



# Hillstone News

## Children's Mental Health Week

I know how much we are all struggling and that difficulties have touched everyone. Bereavement for some, redundancy and loss of income, anxiety, worry, not being able to see loved ones, missing sport and entertainment, children's behaviour deteriorating to name a few. This week is Children's Mental Health Week and we are suggesting you might want to watch the assembly from the Oak Academy which we will send to you shortly.

As well as thinking about children's mental health you must make sure to take care of yourself. The Birmingham Education Partnership has created three excellent videos on self-care, anxiety and sleep. There is a link here but I will also ensure they go on our well being page [https://youtu.be/YNBtOazN\\_IM](https://youtu.be/YNBtOazN_IM).

With half term coming up, I was thinking of things that you could do with the children that would entertain them, tire them out or educate them. We have been taking the children who are in school, for regular walks. The year 5's loved going to the lake and taking part in the RSPB Big Bird Watch. Reception children have been out on 5k walks to Babbs Mill and surrounding areas. They had no problem walking this far but they did get a bit muddy, rolling down a hill they discovered! Children love being outside, why not take them to woods, climb trees, build dens, act out stories, play hide and seek, find streams and puddles to splash in, find the names of trees, look for mini-beasts or pond animals. All of these activities are so good for them physically, mentally and educationally and children have so much fun just kicking out, getting dirty, using their imagination, problem solving.

Mr Farr is creating an assembly after half term about finding fun and happiness for free - why not share some of your outdoor adventures with us. We'd love to see your photos and it might inspire and help others.

## Car Free Streets

Again, I am pleased to report that the car free streets scheme is running extremely well. We are constantly getting positive feedback from parents, children and residents as to how much safer they feel during the restricted times. With more children returning, I have however, been made aware of some cars that are still driving along the road during the prohibited times when they do not see my presence. I must remind you that there are clear signs put up by the Highway's Agency at the corner of the road identifying the times and the restrictions. Any cars that do drive along it without a permit may well be issued a penalty notice. I thank you all again for your continued support on this scheme, and with the better weather ahead of us, I hope to see even more of you leaving cars at home and walking to school.

Alan Morton

## Virtual School

Thank you to everyone who has fed back to Mr King on his survey about virtual school. We are grateful for all your positive comments and have listened to the feedback on where you think we could improve. We currently have a number of children who are accessing Hillstone Virtual School because it is so much better than what their own school is delivering. Here is an example of a lovely message I received.

*"I just wanted to make contact and say I'm so impressed with your online learning. I am not a parent at your school, however my child started school in September and I'm sure like most parents have been turning to the internet for support. Unfortunately, our own school's online resources are very limited to say the least! I was so impressed with all the direct links that were on the page making it super easy for parents when they are trying to juggle more than one child at home and it's right there! In addition the assembly and a welcome note are very nice touches! The fact that you can contact the teachers directly too! I have looked at so many online resources and yours is by far superior and so parent friendly! Well done to all your staff for achieving such an amazing resource at such a stressful time and thank you!"*

We may be able to access some more digital devices, please let us know if you have siblings who are having to share or indeed any other difficulties with technology. We can help!

## Safer Internet Day

This is on Tuesday 9th February, there will be lots of activities on virtual school to support you and your child. One of my biggest concerns in recent years is how children speak to each other online. It causes huge problems with children becoming upset by what their friends have said to them or the language they are using. Are you always aware of what your child is texting?

## World Cancer Day

I thought you might like to know that Lewis, a little boy in our nursery was the face of World Cancer Day on February 4th.





# HILLSTONE STARS

Each week, teachers will choose a Hillstone star from Lockdown School and one from Virtual School. They will all be celebrated on the Hillstone Stars tab on our website. Here are last week's outstanding pupils.

***Keegan Price-Hindley***

***Lola Williams***

***Talia Grimason***

***Lana Latchford***

***Mohammed Hussain***

***Sophie Burns***

***Jorge Cordell***

***Jenson Mackay***

***Benjamin Barnett***

***Gabriel O'Neill***

***Logan Kesterton***

***Bailey France***

***Kian Edwards***

***Kaisie Bradford***

