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Dear All

Thank you for remembering Red Nose Day and for all the donations received so far.



£250 collected so far. Thank you very much for your generosity!

A message from Mrs Bridson (Headteacher)

The second week of wider opening has been tricky for many of us. We are just not used to being in big groups of people. This includes the staff as well as the children. The noise and bustle of school life can be a little overwhelming! (Lovely noise and lovely bustle but still a shock to the system!)

We all need to be brave (in our own way) because humans need to connect with other humans. Following a year of COVID-19 disruption, we all need to steady ourselves and continue our personal journeys towards life after lockdowns!

Why? Because... in the long term, living like this, is not good for us. Social connection can lower anxiety and depression, help us regulate our emotions, lead to higher self-esteem and empathy, and actually improve our immune systems. By neglecting our need to connect, we put our long-term wellbeing at risk.

While technology has been a useful tool to connect us over the last year, the screens around us disconnect us from nature, from ourselves, and from others. Wi-Fi alone is not enough to fulfil our social needs – we need face-to-face interaction to thrive. Technology should be enhancing our connection to others, not replacing it.

Our inherent need for human connection does not mean that we should all become social butterflies. Having human connection looks different for each person. We understand this.

We also understand that after an extremely traumatic year we all feel **discombobulated!** As we take each step on our journey towards a more social life style just remember to be patient with yourselves, each other and with us!

A Message from Mrs Watkins (Deputy Head and SENDco)

It has been lovely to have everyone back together and looking forward / hoping that things will soon get back to 'normal', (whatever normal is)!

For all of us, adults and children, the last year has been one of uncertainty and having to deal with things we could never imagine. Missing our families and friends, missing doing our favourite things and going to our favourite places has had a big effect on everyone.

I only realised this week that the thought of being somewhere where there are many people, actually scares me and I've been in school all the way through this time. I'm sure many of you will feel the same.

Although the children have appeared happy to be back in school, with their friends, having fun and learning, we are also very aware that this transition has been very difficult for many of them. Classes of 30 seem like big groups. The quietness and stillness of home and of the smaller groups in school has ended. This has been tricky for everyone to varying degrees of trickiness.

All the anxious moments of the last year make it difficult to concentrate and to sleep. Children may be tired, some feel anxious about transitions, changes and worry about what is going to happen in the future.

These are all very normal feelings for the situation we find ourselves in. We will support children with their feelings and help them get through this time.

Many parents have asked me if I have any information about 'anxiety' and how they can help their child/children with this big transition. It seems a good idea to share some ideas with everyone. Below is an 'easy read' about anxiety and a few tips of how we can all help each other to move forward.

Anxiety

Human beings have many different feelings; another word for feelings is emotions. Sometimes emotions change because of what is going on around us, and sometimes they change because of our thoughts.

Emotions can feel small and quiet or big and loud. Some feel good and some feel uncomfortable. When you are feeling an emotion, it can feel like the emotion is taking over your whole body, which can lead to you having emotions and thoughts that are not very positive. **It is ok to feel whatever you are feeling even if it is one of those emotions that don't feel comfortable, like sadness, anger or anxiety.**

Anxiety is an emotion we feel when we are nervous, afraid and worried all in one go. It is the feeling you get when you can't get the worry out of your mind, one that starts to be part of your thoughts so you don't have time to think about other things.

You may feel anxious about something that happened in the past. You may worry that it will happen again or that something might happen to you or someone you love. Sometimes, you might not know what is making you feel anxious or you might think others will not understand your worries.

Anxiety is just one of the emotions humans feel and it is normal! In fact, emotions can keep you safe and help you make sensible choices. Humans feel scared and nervous in order to keep safe from danger. In the Stone Age, this meant watching out for sabre-tooth tigers... today, worrying or being cautious helps humans to remember to be careful in the same way. For example when crossing the road.

What does anxiety feel like?



There are many different types of anxiety. Some children can feel very anxious about some in particular, others can feel anxious all the time, with lots of small worries that fill up their minds.

So what can we do?

Dealing with anxiety

Remember it is OK to feel like this, anxiety is a normal feeling/emotion.

As a parent/adult, **it is important to validate your child's feeling and emotions**. Remind children that it is OK to feel any emotion and show understanding. When your child is feeling anxious, they are probably very scared, so it is vital to stay calm.

Feeling anxious comes from the part of the brain, which controls emotions. If your brain senses danger or a threat (even if it is not a 'real' or immediately present, just something you are worried about) it sends messages all around your body, which causes your body to react, for example, your heart may beat faster, you may get really hot, or you may feel sick. (See above)

When you feel anxiety building in your body, don't panic! Here are some quick tricks you can do anywhere to help yourself feel calm or do with another person to help him or her.

- Count backwards from 10
- Think about the ground beneath your shoes, can you feel it? What does it feel like? Wiggle your toes?
- Imagine you have a mug of hot chocolate in front of you, breathe in to smell it and breathe out to cool it down
- Close your eyes and imagine a garden, what flowers are there? What colours can you see? What can you hear?
- Take a moment to notice four things around you that you can see, then three you can hear, two you can touch and one you can smell. Say the things you've noticed either to yourself or out loud.

One of the things we are learning in school to help us all feel calmer is different types of breathing. The following link is for 5-finger breathing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HQVZgpyVQ78>

Finally...

Keep going, be brave and feel good that your 'Lockdown Hair' cannot be as bad as mine is!



Kindest regards

Kay Bridson