

Primrose Hill Primary School Weekly Newsletter

Address: Princess Road, London, NW1 8JL
Tel : 020 7722 8500
Email: admin@primrosehill.camden.sch.uk
Website: www.primrosehill.camden.sch.uk

Friday 13th Jan.
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Dear Primrose Hill Families,

Value of the month: Happiness.

"A smile puts you on the right track. A smile makes the world a beautiful place. When you lose your smile, you lose your way in the chaos of life." – Roy T. Bennett

I have set a whole school challenge of spreading a smile across our whole school, homes and community. I did an assembly this week to introduce the value of the month—happiness. I talked about the importance of a smile and how easy it is to spread happiness through a smile.

Value of the month Happiness competition. Ten winners will be invited to the Head Teacher's tea party.

- Write a story, poem, comic, script on happiness.
- Dance to the theme of happiness.
- Art piece on happiness.

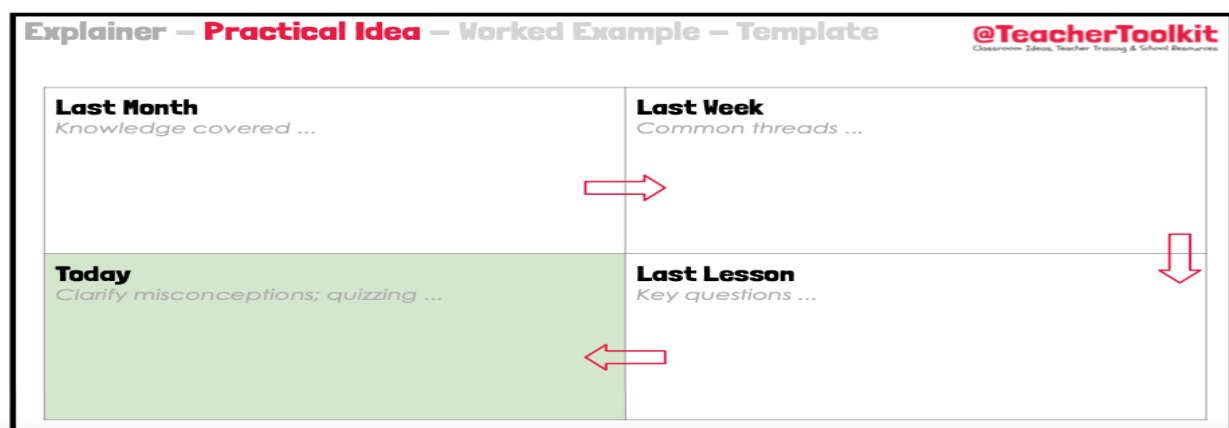
Competition end Friday 20th January. Keep Smiling! **Have a lovely weekend, Harsha**

This week, we had training from the 'most influential blog in the UK', educationalist Ross Morrison McGill, who has written books, blogs and trains teachers about how to make learning stick. He gave us an analogy of a car and if you passed your driving test you know how to drive a car but how many of us know the intricate mechanisms of a car? If we use this to describe how we teach, it is easy for us but describing how children learn is much harder for most of us. We learnt a new word 'phronesis' which means professional wisdom. We did a training session that gave our teachers the phronesis to support our children to learn more and remember more.

Learning = a change in the long-term memory. 'If nothing has changed, nothing has been learned.'

We learnt lots of practical ways that we can help our children to remember more through retrieval exercises that can be built into our everyday practices. Retrieval practice aids later retention 'every time you retrieve a memory it becomes deeper, stronger and easier to access in the future.'

Here is one that you can try at home as we will be using this template at school.



Have a go at using the template and let me know if it helps you remember something you learnt over a month ago. You may have some great ideas to make this template more effective so share with us as we can help all children know more and remember more. **Harsha**

New Signing in System

The school gate is open between 8.45 and 9am. If you are late, you now need to sign your own child into school using the computer system in the main entrance. This will register your child and indicate they are late. You will need to provide a reason. Please ensure you arrive to school on time to prevent you being further delayed by having to wait in a queue to sign your child into school.

ATTENDANCE UPDATES

Our whole school attendance for this week is **93.63%**, which is below our target of **95%**, please continue to strive for 100% attendance .

A huge clap for Kestrels who had the highest attendance of 98.62%.

Children who arrived late for school this week was **106**.

This figure is very high & we need to work on this. We will continue to send reminder texts, letters and invite parents in for meetings.

Soft start is from 8.45-9am. The gate will continue to close promptly at 9am and all of those who are late will need to enter through the office.

