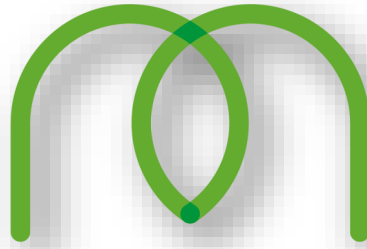


Mental Health First Aid



MHFA England

Why invest in employee Mental Health First Aid training?

“Supporting Mental Health in the workplace is not just a corporate responsibility; staff who have positive Mental Health are more productive and businesses who promote a progressive approach to mental health can see a significant impact on business performance, so it is about good business too.”

*Dr Justin Varney, National Lead for Adult Health & Wellbeing
Public Health England*

We have 7 members of staff from SECAT attending an Online Mental Health First Aid Training Course in April.

The course offers:

- An in-depth understanding of mental health and the factors that can affect wellbeing
- Practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of a range of mental health issues
- Confidence to step in, reassure and support a person in distress
- Enhanced interpersonal skills such as non-judgemental listening
- Knowledge to help someone recover their health by guiding them to further support—whether through self-help resources, through their employer, the NHS, or a mix.

To empower people and organisations through education about mental health so that they can make a positive contribution to humanity and society. Education is key.



SHOEBURYNESSE HIGH SCHOOL

Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshops



For two weeks during February 2021, Shoeburyness High School had the privileged of working with Trustlinks, South East Essex's local independent charity for mental health and wellbeing, to offer a range of workshops to all of our students. With the Trust Links Wellbeing Roadshow, years 7 to 13 received a different mental health related workshop each day for 1 week. The workshops were run by mental health specialists online via Microsoft Teams, and the beneficial topics included:

1. My feelings and me – Recognising different emotions, how they feel and how to cope with them
2. Managing stress and Anxiety – understanding what stress and anxiety is, why it occurs and how to cope with it
3. Building confidence and self-esteem – Tips on how to boost your confidence and start believing in yourself
4. Building resilience – How to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult situations
5. Looking after yourself – an introduction to Self-care

Students responded incredibly well to the workshops and were grateful for the support and advice given by Trustlinks. Nearly 70% of students said their mental health was positively impacted by attending the workshops. Student responses include:

"Thank you to all of you presenting....this has been so enlightening and helpful."

"Thank you for changing my perspective on my mental health and how I view myself and others"

"Thank you guys for everything that you've put into helping us this past week, you've made us all understand that we aren't alone with what we experience. You've helped us know, this will not last forever and we have people along the way that will help us up. Thank you for all the advice and stories you used to help us through! Thank you guys really. (Ps. I don't have a favourite presenter you're all amazing in your own ways)!"

"Thank you guys for everything! I've always struggled with anxiety and showing my emotions but you've showed me that there are people out there who care and want to help and now I feel confident that I can share my emotions and not feel alone."

"Think this has been such a positive addition to what has been a difficult year, with uncertainty and lockdown. Coming out of the week feeling a lot more positive in my awareness of mental health and understanding of my own and other's emotions"

"I have loved these workshops I have written notes on slides every day and by referring back to them helps me, thank you :)."

"I have loved these workshops I have written notes on slides every day and by referring back to them helps me, thank you :)."

"Thank you to everyone at trust links and Mr Smith for everything you have done for all of us this week, you have helped me so much and you have helped to encourage me to open up. Thank you 😊😊."

"Thank you so much for these workshops, I didn't realise I needed this. This has made me realise that I can help others and help myself!"





Ben Stickley
Chief Operating
Officer

Central savings means more to spend on education



The central team have been busy since our last edition working on opportunities to save our schools time and money so that we can invest more in our children's education. We have recently completed a tender exercise for the cleaning contracts across the Trust and are delighted to announce that a new provider, Ridge Crest Cleaning, will now be providing our cleaning services across the schools.

The new contract comes with brand new cleaning equipment across the estate and also saves more than £80,000 per year. This is the equivalent to the cost of two additional teachers!



We have also centrally tendered for and will install new printers and photocopiers across all schools over the Easter holidays. The brand new machines have been purchased at no additional cost to the budgeted print costs for schools year on year and come with sophisticated print management software to reduce waste and improve efficiency. We have also managed to include print shop quality machines in our reprographics suite

at Shoeburyness High School. This means that brochures, posters and pictures can now all be produced for schools across the Trust in house, saving significant amounts on external printing. We expect the contract to deliver savings of thousands of pounds a year to schools once we fully analyse the savings made per page printed.

Initially we have carried out this exercise with Thorpedene Primary school and identified a saving potential of £6,500 for the next year based on current printing volumes.

