

Half Term and Mental Health

As we reach the end of a busy term it is important to remember that a half term break is a great opportunity to re-set our mental and physical health. Today's Place2Be non-uniform day has refocused our children's minds on how to stay mentally healthy, but this applies to adults too. There is now a wealth of advice and guidance available on mental health; sometimes it is the simplest actions that are the most effective.

The NHS recommend a '5 a day' approach [5 steps to mental wellbeing - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/5-steps-to-mental-wellbeing):

Connect – with your family and friends, spend time together this week.

Give – Give kindness, praise and be willing to receive.

Take notice – Of the world around you, your family and friends and the small things we take for granted.

Keep learning – Seek new experiences, take day trips to the beach or moor, and explore the world.

Be active – Get outdoors, walk, cycle, run and play.



Have a great half term week, we look forward to seeing you all on the 20th February.



Team Points: Elm

Stars of the Week

Travis – Talking through his ideas and *flourishing* in discussions

Austin – *Flourishing* in recognising sounds

Evie W – *Flourishing* in her reading

John F-W – *Flourished* with home learning and worked hard to present his ideas

Bentley – *Flourishing* in Maths

Cross Country

Results are in for the first race in the 3-race series. Ellenor came second in the Y5/6 Girls race, and Lucy and Mia came second and third respectively in the Y3/4 Girls race. The boys also put in a strong performance, and Bridestowe's teams sit nicely in the overall results table so far. The next event is at Chagford Cricket Club on the 8th March. Details will be sent home after half term.





Dress to Express for Mental Health

Children expressed themselves in many different and amazing ways today. It was inspiring to walk through the school and ask individual children what their outfits were expressing about their feelings and interests, and to see their personalities shine through.

During the week children took part in many activities, including a LYFTA Mental Health Workshop.

Please remember to make your donation via School Gateway.



Safer Internet Day

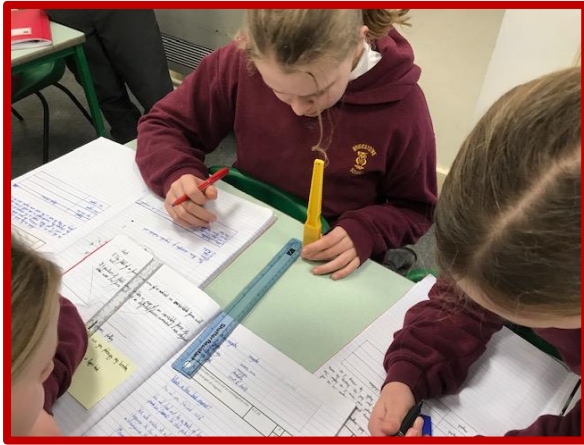
It was Safer Internet Day on Tuesday 7th February and thousands across the country celebrated it by sharing what they enjoy doing online, but also sharing how to be safe. As a whole school we held an assembly and then completed different activities in our classes.



Owlets learnt a song, Tawny Owls listened to a story and made decisions about what was safe and not safe, Snowy Owls learnt how to be S.M.A.R.T and Barn Owls did an activity considering how safe children feel about different risks they may encounter online, and followed this with a discussion about how to approach and solve these.

Barn Owls

In science, the children carried out an investigation with magnets, establishing which magnet was the strongest.



Homework Share

It was great to see so many parents and carers on Wednesday. I'm sure you'll agree that the standard of the children's home learning was very impressive. Lots more pictures on the Class Blog: [BRIDESTOWE PRIMARY SCHOOL - Classes blog \(bridestowe-primary.devon.sch.uk\)](http://BRIDESTOWE PRIMARY SCHOOL - Classes blog (bridestowe-primary.devon.sch.uk))



Fire Service Visit

We were pleased to welcome Firefighter Kerri from the Devon and Somerset fire service to school on Friday 10th February to speak to the children in Y2 and Y5 about fire safety. It was a very informative talk about what fire fighters do, how they help us, how to stay safe at home and why smoke alarms are so important. Kerri explained how we can help the firefighters by keeping ourselves and others safe. The children asked many interesting questions and enjoyed the session, especially being given the opportunity to dress as a firefighter!



Swimming Lessons

A reminder that swimming for Owlets and Tawny Owls will begin after half term, every Friday afternoon. Please ensure you have given consent and made payment via School Gateway. Please also check you have paid for KS2 swimming, the final session of which was today.



