

Wellbeing

Newsletter Issue 17
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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our Wellbeing Newsletter and the first of 2025! I hope you all had a lovely Christmas break and had a chance to get together with your friends and family; I do feel that is my favourite part of Christmas. This year, for my family, it was the first one where we were not all together as my youngest son had to work all over the Christmas break; we still had a lovely time - just different, although it meant we got to do a 'second' Christmas Day when we did see him on 30th December - which was an added bonus!

Coincidentally, it defined our theme for this newsletter, being '**Togetherness**', which is our representation of '**T**' in our '**HEART**' values, as well as '**Independence**' which is our link to the Six Strands Curriculum. For the first time, my son had to be alone, showing independence, in a foreign country, for Christmas, and we, for the first time, didn't have our usual '**Togetherness**' for our family. Which made me think about which other ways '**Togetherness**' and '**Independence**' can share common ground. Within school, and in any learning environment, we often teach in groups, getting students to work together to learn something but then, once they have grasped the relevant skill, we ask them to show independence by completing a task relating to the newly acquired skill, by themselves. Which is what, as parents and teachers, we want for all our children; to go from being reliant on us whilst learning ('**Togetherness**') to, eventually, showing '**Independence**' and being able to 'survive' in the big, wide world.

As parents, this is probably the hardest part of 'our job' and we all have different views on it, which is all dependent on our upbringing, parenting styles, homelife, etc., who knows if there is a 'right way' or a 'wrong way' (?) but it is definitely something that as parents, I don't think we are ever ready for! Which is a bit mad considering that from our child's birth, that is our end goal! It is the end goal for all mammals really - to teach our 'young' to be able to 'thrive' and that goes way beyond food, drink, warmth and shelter! We need, while using '**Togetherness**', to teach our children how to traverse the world of friendships, school, education, work, love, relationships, finance, optimal physical health, cooking and self-care, wellbeing and how to protect and boost our mental health, how to literally navigate the world (holidays/travel for work) - the list is never-ending! But, as was said earlier, we start off doing all of these skills in a secure, loving environment, using '**Togetherness**', but with '**Independence**' as our aim.

Within school, obviously starting with '**Togetherness**' in most things we do, we would then progress using the Six Strands Curriculum. We would initially start with '**Independence**' by looking if they can follow simple routines or instructions with support? Can they try to do things for themselves? Can they find the things they want or need?

Can they explore their environment? And can they, quite a poignant one for a lot of parents, separate from a special adult with support (remember that first day at pre-school/nursery/school)?

No-one said being a parent was an easy job but I think everyone needs a big pat on the back for doing probably one of the hardest jobs on the planet! It will throw up challenges along the way but many, many rewards also, and, as always, if in doubt - just breathe!

Mrs Lesley Lillis, Pastoral Support Lead



A reminder to savour the lightness and magic of togetherness.