Capital works plans finalised for this year

The Trust has just finalised a plan for capital works across our school sites for the year ahead.

These works are funded from **School Condition Allocation(SCA) which we are allocated as a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) of over 5 schools.** Smaller MATs and Single Academy Trusts have to bid for any proposed project and have no guarantee of success in achieving funding. Local authority schools have to bid to the local authority for any works and these are agreed solely at their discretion. Being a larger MAT guarantees us annual funding so we can improve our buildings.

A selection of works which will be going ahead this year are:



Bournes Green Infant School:
Upgrades to the fire alarm system
and emergency lighting
(Circa £18,000)



Hinguar Community Primary School:
Replacement of the lift
(Circa £45,000)



Thorpedene Primary School:
Roof replacement and building
upgrades (£200,000)



Bournes Green Junior School:
Rewiring and upgrades to the fire
alarm system and emergency lighting
(Circa £80,000)



**Richmond Avenue Primary and
Nursery School:** Replacement of the
Nursery Playground
(Circa £30,000)



Shoeburyness High School: Roof
replacement, emergency lighting
upgrades and disability access
improvements (Circa £126,000)

These works will take place in the main over the summer holiday period.



BOURNES GREEN INFANTS SCHOOL

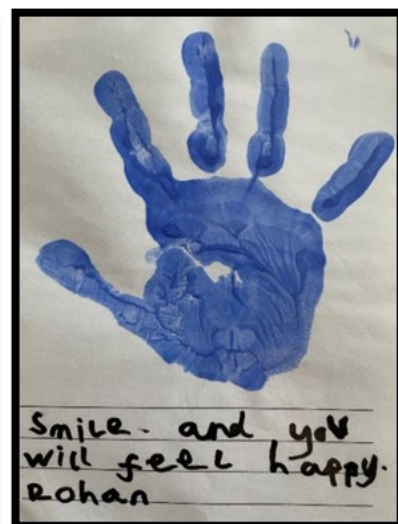
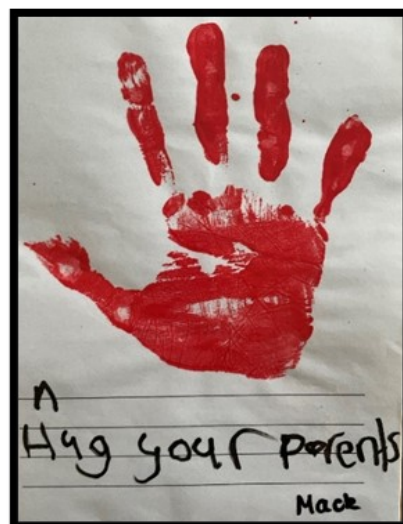
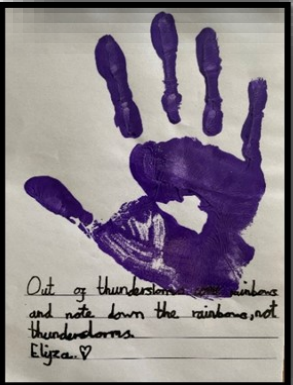
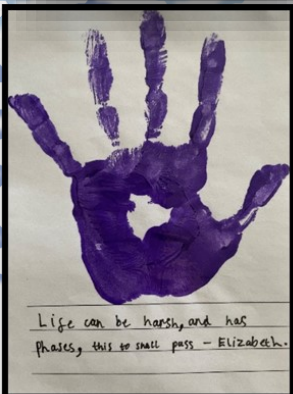
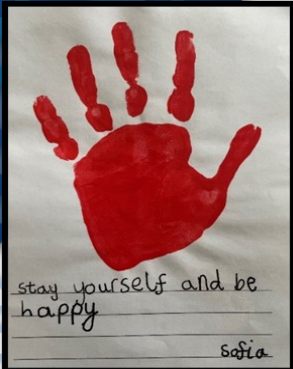


The children returned happily to school and we have really enjoyed having our whole school community back together again. We are always aware of the importance of **good mental health and wellbeing but now more than ever it is essential that this remains at the heart of what we do.** Therefore, as part of our return to school plan we have enhanced our curriculum with a range of activities which promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

One element of this is the '**Kalma Kids**' sessions which all of our children now participate in. They follow the themes of **calm breath and balance, mindfulness, meditation and relaxation, positivity and feeling calm and happy.**

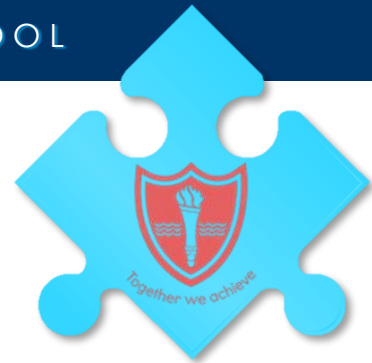
We all know the importance of spending time outside and in recognition of this we have ensured that outdoor learning is regularly undertaken and we have introduced a **daily structured outdoor game time for each class.** The children are thoroughly enjoying the benefit of being outside and learning a range of traditional games to play with their friends.