If your child arrives to school after 9.15am this is marked as an unauthorised late.

We appreciate you all making a huge effort to arrive at school before 9am.

VALUE of the Month: Happiness

A value is a principle that guides our thinking and behaviour

Throughout January we are exploring the value Happiness

This month we are focusing on the value of 'Happiness'. Happiness is closely linked to our other values 'Respect', 'Courage', 'Love' and 'Kindness'. Happiness is about being able to make the most of the good times but also cope effectively with the bad times, to experience the best possible life overall.

Ways we can show and spread HAPPINESS:

Spending quality time with your family and friends.

Trying your best and encouraging others.

Smiling and making people laugh.

Being kind to others.

Listening to others.

Including others in your games and not leaving anyone out.

Praising others when they have done something well.

Leading a healthy lifestyle.



Forest of Happiness by Bob Ross



How does this oil painting show 'Happiness'?

Why has the artist used these colours?




Does this painting make you feel happy?

The Brain

As a parent, understanding the links between the brain and behaviour can be enlightening. We can see our children's behaviour more objectively when we are able to put it into a biological context. An understanding of your child's developing brain can help to lower your parental frustration and increase the effectiveness of your responses. Learning a few key facts about the brain can optimize our ability to help our children navigate childhood and become successful adults. In my assembly, children learn about four main parts of the brain: the Amygdala, the Pre-frontal Cortex, the Hippocampus, and the Reticular Activating System. Children of all ages love learning interesting facts about their brain. It is powerful for children to begin learning about their brain because it allows them to actively seek the optimal state for learning and being.

Activity

MindUP helps children understand how their brain works in an age-appropriate way. Using the analogy examples below, create your own analogy for the functions of the different parts of the brain:

		
MindUP™ Brain Part:	Animal Analogy:	School Analogy:
Amygdala	Guard Dog	Fire Alarm
PFC	Wise Old Owl	Teacher
Hippocampus	Hippo	Library
RAS	Whale	School Secretary



GETTING TO KNOW OUR AMAZING BRAIN

Explore emotions and feelings to build emotional intelligence.
Discuss feelings with your child. When your child has been overwhelmed with emotions (an amygdala hijack) discuss how they felt and explain what's happening in their brain. When your child is calm, focused, happy or enjoying a quiet moment with you, explore and discuss their emotions and feelings linked to these experiences. This also helps to extend their emotional vocabulary.

Bring emotional understanding alive through books/reading together:
Use opportunities when you're reading books together to consider how characters might be feeling, what emotions they're experiencing. Also, discuss what part of the character's brain might be in control in different parts of the story, consider the choices that they make and how they might reflect on those choices, make changes to situations etc.

Make a calm down glitter bottle:
Use an empty plastic bottle and fill with water. Add a teaspoon of biodegradable glitter. Firmly secure the lid. Use the bottle to explain the brain as follows:
Shake the bottle and discuss how hard it is to see clearly through the bottle when the glitter is flying around.
Explain that when the glitter settles it's like the amygdala calming down so clear decisions can be made from the prefrontal cortex.

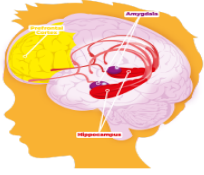
MINDUP™ GETTING TO KNOW OUR AMAZING BRAIN

As a parent, understanding the brain can be enlightening. Having an insight into the biology of the brain enables us to be more objective in our responses to behaviours and situations.

Learning some key facts about the brain can increase our ability to help our children become more self-aware and develop essential skills to regulate their emotions, behaviours, and learn more effectively.

By developing our own knowledge about the brain, we can learn to respond differently to challenging moments with children and avoid escalation which is beneficial to all involved! We also develop an understanding of the importance of being calm to increase both our own and our children's awareness and focus.

The 3 parts of the brain that we will explore are:



Prefrontal Cortex: The executive functioning part of the brain, responsible for helping us learn, think, plan, make good decisions, and interpret our experiences.

Hippocampus: Situated in the limbic region, the primitive part of the brain. The hippocampus is important for remembering information and storing memories.

Amygdala: Situated in the limbic region, the primitive part of the brain. When operating from the amygdala, we react quickly with a fight, flight, freeze, faint response. These responses are useful when dealing with real threats, e.g. reacting to a fire alarm, running away from danger, but less useful for 'perceived threats', e.g. tests, public speaking or when someone bumps into us, etc.



Dr. Dan Siegel describes the amygdala as the downstairs brain and the prefrontal cortex as the upstairs brain in his book 'The Whole Brain Child'.

