

Curriculum Recovery Strategy

SEND Update
Mental Health

Supporting SEMH needs during covid-19 'School Closures'

Promoting positive mental health

- ▶ Almost a third of pupils with SEND (28%) continued to access in-school provision. The majority of these children have SEMH needs and although not classed as vulnerable in terms of having an allocated social worker, we felt that this additional support was best for the children.
- ▶ Class teachers, TAs & SENCO kept in touch regularly with parents throughout the period of 'closure'. Teachers went above and beyond in providing a level of care for both children and their families, offering emotional support and advice throughout weekends and 'school holidays'.
- ▶ Resources to support home learning were delivered by staff to children who need them, for example; Maths manipulatives, talking tiles, SEMH resources.
- ▶ Bespoke learning packs either tailored to children's individual interests or based on a specific need (e.g. anxiety, building self-esteem) were also been delivered to children who need them.
- ▶ Resources to support SEMH needs were shared with **all** parents via School Dojo, including (but not limited too) a nurture pack from the Emotional Wellbeing Team, Relax Kids 'Calm Pack', 'Staying Mentally Well during Covid-19' and Rollercoaster services.
- ▶ We also signposted parents to online training & resources that could be helpful during this time, including online One Point support groups & courses.

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- ▶ 'Wellbeing Wednesday' challenges shared weekly via Class Dojo.
- ▶ Daily outdoor/exercise challenges set, including yoga and mindful movement challenges.
- ▶ Some pupils who do not have SEND, but who struggled with increased anxiety as a result of the pandemic, were provided with 'Worry Journals' and other support.
- ▶ Some children sadly suffered bereavements within their family during the period of 'closure'. We delivered wellbeing hampers to these families and supported parents in accessing bereavement support for the children via Cruse Bereavement.
- ▶ Throughout the period of 'lockdown' we shopped for & delivered many food hampers to families struggling financially as a result of the pandemic in order to support the mental health of both children and their parents.
- ▶ Feedback from parents has been lovely, with some parents commenting: 'We always knew Stanley Crook Primary School was the best and this very kind gesture goes to show it yet again' and 'You always go above and beyond for me and my children'.

Staff training

- ▶ Staff took part in a varied programme of CPD while working from home.
- ▶ Training specific to Mental Health needs included;
 - Early warning signs of SEMH needs
 - Supporting children with anxiety
 - Promoting resilience
 - Dealing with challenging behaviours – promoting positivity
 - Children who are anxious to attend school (school refusal)
 - Empowering children
- ▶ All staff completed course 'Supporting a Safe & Successful Return to School using the SWAN Framework'
- ▶ Safe Welcoming All together Nurturing

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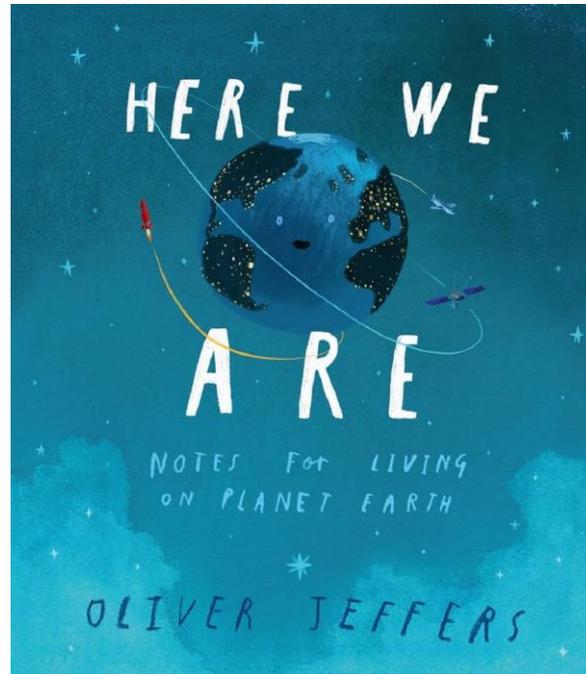
Return to School

- ▶ Children's mental health and wellbeing is always a priority at Stanley Crook Primary.
- ▶ However, all staff agreed that it must be the top priority upon our return to school, with a focus on rebuilding relationships, developing confidence, building self esteem & resilience and reducing anxiety/low mood.
- ▶ Curriculum recovery is vitally important – but unhappy/anxious children aren't ready for learning.
- ▶ Wellbeing Wednesday – each week (often much more regularly) children participate in activities designed to promote positive mental health e.g. yoga, Zen Den (guided meditation for children), mindful movement challenges.
- ▶ Increased opportunities for children to be creative – Art, D&T etc.
- ▶ Daily opportunities for outdoor exercise/play – even in bad weather!
- ▶ In class interventions include A Tummy Full of Fireworks, Getting Along and Zippy's/Apple's Friends - programmes designed to promote mental health and emotional wellbeing in children.
- ▶ They support children to develop coping and social skills, teach them how to cope with everyday difficulties, to identify and talk about their feelings and to explore ways of dealing with them, as well as encouraging children to help other people with their problems.

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Developing emotional literacy

- ▶ Whole school English programme based on 'Here We Are: Notes for Living on Planet Earth' by Oliver Jeffers.
- ▶ We chose this book to build a sequence of work around because it provides a powerful vehicle for children to reflect on and make sense of the world we are all living in. The story & beautiful illustrations help children to understand their place in the world and to move forward together in a positive way.



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Outdoor Learning

- ▶ Increased focus (whole school) on outdoor learning & Forest Schools.
- ▶ There has been significant research on the benefits of the natural environment for health and wellbeing with a growing body of evidence showing the numerous and varied benefits for people of outdoor activity in the natural environment.
- ▶ The mental health benefits for outdoor learning include;
 - Increased general wellbeing
 - Reduction in depression, anxiety and stress related symptoms
 - Improved self esteem, confidence and mood
 - Increased capacity for listening & attention
 - Improved happiness, satisfaction & quality of life
 - Sense of peace, calm or relaxation
 - Feelings of safety and security
 - Increased social contact, inclusion and a sense of belonging

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Outdoor Learning cont.

‘Fruits of the Forest’ programme

- ▶ The programme is based around 5 ‘key skills’; fire, knots, tool use, nature and teamwork.
- ▶ Each session, children will also learn the importance of mindfulness and start to practice some basic meditation. The aim is to give the children the skills to learn to reflect & appreciate the natural world as well as giving them time to relax and to feel the benefits of doing so.
- ▶ The aim of these sessions is to encourage the children to get outside, have the freedom to play and develop their learning and creativity whilst gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of the natural world. The children will learn skills such as lighting fires and using tools. The main emphasis is for children to enjoy themselves and have fun!
- ▶ Activities available to the children include natural crafts, clay, working with willow, playing in the digging pit, building & lighting a fire, den building and knot skills.
- ▶ Children work towards awards each term, building confidence & self esteem and giving them a sense of accomplishment & pride.



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Going forward

- ▶ Staff are experienced & highly trained, therefore well placed to identify early signs of mental health needs in children.
- ▶ Graduated approach – First Note of concern (agreed with parents), plan/do/review, referral to relevant services if needed.
- ▶ Top priorities:
 - Be responsive to the needs of individual children.
 - Be prepared to support children through periods of uncertainty, anxiety and stress.
 - Ensure support in school is well planned & appropriate, as many mental health services, including CAMHs, are operating with significant delay.
 - Continue to provide support to children & their families – this could go on for many months, but as we have repeatedly reiterated to parents throughout, we are all in this together!

T E A M
Together Everyone Achieves More

Any questions?

