

Coombe Hill Infants' School Newsletter – Summer term – May 2021

Mental Health & Wellbeing

The wellbeing and mental health of our children has always been our priority at CHI as we fully understand the necessity for children to feel safe and secure before they can begin to learn, make relationships and thrive. As part of this focus, we have recently joined a cluster of schools working with the newly formed Mental Health Support Team. One of the commitments in the [Government's Green Paper for Transforming children and young people's mental health](#) was establishing these new MHSTs to provide early intervention on some mental health and emotional wellbeing issues, such as mild to moderate anxiety, as well as helping us in school to provide a "whole school approach" to mental health and wellbeing. Through this programme, 6 members of staff have received Mental Health First Aid training. Other members of staff have also completed Psychological First Aid Training (Public Health England) and Mental Health Champion (Place2Be) training. Our Governors have formed a Wellbeing Working Party to ensure that we are always mindful of the wellbeing of the children and the staff.

Attachment Aware Schools Award

As a school we feel relationships are at the core of everything we do. The Attachment Aware Award recognises and celebrates best practice in attachment and trauma aware schools and settings. Led by Mrs Jackie Heard (INCLC), the year long attachment aware schools award programme involves: training from AfC virtual school, coaching from a team of Educational Psychologists, on-site whole school training in attachment and emotion coaching and development of a whole school change project based on findings from the attachment Aware schools audit. As a result of this award we hope to increase our knowledge of attachment and emotion coaching, make our language more trauma informed and adapt our practice and policies to reflect this attachment and trauma informed approach.

Letters & Sounds training

As you know, we follow the Letters and Sounds progression for teaching phonics in school and this term, every member of staff has successfully completed fully accredited Letters and Sounds Training through the Wandle English Hub. This CPD will enhance the teaching and learning of phonics at CHI.

Decodable Books

We have been continuing to increase our teaching spine of books to ensure that every child brings home a fully decodable book ie the book only contains the sounds the child has already been taught - this ensures the child can read that book independently with 95% accuracy. Children will continue to bring home fully decodable books until they have completed learning Phase 5 phonics.

Diversity

We continue to ensure that all the books in school reflect the reality of the children in school - ethnicity, religion, family, disability etc and we constantly audit our book stock. We have been guided by the CLPE [Reflecting Realities Report](#) (2021) and follow their recommendations for new books. If you have any books you can recommend please let us know.

Power of Reading

As you know, we are a [CLPE Associate school](#) and we use the Power of Reading Approach to teaching English. Using this approach, we immerse the children in a carefully chosen spine

of high quality picture books. Picture books are an extremely important genre of children's literature and not just a step on the route to chapter books. The combination of the visual alongside verbal, supports children's emotional engagement and helps them learn to infer, deduce, think critically, empathise and make personal connections - all vital skills on the journey to becoming strategic and knowledgeable readers who read for pleasure. This approach has had an impact on the writing of all of the children.

Bedtime Reading Books

We haven't been able to send our Bedtime Reading Books home yet, but we are hoping to next term. Building on our desire that all children should read for pleasure, the children will be bringing home a very special book to read/share with you - it will not be a book they can necessarily read, but we hope you will take the time to talk about the book and discuss new vocabulary and ideas.

Spark Book Award

The children have so enjoyed reading and deciding which is their favourite book from the shortlist in the 4-7 age category of the Spark! Kingston and Richmond Book Awards! We read "The Last Tree" by Emily Haworth-Booth, "Clean Up" by Nathan Bryon, "Avocado Asks" by Momoke Abe and "Who's Your Real Mum?" by Bernadette Green. We also met the authors virtually and listened to them read and talk about their own books. We talked about democracy and voting and the children then voted in class and decided on the class favourite before they all voted at our voting station to find out the favourite book in school. They used gold coins to vote. Year 2 children counted the coins and found the winner – "Avocado Asks" by Momoke Abe with 162 votes! On 17th June, we will watch the Spark! Award Ceremony to see who is the winner of the 4-7 age category - will all the other children in Kingston and Richmond agree with our decision?

Primary Science Quality Mark

Mrs Jenny Warland (Science Lead) is the driving force behind constantly improving the teaching and learning opportunities in science and she is now leading us towards achieving PSQM status. We now have a clear vision for the teaching of [science](#), detailed sequential teaching plans focusing on scientific skills and types of enquiry and high quality CPD so that the children, and staff, have the skills and knowledge they need. *"Learn together what it is to be a scientist, grow together in our knowledge and understanding of our natural and physical world."*



Unicef UK Rights Respecting School

As we told you back in December 2020, CHI is a [Rights Respecting](#) Aware Bronze Award school and we are really excited to be working towards our Silver Award. Children will learn about their rights, under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, by putting them into practice every day. These rights are based on what a child needs to survive, grow, participate and fulfil their

potential and they complement our Learning Behaviours (Respect, Resilience, Responsible etc) and our PSHE scheme (Jigsaw) and our Equality Policy and Action Plan. We will be giving you lots more information about RRS next term.

Equality Action Plan

With the support of the governing body, we have worked to develop this important [policy](#) and action plan as we believe that every person in the school community, whether teacher, support staff or child, has a fundamental right to equality of opportunity and we aim to provide this irrespective of religious persuasion, ethnic origin, cultural or linguistic background, gender, social group or disability.

Forest School

The children love their Forest School Sessions with our fully qualified Forest Schools Teacher, Mrs Caroline Young. They learn so much from this part of our curriculum - science, art, vocabulary development as well as collaborative and social skills.

Drumming

We have been pleased to welcome back our professional drumming teacher, Sean, and to see the children learning skills of rhythm, music making and listening and attention skills.

Love the Ball

This term the Love the Ball coaches have focused on teaching the children tennis skills. This forms part of our PE curriculum and the children are constantly improving their hand-eye-ball coordination skills.

[Daily Mile](#)

Every day the children complete their daily mile, all adding to their awareness of the importance of physical wellbeing.



Virtual National Gallery - last week, Year 2 visited the National Gallery virtually. They all talked so enthusiastically about the visit and wrote wonderful pieces in their writing books, inspired by the trip and by the series of [Katie books](#) by James Mayhew.

The Arts

The Arts continue to be celebrated every day. This term Reception have been working with and exploring clay, Year 1 have produced beautiful work inspired by artists such as Van Gogh, L.S.

Lowry and Claude Monet and Year 2 have enjoyed an 'Awesome Art' topic including a virtual tour of the National Gallery led by the gallery's wonderful guides.



Virtual Kingston tour

Led by our longstanding friend and tour guide, Carol McGrath, the children in Years 1 and 2 took a virtual tour of Kingston and learned about the history of the town. Ask your child about the three fish symbol seen around Kingston!

Transition Plan

We are already planning our transition from Reception to Year 1, Year 1 to Year 2 and Year 2 to Year 3. Please be assured that we are mindful of every child's needs and we organise fun opportunities for the children to meet their new teachers, visit their new classrooms and give the teachers time to ensure a very detailed handover so that the new teacher is aware of every child's next steps. We will inform you of the class moves at the beginning of July.