



THE SOLENT SCHOOLS

Summer Newsletter 2021– Issue 3

It has been wonderful to see pupils and adults around school sharing ideas relating to how spending time in our outdoor learning environment positively impacts upon their mental health. Seeing groups of pupils simply taking time to 'be', without any expectations placed upon them, has been an enlightening learning experience. Sunday 16th May marks the end of Mental Health week 2021, but we plan to continue to develop our outdoor learning environments to ensure that this resource remains available to all of our pupils as part of our rich provision.

Mrs Wilby Executive Headteacher

Risk Assessment Review

Monday sees the next important stage in the easing of national lockdown measures. In light of these changes, we have been busy revisiting our own school risk assessment. We have made the decision to keep many of the restrictions in place for now. We will continue to operate a staggered start and end to the school day and kindly ask that pupils continue to leave all bags at home. However, we will be implementing a few changes.

- Pupils will be playing in year group zones at playtimes and whilst outdoors generally.
- Pupils will begin to share equipment within their class bubbles, rather than having individual resource packs.
- Reading packs with 'real' books will be sent home and then quarantined upon return.
- Pupils will be able to freely move around their own classrooms.
- Year R will be using the Adventure Playground and their bikes and trikes.
- The trim trail at SJS will be open to one year group each week.

We will continue to review our risk assessment throughout the summer term and will share any changes with you as they are agreed.



Pupils of all ages have been connecting with our outdoor learning environment this week in recognition of mental health awareness week. The theme this year is 'Nature', encouraging our pupils to recognise the powerful benefits of nature upon their mental health. They have been inspired to connect with nature in new ways, noticing the impact that this connection has upon the way in which they feel. Over the next two pages you will find some examples of how each year group has explored this theme further building it in as an integrated part of the curriculum. On the left is a 'Van Gough' inspired piece of art work created by Year 1. We thought we would share as this certainly made us all smile!



SOLENT INFANT SCHOOL

Our Assemblies this week have focused on the theme of Respect: respecting ourselves, the people around us and also our environment. We collected ideas about the kinds of things that we have different opinions about; we know that it is okay to have different opinions and to respect the opinions of others. For Mental Health Awareness Week, we have practised yoga and mindfulness, discussed how different emotions make us feel and shared strategies for feeling positive and happy. Lots of our strategies involved going outside, noticing nature and doing some exercise. Stingray Class felt very relaxed, looking at the clouds and thinking about what the shapes could be—and we have had plenty of clouds this week!

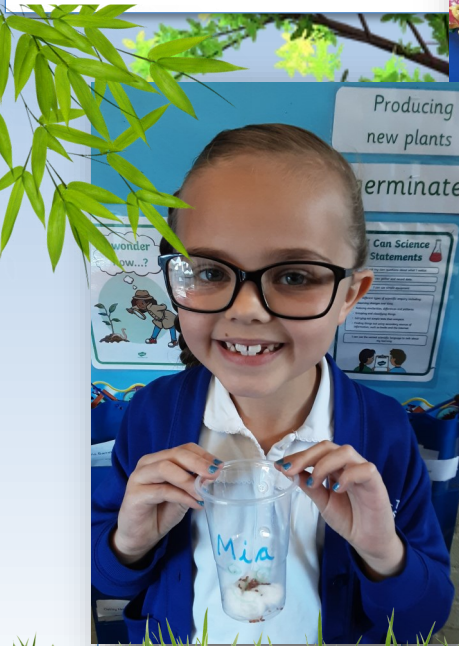
Mrs Curthoys—Head of School SIS

Early Years!

As part of Mental Health Awareness Week, we have been using our outdoor learning sessions to spend time in the natural environment. We have enjoyed admiring and discussing the plants around the playground and even used these to create some beautiful art-work. We were also very excited by the arrival of our class caterpillars and have been observing how they grow and change.

Year 1

This week, the Year 1 children have extended their learning about sunflowers and enjoyed finding out about butterflies and bees. We explored the meaning of new words like, 'nectar, pollen and pollination'. Last week, we made clay sunflower heads and this week we painted them. We are budding Van Goghs! He was a painter but his Sunflower painting has inspired our sculpture work.



Year 2

In Science, Year 2 are learning about Living Things and have planted beans and cress seeds in water, but with no soil, to see if they will grow. This is called Hydroponics. We have made predictions and we are observing our seeds daily. We drew faces on our transparent cups and are hoping the seeds will grow and look like hair!





SOLENT JUNIOR SCHOOL

It has been lovely seeing the children practicing mindfulness, yoga and reflection techniques to mark Mental Health Awareness Week. They have said "It made me feel quiet inside", "I felt calm and peaceful". Whilst we know that life is getting busier, both inside and outside of school, it is really important to remember these techniques to help us find the balance.

Hopefully this week has reminded them of the importance of moments of calmness and reflection.

Mrs Peterkin-Aldred-Head of School SJS

Year 4

This week, we have taken some precious time out of their days to spend time exploring Nature and the outdoors, to support Mental Health week. Year 4 did this in a number of ways! We read within the trees, we carried out a scavenger hunt and we simply took time to enjoy each other's company, whilst being outdoors. Why don't you all do the same this weekend?



Year 5

Year 5 have enjoyed taking part in our PSHE activities for Mental Health week. It was the perfect opportunity to combine our love of reading with being in nature (and the small amount of sun we had). It really gave us the opportunity to read peacefully and listen to the sounds of the world around us. We were so quiet at times that the local wood pigeons landed very nearby eager to see what we were doing!



Year 3

We have now begun our very exciting Design and Technology topic of sundials. We have researched all about sundials and have now started to plan and design our own, ready to make next week. The children are very much looking forward to using wood and other materials to create their own sundial. The picture shows the wooden frame, that will form the first stage of the sundial's base.



Year 6

This week our year 6 pupils have worked their socks off during our assessment week. Although the national SATS tests were cancelled, we wanted to give the pupils the chance to show off what they had learnt over their time at Solent and they certainly didn't fail to impress! All children showed resilience, determination and hard work. As a special treat, the week finished with a non-uniform reward day.