

Wellbeing

Newsletter Issue 15
Sept/Oct 2024



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our first Wellbeing Newsletter of the new school year! I hope the late summer weather stays for a long time into autumn but I am also looking forward to kicking up the fallen leaves on a walk and wrapping up in warmer clothes and seeing pumpkin decorations everywhere!

Our theme for this newsletter is **'Ambition'**, which is the third of our **'HEART'** values and I thought I would take the new school year as an opportunity to also link in our use of 'Six Strands' which we run alongside our values, to help support learning in school. For our first link, I will look at **'Resilience'** as it often goes hand in hand with **'Ambition'** as a way of achieving our goals.

Obviously, we encourage **'Ambition'** in all our children, both in school and with their home life and activities outside of school and we love to hear about them achieving targets and goals - no matter how small. Having just watched the Ringwood Carnival, it was fabulous, as always, to see so many of our children, from both schools, performing in the Carnival. From the rugby club and dance clubs to cheerleaders and scooter clubs and many more - smiling and showing off, not only their skills for all to see but the confidence and **'Resilience'** shown to keep going, on what is a long, tiring day, was great; so proud of all of them.

But how do we support our children and family and friends with achieving things? How do we instil **'Resilience'** into our children? How do we teach them to 'keep going' when things get harder and they want to give up? At what point do we say they have to 'keep going and work harder' or do we allow them to set their own goals and decide when they have done enough? Harvard University's Child Development Centre says that a *'combination of supportive relationships, adaptive skill-building and positive experiences is the foundation of resilience'*; do you agree? To all the parents, standing on the side-lines of sporting events, cheering on our children, willing them to do well, did we ever stop to think how we could best support them? Are our cheers enough? I suppose that would start to tick the box of 'supportive relationships' as we would always be there for them, win or lose, but what would our own definition of 'supportive' be? Is it encouraging them to complete something? Is it training with them to learn new skills? Is it being there for them and supporting them at all times, in all weathers? Does supporting them with tricky friendships at school or with siblings help them achieve their goals in other areas? Apparently, it can! Therefore, does supporting them in different areas help with **'Ambition'** too? So many questions!

Obviously, within school we do hope children have a positive experience and encourage them to have the 'Resilience' to take the next steps in their learning and even go beyond it, with 'Ambition' because life can be challenging in so many different ways and it is a great tool to have in our emotional armoury. Think back to when you were children and try to remember a time when you perhaps struggled with learning something new, either in school or out; what kept you going to achieve your goal? Or did you maybe not have the 'Resilience' and 'Ambition' and gave up on something that you now regret? Or do you not think they are essential in life? Everyone is different and approaches life from many different angles and I don't believe there is one 'right way'. I can remember struggling with the spelling of a certain word, repeatedly, and asking my junior school teacher, who just kept marking it wrong (with a big red cross!) how to spell it correctly and she simply said 'Use a dictionary!' - Not particularly helpful when you can't spell a word in the first place (thankfully teaching has come a long way in giving us a variety of problem solving skills now). I was not going to ask the teacher again, refused to get any more red crosses next to my spelling work, couldn't ask my parents, and so had to find my own solution. My stubbornness in wanting to get it right resulted in me reading the whole section of words, starting with the same letter, until I found my one! I guess, in that moment, I not only found my word but also the 'Resilience' to fix the problem! I have luckily continued to have that thirst for finding out the answer and solving problems, although these days it is a lot easier with the internet and search engines (rather than getting on my bike, going to the library [which was a 20 minute cycle away] and searching through the encyclopaedias and then having to copy down the information into my trusted notebook, followed by a 20 minute cycle home!)

Perhaps, next time we are struggling to find the 'Resilience' to achieve something we could break it down more, like we do with the 'Six Strands' and ask for support, accept help when things go wrong as well as be comforted when they go wrong, talk to someone and show them you are struggling and never forget to have another go!

Enjoy autumn and, don't forget, as always, - just breathe!

Mrs Lesley Lillis, Pastoral Support Lead