As parents, we learn to recognize when behaviour is fuelled by the reactive thinking of the downstairs brain and understand that when this is happening the upstairs brain cannot work effectively, limiting the ability to process thinking and reducing the ability to make good decisions. In these situations, the child needs safety, comfort and time to calm down. Attuned parents learn that discussions about their behaviour need to wait so that the upstairs brain can assume control.

Remember also that the prefrontal cortex isn't fully formed until individuals reach emerging adulthood in their mid-twenties. Children don't have the same thinking, reasoning, problem-solving and decision-making skills as we do.

Disclaimer: These are simplified explanations designed to make it more accessible to conceptualise the impact of the brain on our behaviour. It is of course far more complex!

mindup.org.uk

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RA

Royal Academy of Arts



How would you like your art work displayed in the Royal Academy?

Artists are at the heart of everything they do at the **Royal Academy of Arts** — they believe in nurturing and celebrating the next generation of artists. Taking inspiration from the [Summer Exhibition](#), the **Young Artists' Summer Show** is a free, open submission exhibition for young artists aged 4–19 years studying in the UK.

Each student can **submit one artwork** and there is no theme. **Please give your artwork a title and a sentence about your artwork, why you made it and do not forget to write your full name and age** (do not write this information on the front of your work, put it on the back). **The deadline is Friday the 10th of March**

Your artwork will be seen by a [panel of judges](#) and the selected pieces will be shown in their online exhibition. Some of the artworks will also be shown at the Royal Academy of Arts.

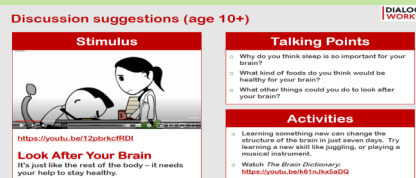
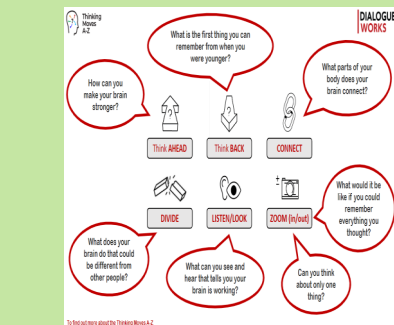
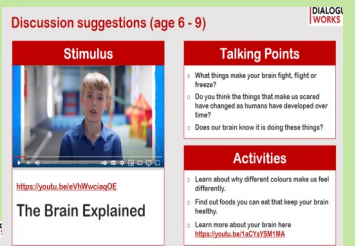
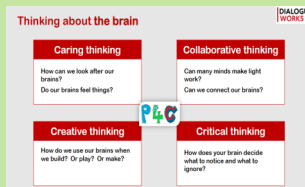
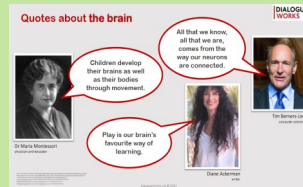
The artwork can be made using any material; it can be a painting, sculpture, photograph, drawing, or a combination. There is no theme so artworks can be of any subject and they don't mind when you made the artwork as long as you are between 4–19 years old when you submit it. We also welcome collaborative pieces made by more than one student.

Please return your artwork to your teacher by the 10th March.

Have fun!

Maria Felstead Art and Design lead

Harsha's Home Talk Activity



Starting school in Camden – apply for a Reception place before 15 January 2023



Parents and carers can still apply for primary school reception places for their child for **September 2023 before the deadline of 11.59pm on Sunday 15 January 2023.**

[Read our latest primary schools admissions guide](#)

Visit the [primary admissions web page](#) on our website

[Apply for a reception class place now](#)

Contact the Camden admissions team: admissions@camden.gov.uk

Relating

The people around you offer a valuable pool of support so it's important to put time into strengthening those connections.

Give it a go:

- Meet up with someone you haven't seen in a while
- Turn off distractions to chat with friends or family about your day

Exercising

Regular activity will provide an endorphin boost and increase confidence.

Give it a go:

- Find an activity that suits you and your schedule
- Choose the car on short journeys and cycle or walk to work

Awareness

Taking time to switch off autopilot and 'be in the moment' is a great tool to combat stress.

Give it a go:

- Pay attention to your senses — what can you see, hear or feel around you?
- Choose a regular point in the day to reflect

Giving

Holding out a helping hand makes other people happy and will make you feel happier too.

