

Head teacher's note

There has been such a buzz around school this week - I honestly think that OPAL is one of the best things that I have ever introduced in a school! Another huge thank you from me to Allison Mead, Hannah Butler, Caroline Burt, Andrea Walton and Greg Thornton for working so hard to make it happen. I would especially like to single Allison out as she has been the brains behind the logistics of which adult goes where and ensuring that our dinner halls, playground and field have all run smoothly. Thank you as well to her trusty team of midday supervisors who have embraced the changes with such enthusiasm and positivity. A final thank you to Neil, Bethan and some Y6 girls who mended some of the willow fencing in the forest school last Friday.



Friends of Fishergate

Mother's Day Stall

All children are invited to shop for mums, grandmas and other special people at our stall, which will be set up in the playground after school this Friday 13th March. We'll have lovely daffodil pots available for £2.00 each, plus a variety of card-making kits and badges created by an artistic mother-daughter duo from our school.

Just a little more help...

Our list of wonderful helpers is steadily growing for the Spring Disco on Friday 20th March, and we just need a few more roles filled. It's heartwarming to see a Year 7 student kindly offering to return and assist with a stall! Get in touch at friendsoffishergateschool@gmail.com to lend a helping hand. Many thanks!

- EY & KS1 families: can you help selling snacks or bunny-themed accessories?
- KS2 families: your help is needed to run the snack stall and to sell tickets at the front door.

Bake sale on Monday

Early Years families will be hosting that last bake sale for this term on Monday 16th March. Be sure to stop by and treat yourself to something sweet to start the week off right. Items will be sold at 50p each, we take cash and have a card reader available too.



Dates

Mon 16th - OPAL assemblies

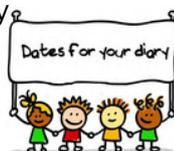
Fri 20th - Over and Above treat

Fri 20th - KS1 singing assembly 2:45pm

Fri 20th - Comic Relief Day

Fri 20th - YR and Y1 oral health survey

Fri 20th - Spring Disco



Phase group updates

Early Years - This week in Early Years, we have been learning all about the number 9 and exploring its many ways in our activities. We enjoyed reading *We're Going to Find the Monster* and went on an exciting forest adventure, using magnifying glasses to discover minibeasts hiding in nature. Back in the outdoor area, children used the new mud kitchen to make delicious creations, stirring up lots of imaginative fun! We also spent time thinking about our mummies and feeling thankful as Mother's Day approaches.

Year 1/2 - this week, KS1 enjoyed a fantastic morning in Forest School conducting minibeasts investigations and creating their own tally charts. We've been continuing our 'Artists' topic, creating our own stories based on the book *'Katie and the Impressionists'*, whilst in Topic we've been studying the geography of the life of Van Gogh and learning about the different countries and cities in which he lived.

Year 3/4 - In RE we took part in a Christian baptism. We used holy water from our font and chose parents and godparents. Our Egyptian assembly practises are going well and the children have made a great effort to learn the words to "Walk Like an Egyptian".

Year 5/6 - In DT, our cars are coming along nicely and actually have wheels on now! By next week, they may even have 'engines'! Year 5 are discussing whether the Highwayman in Alfred Noyes' poem was a hero or a villain while Year 6 are writing a letter from the point of view of a character in Shaun Tan's *The Arrival*. In Maths, we are working on fractions and area and perimeter.



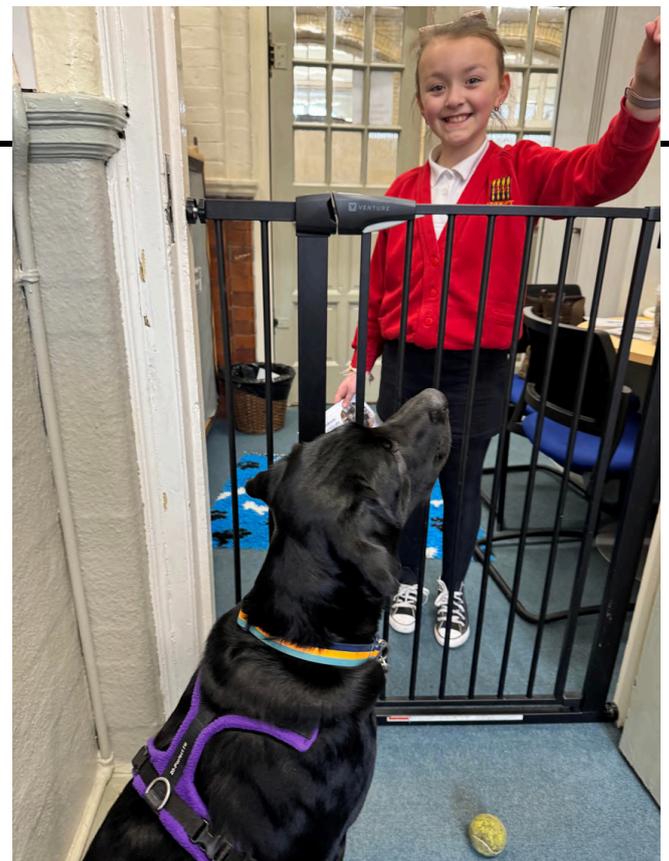
Bodhi Corner

This week we gave out the very first Bodhi Kindness Award, and I got to help give it out. I was wagging my tail a lot because it was very exciting! I was not surprised at all that it went to Daisy in Year 4 though, because she is always really kind.

Daisy always thinks about other people and makes sure everyone feels included. She is a really good friend and she is always helping others if they need it. I see her doing kind things a lot, like checking if people are okay and making sure nobody is left out. If kindness had a smell, I think Daisy would sniff it out straight away!

I think Daisy is the perfect person to get the first kindness award because she shows what being kind looks like every day. If I had a basket of treats, I would definitely give her one.

Well done, Daisy! From Bodhi 🐾



OPAL

It is safe to say that we have all had an absolutely brilliant first week of our new OPAL playtimes. It has been wonderful to see the children having so much fun - using all of the areas of the playground and field, playing with their friends or siblings in other phases and enjoying the new play resources. I am sure that your children will have told you how much they are enjoying themselves.

The thing that seems to be sparking the most joy at the moment is the dressing up area. So, if you have any dressing up clothes that your child no longer plays with then please bring them in.

We know that this is a big ask but if you happen to have a shed that you are no longer using then we could really do with extra storage - maybe you know someone who is upgrading? This is being typed in the ignorant state of not knowing how easy/hard it is to dismantle and rebuild a shed!!



ATTENDANCE

Please note that the playground is open from 8:30am every morning and that the children are all expected to be in school by 8:45 at the latest. The registers close at 8:55 and the children are marked in as late for the next 30 minutes. After this time they are recorded as an unauthorised absence.

More information about our approach to attendance can be found on the school website.

<https://www.fishergateschool.com/news/inclusive-attendance-project>

#MISS SCHOOL #MISS OUT

Some of the things our children say they would have missed out on if they were absent from school...

- New OPAL Playtimes with toys
- Forest School
- Certificates in assembly
- Pedestrian training (Y3/4)
- Ancient Egypt Assembly (Y3/4)
- Computing day
- World Book Day pyjama day
- Visit to Waterstones to spend the £1 World Book Day vouchers
- Visit to Dick Turpin's Grave (Y5)

WE LOVE OPAL!!



THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS HELPED THIS TO HAPPEN.

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.



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.



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.



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!



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 of 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.



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/randam-acts-kindness>

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