be closed for half term from 15th to 19th February. There will be no remote work set that week.

Tues 24th Feb - Y2 parent curriculum meeting online.

Weds 25th Feb - Y1 phonics meeting for parents online.

Fri 26th Feb - Maths Day - all maths activities on this day

Thurs 4th March - World Book Day - all reading and book based activities on this day

Google Meets and Live Sessions

The Google Meet sessions are going well. The children are enjoying seeing the teachers and some of their class. A reminder that these sessions are for social interaction, wellbeing and pastoral support just as circle times in school would be.

Along with our 6 other local primary schools and most primary schools in Barnet we are not doing live teaching sessions for very sound educational reasons. A reminder from our policy why we are not doing live teaching:

Live teaching will not be made available during a period of closure. This decision has been made for several reasons, most importantly the following:

- Video streaming requires all students in every household to be online, separately but simultaneously, for long periods during the normal school day. Not all of our families have the hardware, and/or a sufficiently reliable internet connection to enable this to happen, nor do they have enough hardware for all their children to be online simultaneously.
- The above technology requirements also apply to our staff team.
- Also, even if sufficient numbers of staff are well at any one time many staff are also in a position whereby they are managing their teaching load alongside their own family commitments during normal working hours.
- There are also numerous issues relating to safeguarding and online learning. To give just one example, official guidelines recommend that ideally any streamed lessons should be delivered in teams of at least two staff. It is difficult to consider how this would be feasible for us, even at a limited level, in any circumstances.
- Safeguarding for our children remains our highest priority and there are now growing reports of Zoom being hacked. Other platforms such as WhatsApp live calls are just not acceptable for a school situation. We are happy that using the Google Classroom for Years 2 to 6 provides a safe place for teachers and children to be in contact about the learning.
- It is also not realistic to recreate a classroom experience for 30 children via video streaming. There is little scope for engagement, monitoring or meaningful interaction, all of which severely curtails the learning experience for children involved.
- It is not desirable for young children to spend hours every day in front of a screen, whether for education or recreational purposes, as it can have a detrimental effect on their sleep, concentration and wellbeing. Young children need a broad range of activities, with time spend outside wherever possible.
- Online lessons are not desirable as a tool for primary children, as the teacher-pupil interaction is not easily replicated in this way. The bulk of tasks should be flexible lists of activities that can be chosen by pupils and families to do at convenient times.
- If a child misses a live session they miss everything. If they are late or have technical difficulties they miss the learning.
- Pre-recorded lessons are the Teaching Union's preference, as a great alternative to live lessons. They allow the teacher to explain key ideas and methods, modelling writing, maths, drawing and so on, and can be paused where necessary and watched at a time that suits the pupil and their family.
- Teachers teaching live from home, especially those with caring responsibilities can be very difficult.

There is NO requirement or expectation from Ofsted that there will be live teaching.

Whilst home education is a requirement, how it is done is not specified and is up to each individual school. Schools must do what is best for them - what is practical and suits staff capacity etc.

The NEU teaching union advice is that teachers should not do live lessons during any bubble closure or lockdown.

It's No Screen Tuesday!

Everyday Activities That Count As Learning

So today - apart from logging in to find this sheet and posting evidence of your day back on to Google Classroom we want you to choose between 6 and 8 of the activities below and spend half an hour on each of them.

It is a good idea to spend time without screens. Please avoid screens such as TV, ipads, laptops, phones etc today and see if you can enjoy these experiences below and have a day without screens! Enjoy

<p><i>Baking</i></p> 	<p><i>Take a walk</i></p> 	<p><i>Write a letter</i></p> 	<p><i>Listen to music</i></p> 
<p><i>Read</i></p> 	<p><i>Play board games</i></p> 	<p><i>Do a puzzle</i></p> 	<p><i>Build a den</i></p> 
<p><i>Make something out of Lego</i></p> 	<p><i>Garden or plant some seeds</i></p> 	<p><i>Paint a picture</i></p> 	<p><i>Cook a meal</i></p> 
<p><i>Do some sewing</i></p> 	<p><i>Do a performance for your family</i> (puppets, dancing, singing,)</p> 	<p><i>Make a board game</i></p> 	<p><i>Exercise</i> (cycle, run, yoga etc)</p> 
<p><i>Learn some magic tricks</i></p> 	<p><i>Draw a picture</i></p> 	<p><i>Play a card game</i></p> 	<p><i>Learn to Knit</i></p> 