



PARK HILL JUNIOR SCHOOL

Stanhope Road, Croydon, CR0 5NS Tel: 020 8686 8623

RESPECTFUL - KIND - RESILIENT - RIGOROUS - ASPIRATIONAL



1st February 2021

LEADERSHIP TEAM MESSAGE

Dear Parents and Carers,

The 1st - 7th February 2021 is **Children's Mental Health Week**, an opportunity to focus on the importance of children and young people's mental health. In this month's newsletter we have included some of the support available for supporting children's mental health.

There are times when we all feel the strain. As parents and carers, there are ways we can support children and young people to give them the best chance to stay mentally healthy.

Some children and young people have enjoyed being off school, while others will have really struggled – with the coronavirus outbreak keeping them at home and away from friends. Others may be coming to terms with family problems, loss or changes to their living situation. It's still uncertain what further changes we all may face.

Feelings like these will gradually ease for most, but there are always steps you can take to support them emotionally and help them cope with problems they face.

Next week we will be hosting three virtual events for parents and carers which we hope you will be able to join:

Please join us on Zoom for a **drop in with the leadership team**. This is a chance for you to ask any pressing questions about the school during this lockdown period:

2nd February Year 3 & 4 from 6pm-7pm

3rd February Year 5 & 6 from 6pm-7pm

Join the drop using the Zoom Meeting ID: 257 658 4743
Passcode: parkhill

On Friday 5th February 5.30-6.30pm please join us for a Parent/Carer **Workshop: Helping Children to Cope with Anxiety**. Please see details opposite and a link to the workshop.

Please remember that our staff are still here for you and your family. The school office remains open every day and you can contact other staff through the office by email: office@phjs.foliotrust.uk or by calling 0208 686 8623.

Stay safe and well,

The Park Hill Junior School Leadership Team

PARENT WORKSHOP

HELPING CHILDREN TO COPE WITH ANXIETY

Friday 5th February 5.30-6.30pm

We are very much aware that some of our children are feeling anxious and worried about the current lockdown and pandemic. To help you support them, we are offering a one-hour workshop that we hope will help you to understand your child's emotions and give you some practical ideas for supporting them at home.

The workshop will look at:

- How the brain works, how it develops in children, and how it responds to stress
- What anxiety is and what it's for
- Ideas for reducing anxiety and promoting positive thinking

In line with the current restrictions the workshop will be held online and will be presented by Zoe Barkham Manlow, who is the Croydon Education Improvement Officer for health and wellbeing.

To join the meeting: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

If you are unable to attend, the slides will be made available afterwards and you are of course always welcome to contact us with any questions.

EVERY MIND MATTERS

The [Every Mind Matters platform](#) has a [COVID-19 hub](#) that includes tips and support on how to deal with change, cope with money worries and job uncertainty and how to look after your mental wellbeing while staying at home. It also includes practical tips and videos from experts on dealing with [stress](#) and [anxiety](#), boosting your [mood](#), [sleeping](#) better and what you can do to help others – including advice for [parents](#) and for [children and young people](#).

www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/childrens-mental-health/

KEEPING ACTIVE

When you're going through a difficult time, it can be hard to think about taking exercise - especially if you're stuck indoors for most of the day. But for adults and children alike, keeping fit and working out can do wonders for both our physical and mental health.

Easy ways for children to keep active, even if you cannot get outdoors: www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities/indoor-activities
www.sportengland.org/jointhemovement

LOCKDOWN LUNCHES

Change4Life have created recipes and shopping lists for families which can be used to create lunches for around £15 each week – perfect for anyone receiving the Free School Meals Vouchers!

www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/lunch/cheap-lockdown-lunch-ideas

If your situation has changed and you are now in receipt of benefits such as Universal credit, your child may now be eligible to receive Free School Meals. During lockdown these are replaced by supermarket vouchers.



Top tips to support children and young people



Be there to listen

Regularly ask how they're doing so they get used to talking about their feelings and know there's always someone to listen if they want it. Find out how to create a space where they will open up.



Support them through difficulties

Pay attention to their emotions and behaviour, and try to help them work through difficulties. It's not always easy when faced with challenging behaviour, but try to help them understand what they're feeling and why.



Stay involved in their life

Show interest in their life and the things important to them. It not only helps them value who they are but also makes it easier for you to spot problems and support them.



Encourage their interests

Being active or creative, learning new things and being a part of a team help connect us with others and are important ways we can all help our mental health. Support and encourage them to explore their interests, whatever they are.



Take what they say seriously

Listening to and valuing what they say, without judging their feelings, in turn makes them feel valued. Consider how to help them process and work through their emotions in a more constructive way.



Build positive routines

We know it still may not be easy, but try to reintroduce structure around regular routines, healthy eating and exercise. A good night's sleep is also really important – try to get them back into routines that fit with school or college.

GETTING MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

If you're concerned about a child or young person's mental health, you can get free, confidential advice via phone, email or web chat from the [Young Minds Parents Helpline](#).

[Action for Children](#) has lots of tips to help you spot signs of mental health issues in children and advice on the action you can take to help.

Barnardo's has also set up the [See, Hear, Respond support hub](#) – a dedicated service to help children, young people and their families or carers with problems caused by the coronavirus outbreak.

Experiencing the loss of a friend or loved one can be extremely difficult. The [Childhood Bereavement Network](#) has information and links to national and local organisations you or the child you look after might find helpful.

If you look after a child that has additional needs, [Mencap](#), the [Mental Health Foundation](#) and [the National Autistic Society](#) all have excellent resources and support for parents or carers of children with learning disabilities or autism.

Do not hesitate to [get urgent support](#) if you think either you or your child needs it.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

The week of 1st-7th February is Children's Mental Health Week and we will be taking part in an online mental health festival for schools on **Wednesday 3rd February**.

The over-arching message for the day is to be kind always. You never know how someone is feeling inside. To this end we will be setting some learning activities which focus on kindness, gratitude and resilience and which will enable children to talk about their mental health.

Wednesday 3rd February will be **Inside Out Day**. On this day we would like as many pupils and teachers as possible to wear an item of clothing inside out to serve as a reminder to be kind always, as we never know how someone is feeling inside – a simple premise and easy to implement. Thank you for your support.