Heart Heroes

On Friday 24th February we are asking children to wear red in exchange for a small donation of £1 for Heart Heroes Day. This will be a full non-uniform day in aid of this local charity which helps support children living with heart conditions. [Heart Heroes Hubs: - Heart Heroes](#)
Please donate via School Gateway. Please DO NOT bring cash into school as we cannot accept it.

Tesco Blue Tokens for Treetops

Tesco in Tavistock has Treetops Pre-School and Childcare as one of the choices in the blue token collections, continuing until the 31st March. Please consider Treetops if you're visiting Tesco as this will greatly support their fundraising efforts.



Family Consultations

We are pleased to offer a family consultation on Wednesday 1st March in the afternoon.

Please complete this form to book a time slot: <https://forms.office.com/e/EbCYsv1cZg>

Your 10 minute appointment will be confirmed no later than Tuesday 21st February.

If the 1st March is not suitable for you, please speak to your class teacher about an alternative day/time.

Recorder Club

Some of the recorder group delighted Owlets by playing 'Samba' to them this morning.



Clubs After Half Term

We are pleased to offer the after-school clubs below next half term. Please book sessions via School Gateway.

DAY	CLUB	YEAR GROUPS	RUN BY	TIME
MONDAY	RRR Club	Year 6	Mrs Reid	3.15-4.15pm
MONDAY	Forest School Club	Years 1 and 2	Ms Baker	3.15-4.00pm
TUESDAY	Film Club	Years 3-6	Mrs Lammas	3.15-4.00pm
WEDNESDAY	Board Games	Years 1 and 2	Mrs Harris/Mrs Sharland	3.15-4.00pm
WEDNESDAY	Basketball	Years 3-6	OCRA	3.15-4.15pm
THURSDAY	Recorder Club	Years 2-6	Mrs Sherring	3.15-4.00pm
THURSDAY	Cheerleading	Years 2-6	Miss Spooncer	3.15-4.00pm

Next Week

13th – 17th

Half Term Break

W/C 20th February

Monday	Children return to school *Forest School Club, 3.15-4.00pm *RRR Club, Y6 only 3.15-4.15pm
Tuesday	*Film Club 3.15-4.00pm
Wednesday	Forest School – EYFS, Years 4-6 *OCRA Club 3.15-4.15pm; *Board Games Club 3.15-4.00pm
Thursday	*Cheerleading Club 3.15-4.00pm; *Recorder Club 3.15-4.00pm
Friday	EYFS and KS1 Swimming – first session Heart Heroes – wear red non-uniform

*Your child must be booked into after-school clubs via School Gateway in order to take part

Diary Dates

March

6th – 31st March – Festival of Hope

2 nd	World Book Day
3 rd	Year 5/6 Activity Day EYFS and KS1 Swimming
6 th	Year 5/6 Activity Day
7 th	Dog's Trust Visit Swim Gala – selected children
8 th	Forest School – EYFS, Years 1-3 Cross Country @ Chagford – Selected children
10 th	Open the Book Assembly EYFS and KS1 Swimming
17 th	EYFS and KS1 Swimming
21 st	Forest School – EYFS, Years 4-6 Odd Socks Day
24 th	EYFS and KS1 Swimming
27 th	Parental Book Look – 09.00am
28 th	South West Water Workshop – KS2
29 th	Sport 4 Champions Athlete
31 st	EYFS and KS1 Swimming – final session Last Day of Term

April

3 rd – 14 th	Easter Holiday
17 th	Start of Summer Term
18 th	Y6 French Residential Meeting, 4.00-5.00pm at Bridestowe school

Mr A. Hill – Principal

ahill@dmatschools.org.uk

01837 861361

Whole School Attendance

95.6%



Festival of Hope

6th - 31st March 2023



The Festival of Hope will return for its 2nd year of celebrations in March 2023. The month long event will allow for even more festivities and events to be enjoyed! Expect to see:

- **Community reading programmes**
- **Travelling art exhibition**
- **Sporting events**
- **Poetry**
- **Trees of Hope**
- **and much more!**

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10 WAYS GAMING CAN SUPPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES in Children and Young People

Gaming, of course, is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary school aged children doing likewise. If enjoyed in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems. Check out our top ten tips on how gaming online can sometimes work to your child's advantage...

