



It has been a musical extravaganza this week at St John's! Emma from I Sing Pop spent three days with us as we rehearsed for our two concerts on Wednesday 20th March at St Christopher's Church. Emma's enthusiasm, drive, encouragement and incredible singing voice were inspirational and it was a pleasure to host her at St John's. Not only did we enjoy singing and dancing with Emma, we also had more music experiences when Year 1 joined with classes from three other schools to perform songs and instruments for Mousike Ensemble. We love hosting events like these at St John's and it was lovely to see the children making new friends and shining together. Our choir event for our younger classes was a great success on Thursday and they thoroughly enjoyed travelling to the Methodist Hall to perform with a group of schools. Thank you to the staff who give up their time to allow us to give children so many opportunities. Year 6 had a fabulous day at Holdenby House on Tuesday and their experiences of what life might have been like for an evacuee were very thought-provoking. We also loved Year 1's worship all about the value of Excellence on Tuesday and we were so impressed with how confidently everyone spoke and shared all about how they show excellence. We loved the poem you wrote and performed!

Congratulations to our Presentation, Writing, Friendship and Star of the Week award winners this week!



Congratulations to Ethan, Aron, Kacey, Zayne, Violet, Eleanor, Harry, Florence, Bethany, Archie, Isaac, Joash, Olivia, Olive, Toby, Iona, Brooke and Guinevere. We are so proud of you!





Dates for your diaries

Monday 18 th March	Am: Year 4 Mousike Ensemble with visiting schools Pm: Year 6 Easter Experience
Tuesday 19 th March	9.30: Easter Service at St Christopher's Church led by Year 4 2.00- 3.00: Year 6 Come and Share
Wednesday 20 th March	'I Sing Pop' performances at 2.00 and 5.00 – St Christopher's Church
Thursday 21 st March	Year 4 Viney Hill trip 2.30: Year 5 Come and Share
Friday 22 nd March	Year 4 Viney Hill trip 9.00: Celebration Worship – please join us to celebrate together
Easter Holidays	
Monday 8 th April	First day back at school to start Summer Term 😊
Tuesday 9 th April	
Wednesday 10 th April	5.30 – 6.30: Choir showcase in the hall
Thursday 11 th April	
Friday 12 th April	
Monday 15 th April	
Tuesday 16 th April	
Wednesday 17 th April	
Thursday 18 th April	
Friday 19 th April	10.00: Mental Health in Schools Team coffee morning - Anxiety
Monday 22 nd April	
Tuesday 23 rd April	9.00: Year 3 leading values worship – Teamwork
Wednesday 24 th April	Book Fair delivered to St John's for one week – available after school
Thursday 25 th April	
Friday 26 th April	

WHY 'KINDNESS MATTERS' & HOW DOING GOOD DOES YOU GOOD

'WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET. WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.'

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

THE FOCUS FOR THIS YEAR'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK IS 'KINDNESS MATTERS'. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK INTO THE BENEFIT OF HELPING OTHERS WHICH IS GOOD FOR IMPROVING OUR OWN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING. HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU THINKING:

ALTRUISM

Altruism is acting in someone else's best interests in order to improve their welfare. When we feel compelled to donate money, shop for someone, call a relative in need or help a neighbour, we are considering the needs of others even when we may not know them. Showing kindness like this, often motivated by empathy, creates a sense of purpose, making us feel good and developing our wellbeing. Children and young people can take part in altruistic activities at home or school. They could create a video for those in isolation, fundraise for a local cause, bake cakes for neighbours or write letters to older members of the community who may feel isolated.



GENEROSITY

In the context of kindness, being generous with our time, resources and words can provide a low-cost approach to helping others. A generous act is accessible to all. Giving compliments, for example, are a well-researched way of creating a sense of wellbeing and positivity in a community at school or with family. It helps us to recognise the positivity in others as we actively choose to notice and comment on what is valuable and meaningful in someone else. When compliments are given regularly, consistently and with meaning, the community benefits are far reaching!



GIVE TO GIVE. NOT TO RECEIVE

Sometimes when we are kind there is no payback, which can make it more difficult to keep being kind. Our natural reaction is to shrink back and withdraw our kind act, feeling frustrated that it has either not been reciprocated or that it has not been valued. This is probably one of the most difficult concepts for children to understand and where the 'random acts of kindness' approach is helpful. If it is a random act then it is 'just because' and for no other reason than a one-off act for someone.



HOLDING OTHERS IN MIND

By holding someone in mind we show that we have been thinking about them and that they matter to us. This act of kindness is so important now, more than at any other time, due to isolation. A simple text to say 'I saw... on the telly last night and it made me think of you!' or a quick call to say 'I was just thinking about you yesterday and was wondering how you're doing?' can mean so much. We probably all do this naturally as part of showing kindness and care to others, but perhaps may not appreciate the importance of this for wellbeing.



COMMUNITY

When we help others in our community, it improves our wellbeing by helping us to feel less isolated as we connect with others. When we show kindness, it is something which we feel we can control, particularly when things may feel a bit chaotic and unusual. Helping others can often give us a different perspective on our own challenges and our own problems. Peer support, for example, is often overlooked as an important part of improving wellbeing. Older students can often greatly benefit from sharing similar, shared experiences and can offer a level of empathy and understanding that adults may not be able to.



KINDNESS WITH CAUTION

There is a very helpful analogy that is used when we are in an emergency: 'we should put our own oxygen mask on before putting on someone else's'. What's helpful here is that giving to others can often improve our mental health and wellbeing. However, there are times when helping others can create stress or overwhelm us. This is sometimes called 'compassion fatigue'. So, we must balance our own wellbeing with the wellbeing of others. We should notice if we start to feel resentful or negative or if we start avoiding others, have difficulty concentrating or start experiencing unusual sleep patterns. If this happens it's a good time to take a break or ask someone for help or support.



'KINDNESS IS A SILENT SMILE. A FRIENDLY WORD. A NOD OF ENCOURAGEMENT. KINDNESS IS THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL THING WE CAN TEACH CHILDREN.'

RA KATVIST

The National College

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



For further info, check out these online resources:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/blog/random-acts-kindness>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/get-involved>