We have also introduced teacher led class assemblies concentrating on **self-efficacy, hope, gratitude and connectedness.** We have ensured that there is always time in our day for the children to talk and for someone to listen. This has been very powerful. In addition to this, we felt that it was really important to reach out to our wider community in these challenging times and share the positivity and optimism that children bring. **Therefore, every child in our school has written a positivity quote which will be displayed alongside their handprint on our school railings for all local people to enjoy when taking their daily walk.**





HINGUAR PRIMARY SCHOOL



Self-awareness and empathy, which are two key parts of emotional intelligence. They describe understanding yourself and being able to feel for other people as if their experiences were happening to you.

Resilience and ability to cope with problems, which describes the ability to recover from setbacks, and treat them as opportunities to learn, or simply experiences.

Communication and interpersonal skills. This broadly describes the skills needed to get on and work with other people.

Recovery Curriculum At Hinguar

As part of our recovery curriculum, the children and staff have learned a new skill since returning to school in March. The rationale behind this is linked to Howard Garner's Multiple Intelligence Theory and essential life skills as defined by the World Health Organisation (1999).

- * Year 6 used decoupage to create Mother's Day plant pots. The children also planted 2 freesia bulbs which were then displayed in their decorated pots.
- * Year Five have been using paper craft skills to make envelopes from scratch and have been practising creating beautiful flowers that stand up independently using just a pencil and tissue paper.
- * Year 4 have been juggling silk scarves. They watched the videos of Niels Duinker, a professional comedy juggler from the Netherlands. They learnt how to throw the scarves in a figure of eight pattern, starting with their dominant hand, then switched to the other hand and studied how to use two scarves. Unfortunately, no-one mastered three scarves - but several of the children are still practicing.
- * Both Year 1 and Year 2 have been learning to use a knife and fork properly when eating, using the correct grip and how to position the knife and fork. There was a quiet hush in the in the classroom (and some tongues sticking out) as all the children concentrated on the task of cutting the smallest pieces of bread possible. After they cut their bread, Year 2 then learned the task of sweeping up their bread as well as how to wash and dry up.
- * The children in Reception have learned the skill of skipping with a rope. They were shown how to hold the rope, find the right length for their height and they practiced stepping over the rope. The children tried skipping backwards and forwards. At the end, they used one rope and jumped over it in pairs which they really enjoyed!

"At first, I found it hard but when I did my 2nd layer, I found it easier and did it quite a bit faster."

"I found the coloured bits difficult. When I ripped bigger pieces, it was easier."

"..... It made me feel happy inside. I felt impressed with myself because my mum really liked it."

"I couldn't wait to show my mum and see her face"

"I am so proud of my sewing and I am going to do some more at home. My Mummy has bought me a kit to use."

"The first day we did cross stitch it was really hard, but Mrs Wilson helped"

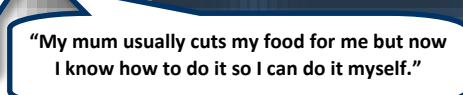
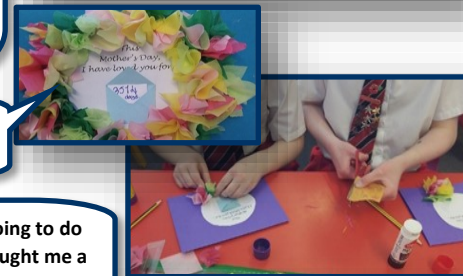
"I am much better using my knife and fork now at lunchtime and I even cut up some meat on Roast Day."

"I liked cutting up the bread because I got better at cutting as I kept on trying. I didn't give up ..."

"I'm still practicing. It makes me happy when I can do it."

"Skipping was hard, but I kept trying. I liked jumping over the rope."

"It was tricky, but I loved jumping! It made me happy."



RICHMOND AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

It has been so lovely to see all the children back on site and in school with us again. As we prepared for the return, we thought carefully about the best ways to support all the children in the changes to their routines and lives as school fully re-opened.

At the top of our agenda, was their wellbeing and how to make sure they had as much 'normality' as possible to ensure that they have stability and routine in their school day.