THE FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Gaming is so popular because at the base level, it's enjoyable for the player. Succeeding in any game or contest releases dopamine in our brains: the 'feel-good' chemical that makes us happy or excited. Those emotions can be incredibly beneficial for mental wellbeing – as long as young players don't become reliant solely on playing video games to make themselves feel happy.

ACHIEVEMENT & PRIDE

A sense of achievement is incredibly important to all of us and can be particularly valuable to someone who's feeling unhappy or distracted. It's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, which can sometimes take a negative turn. So even achieving something small – like finishing a difficult level in a Mario or Sonic game – can feel like conquering Everest and give us renewed optimism.

SOCIAL SALVATION

Gaming can be an incredibly social activity. When playing online with trusted friends, what usually start out as chats specifically about the game can often develop into conversations about school and life. Even if they've had a bad day, simply knowing that a friend is there, on the other end of their headset, can provide young gamers with a sense of security and some welcome laughs.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

In many online games, teamwork is crucial to winning. Often, people who are struggling with their mood tend to feel like they fail or let others down a lot. Working as a team with trusted friends or family in a game can reinforce a young person's self-importance: striving for a common goal and succeeding together can remind them that they're an integral part of something bigger.

REAL-WORLD RELATABILITY

Because many major releases are shooting or action games, when some people hear "gaming" they think of guns, explosions and violence. What's less recognised is how many titles explore relatable issues such as overcoming anxiety or coping with grief. These games allow young players to understand their emotions more deeply and realise they aren't alone in how they might be feeling.

A DIGITAL COMFORT

Video games can provide a reliable constant. No matter what happens in school or between friends, playing a favourite game is something that youngsters can look forward to all day and can help them de-stress. Let's not forget, games are fun – and, when approached safely, an interactive activity in which the player has a degree of control over what happens next can feel immensely reassuring.

PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE

It can be difficult for young people to handle the feeling that nothing is going right or that their problems are insurmountable. Gaming can help alleviate that by presenting challenges to be overcome, either solo or alongside trusted friends. Defeating a powerful monster or solving a tricky puzzle reminds young gamers that even the most daunting obstacles can be faced and conquered.

THE GREAT ESCAPISM

A certain amount of escapism is fabulous – allowing us to temporarily park some stress while exploring a world other than our own. For children, gaming can be like reading a novel or watching a film: a moment in the day when the fantastical becomes real, firing their imagination and immersing them in a story. Who wouldn't want to venture to the stars? Or battle monsters to save the planet?

TRIED & TRUSTED

There can be reassurance in repeating tasks. It often promotes a controlled outcome, which is ideal when life feels overwhelming or out of control. Replicating an experience, such as playing the same level of a game over and over to perfection, gives the player a sense of control and familiarity: it's like listening to a favourite song that always makes you feel happy or confident.

ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Inventiveness is a huge part of many modern games: in Minecraft and Roblox, for example, players regularly dream up amazing structures or new ways to play. Using our imagination to create something (whether digitally or physically) is massively beneficial for the brain; that's why Lego is sometimes used in the medical sector as both a stress reliever and a brain injury rehabilitation tool.

Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer who specialises in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. Author of 15 guidebooks for children on games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft, his work has also been published in the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247.



Source: <https://www.ofcom.gov.uk/consult/condocs/childrens-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2022.pdf>

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Beat the Winter Blues!

OCRA's February Half-Term Activities



[Sport and Art](#)



[Breakfast & Afternoon Clubs](#)



[Mini Camps](#)



[Activity Camps](#)

Beat the Winter blues this half term holiday with OCRA's [Sport & Art](#), activity camps and more from **Monday February 13th**.

Our activity programme is online and booking now. [Sport & Art](#) returns Tuesday and Thursday. Don't forget [Breakfast Club](#), [Afternoon Club](#) and [All Day tickets](#), plus three days of [Activity Camps](#).

3-5 year-olds can choose from [Mini-Tennis](#) and [Mini-Football](#). For the older children we have tennis, football, hockey, movie magic and crafting.

Check out the full listing at ocrasport.org.uk/holidays and book now to avoid disappointment for the rest of the programme.

Book online now

Okehampton Community & Recreation Association,

"helping children, young people and adults be more active, more often. For a lifetime in sport and activity."

If you have any queries, please contact holidays@ocrasport.org.uk.

*For GDPR reasons, we're again asking parents to complete a paper registration form on the day of each activity.

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