Give it a go:

- Share your skills or offer support
- Ask friends, family or colleagues how they are and listen without judgement

10 KEYS TO HAPPIER LIVING

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Find out more about the 10 Keys to Happier Living at actionforhappiness.org

Trying out

Learning new things is stimulating and can help to lift your mood.

Give it a go:

- Take on a new role at work or school
- Try out a new hobby, club or activity that interests you

Direction

Working towards positive, realistic goals can provide motivation and structure.

Give it a go:

- Choose a goal that is meaningful to you, not what someone else expects of you
- Remember to celebrate progress along the way

Meaning

People who have meaning in their lives experience less stress, anxiety and depression.

Give it a go:

- Prioritise the activities, people and beliefs that bring you the strongest sense of purpose
- Volunteer for a cause, part of a team, or how your actions make a difference for others

Resilience

Although we can't always choose what happens to us, we can often choose our own response to what happens.

Give it a go:

- Find an outlet such as talking to friends or writing it down
- Take action to improve your resilience skills

Emotions

Positive emotions can build up a buffer against stress and even lead to lasting changes in the brain to help maintain wellbeing.

Give it a go:

- Take time to notice what you're grateful for and focus on the good aspects of any situation
- Set aside time to have fun

Acceptance

No one is perfect. Longing to be someone different gets in the way of making the most of our own happiness.

Give it a go:

- Be kind to yourself when things go wrong
- Shift the focus away from what you don't have and can't do, to what you have and can do

You are a star!

We are so proud of each and every one of you!
A big special mention for these children this week.
Well done!

EYFS Star Learners

The Grove: Suhaib
N: Tadpoles Azeem and Ilan
N: Froglets Jacob and Julia

R: Ladybirds Matan and Amelia

You are a star!

We are so proud of each and every one of you!
A big special mention for these children this week.
Well done!

Y1 and Y2 Star Learners

Y1: Dragonflies Hanna and Peggy
Y1: Butterflies Mikolaj and Tiago
Y2: Grasshoppers - Lily and Taqwa
Y2: Beetles - Leo & Niyah

You are a star!

We are so proud of each and every one of you!
A big special mention for these children this week.
Well done!

Y3 and Y4 Star Learners

Y3: Squirrels - Ilhan & Zayyaan
Y3: Bats Ida and Safa
Y4 Hedgehogs: Ayub & Oli
Y4 Foxes: Sara & Aron

You are a star!

We are so proud of each and every one of you!
A big special mention for these children this week.
Well done!

Y5 and Y6 Star Learners

Y5: Blackbirds - Harry & Reis
Y5: Woodpeckers - Ruby & Adrian
Y6 Kestrels - Henry & Alannah
Y6: Herons - Nora & Sophia

You are a star!

EYFS



The Froglets came into class earlier this week to find chaos. We looked for clues and recorded what we saw. We think it may have been a crashed space rocket, space helmet and space boots.

We have been having a great time going on our own space adventures and are now busy building a space station to start further exploration.



You are a star!

The Grove

In the Grove this week, we created our story map of "We're Going on a Bear Hunt".

The children used their fine motor skills to create different natural environments and a lot of repeated language with visual prompts to enrich vocabulary.





You are a star!

Y2 went to the CLC to learn about coding.

First they learnt how to give instructions to Bluebots...




After that, they learnt how to use 2Animate on Purplemash and made an animation of how a seed turns into a flower!

<https://www.purplemash.co.uk/displayboard/63c0151b925e613e420fd57a>

Then they learnt how to give coding commands to Mr Bearhead so he could dance!



You are a star!

Y4 have started a new Art project about textiles and printing. We have had a go at doing some tie-dye and these are our beautiful results.





You are a star!

Y5 went on a trip to the Planetarium! We took a trip into space, learning all sorts of fascinating facts about our solar system. We also stood on the Meridian line - the point where East and West meet!





Upcoming Dates for your Diary:	
Friday 20th January: 9am in school 4pm virtually	End of Key Stage 2 SATs Information Session for Year 6 parents & carers
Friday 20th January	Chinese New Year
Tuesday 7th February	Safer Internet Day
Friday 10th February	Women in Science Day
Mon to Fri 13th to 17th February	HALF TERM - school closed
Mon 20th to Fri 24th February	Science Week
Thursday 23rd February from 1pm	Parents' Consultation
Thursday 2nd March	World Book Day
Mon 13th to Fri 17th March	Careers Week
Tuesday 21st March	World Poetry Day
Fri 24th March	Earth Hour Day
Fri 31st March	Last day of Spring Term with Summer Term beginning for the children on Tuesday 17th April