Doing this, we believe, will help the children with their **welfare and social & emotional needs as the uncertainty and changes over the last year have caused so much unsettlement and confusion.**

When school reopened on the 8th, staff were out on the gates and at the classroom doors to meet the children with smiles and happiness. Once in classes, all staff have worked to support and reassure where necessary.

Each day, whilst ensuring a routine of lessons, individual staff have been flexible in approaches for their classes. This has meant that if a PSHE lesson is needed, it takes place; **if the children need a brain break / body stretch they can have one as we rebuild stamina and concentration in pupils learning. We have additional outdoor sessions for all classes to have fresh air and keep active and focused; we also continue to give enhanced support and intervention to individuals as needs occur or develop.**

Richmond has a strong sense of community and there is often talk about how we are a family. It is our aim now and moving forwards that in all we are doing, our family remains strong and supportive of each other in all areas of the school community.



THORPEDENE PRIMARY SCHOOL

At Thorpedene we have been working towards achieving the
Enhanced Healthy School Emotional Health and Wellbeing Project.



Taking part in this project has had a positive impact on pupils and staff who have developed strategies to look after their mental health and recognise how they are feeling. It has enabled us to ensure that mental health and emotional wellbeing are vitally important for every individual in our school and community, and has raised the profile of our need to look after ourselves both physically and mentally as well as being more aware of the needs of people around us.

Over the year we have made PSHE a priority subject for all the children, ensuring that these vital skills are taught to all, whether in school or remotely. We have utilised many online resources, such as those from the Anna Freud Foundation as well as from our current Jigsaw programme that has released special COVID related resources, to ensure that the children are staying mentally healthy during the pandemic.

We have also shared resources with the children and staff to celebrate **Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Awareness Week.**

As a lot of the training that we received highlighted **the benefits of physical exercise**, throughout the Autumn term we organised for Premier Sports to work with the children on a daily basis. They took part in a variety of activities and built on the children's team building skills as well as their physical development. Working as part of a team was highlighted on the children's surveys as an area that a number of children raised as something that they struggled with.

We have been able to take part in a range of training courses for staff including **Promoting Positive Sleep and Youth Mental Health First Aid training as well as the children being able to participate in yoga sessions both in school and online through Kalma Kids. Children have also continued to use the Relax Kids program to develop their skills in self-control and recognising their own emotions.**

A select group of staff have begun their training on the **Children's Health Project**, whose aim is to embed wellbeing throughout the curriculum across a number of subjects – **particularly PE and Science**. This is planned to be rolled out across the school in the coming term, with information regarding the project already on our new Wellbeing area of the school website.

Over the past year **staff have completed a range of CPD topics on wellbeing, including: Educare courses on Supporting Bereaved Pupils and Mental Wellbeing in Children; Creative Education courses on breaking the cycle of emotionally based school avoidance, meeting the mental health needs of pupils with SEND; and the Hays wellbeing first package. These have given staff the confidence to speak about mental health with other colleagues as well as the children themselves. It has also allowed staff to reflect on their own wellbeing.**

"I have been very impressed with the way that the school has shown they care about the children over what has been a very difficult year. One of my children has been at home for the whole of the lockdown period, but the personal contact from his teachers over Teams has been so important in making him feel valued as a member of the class and recognised for what he has been achieving at home." **Parent of year 5 child**

"My daughter's teacher has been wonderfully supportive. She always finds the time to support my daughter and I with any challenges we present her with. She has a great sense of fairness and teaches this to the children in her class. When my daughter was feeling sad about being in school due to an issue on the playground, she responded immediately to the situation. Likewise, while my daughter has been learning at home, she has gone out of her way to support her when she has been struggling emotionally." **Parent of year 3 child**

"I really enjoyed the well-being week and loved Martial arts and yoga. I would change PE clothes all week - no uniform! Karma kids taught me breathing skills to help me be calm." **YR3**



BOURNES GREEN JUNIOR SCHOOL



During our first week back, it was our priority to enable the pupils to return to a warm, welcoming and exciting environment.

By planning creative activities and ensuring structure and routine was immediately in place, we were surrounded by smiling children and there was a definite buzz around the previously quiet school building!

To kick start the week and reassure our pupils that BGJS is a fun, happy place to be, they were greeted with a visit to our **'Little Red Riding Hood Walkthrough Experience'**, in which they explored a range of clues and visual stimuli linked with the fairytale. This then inspired the week's writing focus in each year group. It was a delight to see their faces as they entered the experience... especially when they were confronted by "Grandma" in her bed!

Another very special project that the children were involved in was the **'Hares About Town' charity Art event, due to take place this Summer. With the help of our resident artist Miss Cook, every child contributed to our stunning space-themed leveret, Sparkle, by adding their very own star!** This reminded us of the incredible family that we are all part of it and we were proud to see our combined efforts come together. We can't wait to see Sparkle and the many other hares and leverets all over Southend later this year!

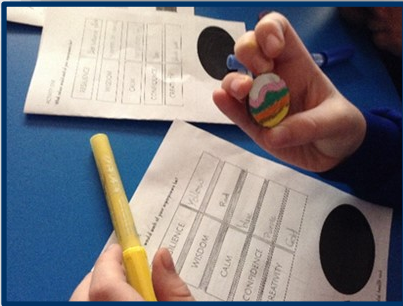
Thanks to our amazing staff team, children were warmly welcomed back to school, feeling safe and supported by the adults around them.



Mrs Westlake, our wonderful Learning Mentor, has continued the work she was doing with individual pupils during lockdown and has played an invaluable role in enabling children to share and express their feelings, following the rollercoaster year that we have all experienced.



Staff Voice on Training



The Children's Health Project



I [...] attended that Zoom training through The Healthy Schools Project and have been looking at the resources, particularly as some of our Year 6's are struggling. We have ensured that we have uploaded a well-being booklet for the children to use remotely and in school. The school have supported my well-being by being accommodating with my medical needs and allowing me to work remotely and away from other staff and children when needed. They have supported me during the autumn term when I had what can only be described as a wobble and allowed me time to recoup.



I have had the opportunity to complete a number of well-being courses. I have found these useful and have been able to draw upon varying key points which have been raised. This has helped me to monitor the wellbeing of children within my day-to-day care, as well as when conversing with parents during lockdown periods. I have felt more confident in making suggestions and have been more aware of things that require safeguarding or where further services could be of benefit.





Ruth Brock
Chief Executive Officer

POSITIVE THOUGHTS

It's hard to believe that a year has now gone by since we went into our first lockdown and goodness, how all of our lives have changed in that time.

As we move into the Summer, it does feel like we are moving into the final stages of COVID and we can look forward to more restrictions lifting and being reunited with family and friends.

It is wonderful to have our schools full of children, eager to learn and be with their friends again. Thank you again, to every single member of staff for all you have done and the support you have given, and of course, parents - we wouldn't have got through this without all of you.

Much of our work as a Trust at the moment has been in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of your children, and of course our staff. As a Trust we have invested in:

- Funding what Pupil Advocates have put forward that they would like: museum visits, summer festival for Yr6's, camping experience, life skills - cooking, finance etc. Trust to support with
- Mental health first aiders training for staff
- Tea and coffee supplied to all staff courtesy of the Trust
- Counselling sessions where appropriate
- Ensuring our outdoor swimming pools are serviced and ready for use after Easter.

I am sure there will be those out there, who are looking forward to the restrictions lifting but have some anxiety about stepping back out into the crowds once again. I think all we can do is take each day as it comes, support those around us and take the positives from each day, however small they may be.

As the days lengthen and the sun shines more, new beginnings are afoot in many ways. I wish you all a Happy Easter if you celebrate and a restful Spring break. Keep safe and well.



Karen Dovaston
Chair of Trust Board

MAT STRATEGIC PLAN

And we are back! And very pleased to see all of our pupils back with us. It was always the strategic aim of the Trust Board to have our pupils back with us as soon as possible, whilst complying with the legislation and public health management regulations. I want to say a huge thank you to all of the staff of SECAT for the hard work and 'can do' attitude to a very trying and unusual situation.

I hope you will have looked at the MAT Strategic Plan reviewed and approved by the Trust Board. This sets out our aims and ambitions for the next 3 to 5 year period. We have our four core pillars of Curriculum, Health and Wellbeing, Growth and Community.

We are starting to reap the benefits of being in a MAT – nearly £500,000 additional funding for use in building repairs; circa £80,000 saved on a cleaning contract for all of our schools – and an enhanced service also; circa £15,000 on digging a cable trench using our own site staff; thousands of pounds on renegotiating printers and print provision MAT wide. These are just the 'number' benefits.

More important than 'number' benefits are the intangibles, driving forward outcomes and achievement for our pupils. We have our Wellbeing Charter nearly completed – fed into by pupils and staff. I looking forward to sharing that with you. I am also excited about the curriculum entitlement document that is being worked on. The aim is to show the experiences and learning for each pupil who becomes part of the SECAT family – what do they get from us?

I am excited about the forthcoming months. I am sure there will be challenges – the spice of life, some may say! Together, we are strong.

