



Forest Way Teaching School Alliance News

SPRING TERM 2021

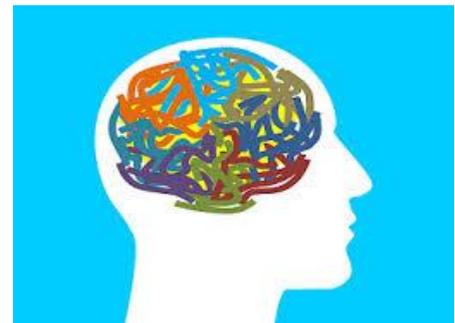
New term, fresh challenges!

Welcome to the spring edition of our newsletter. We hope that you were able to relax a little over the Christmas break and are embracing the fresh challenges of 2021!

Our schools are all working tirelessly to ensure that staff and students are safe, and that the quality of care and education remains high despite the constantly shifting goal posts. It has been great to see several of our schools being recognised for their hard work, commitment and professionalism during the pandemic, with several being nominated as NW Leicestershire Community Heroes. We would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to our wonderful partnership schools for their continuing support of our School Direct trainees and NQTs. Despite the current challenges, Heads and mentors have continued to provide the same level of outstanding support and guidance to our new and burgeoning teachers. It is pleasing to report that recruitment for our teacher training courses has been very good so far for 2021/22.

We are finding that many applicants are hearing about us through word of mouth and are eager to train with our excellent alliance!

The last ten months have not been easy, and more and more focus has quite rightly been placed on the mental health and wellbeing of both staff and students in school. In this edition of the newsletter, we are focusing on mental health and exploring what some of our partnership schools are doing to support the wellbeing of their staff and students during these difficult and uncertain times.



School Direct Teacher Training

Autumn was a tough first term for our trainee teachers in the current climate, but they have risen to the challenge marvellously with the help and support of their school mentors. All of our Primary, SEN and Secondary trainees settled in well to their first placement schools. Unfortunately, due to the closure of schools and the move to online teaching, our school direct trainees are no longer able to complete their second placements and will stay in their main school. We were delighted to have been able to conduct face-to-face training at our Hub, based at The Marlene Reid Centra in Coalville, throughout last term, although we have now

moved all of our training online to ensure the safety of our trainees and speakers.

Our trainees have responded incredibly well to the changing situation. Thank you to Andrea Brown and Sheila Dennis for their hard work and commitment to delivering the highest quality training, and to our many facilitators for their support.

ITT Recruitment for 2021/22

Recruitment for 2021/22 is well under way now with a number of offers already accepted for Primary and Secondary. As we are currently unable to attend our usual face-to-face recruitment events, we are heavily reliant on social media to advertise and promote our courses. So far, this approach seems to be working well, and prospective teachers are regularly emailing and asking to book on to our virtual information events to discuss their options.

Please continue to like/share/retweet our marketing posts on social media, as you help us to reach a much wider audience. Don't forget to put a link to the ITT pages on our website from your website if you have not already done so. Email tsa@forestway.leics.sch.uk for more information or a logo. Several of our applicants this year are already working in one of our partnership schools, or have heard about us via a local school, so your involvement has an undoubtedly positive impact on our recruitment figures.

SLEs Specialist Leaders in Education

If you have any aspirant SLEs in your school then make sure they apply to be an SLE! The closing date is 22nd January. Interviews will be held on Wednesday 10th and Thursday 11th February.

If you have any questions regarding the role or the application, please contact Andrea Brown: abrown@forestway.leics.sch.uk

See our website for details on the information needed to apply: www.forestwaytsa.org/sle-recruitment



Donna Kirby - Dyslexia Assessor

FWTSA have secured the services of Donna Kirby who is registered with the British Dyslexic Association to be able to assess pupils for Dyslexia. See her profile below:

Association to be able to assess pupils for Dyslexia and have been awarded my SpLD Assessment Practicing Certificate (AMDA and APC)."

"I have over 25 years of teaching experience, teaching in the city and county. For the last 15 years I have been the SENDCo at Hugglescote Primary. I have a degree in Psychology and always have been most interested in educating those pupils with additional needs. I have attended many courses over the years to continue this passion and specialism. Recently, I am hosting the SENDCo Collaborative meetings. In the last two years, I have studied part-time at Derby University to secure a Master's qualification in teaching and assessing pupils with specific learning difficulties. I am now registered with the British Dyslexic

Donna can offer a full day session with a full diagnostic report, or a half day investigation, with findings only.



To book Donna, for an assessment, please contact Pam Lord at FWTSA email: tsa@forestway.leics.sch.uk

Enterprise Adviser Network

Currently 80% of schools in Leicester and Leicestershire are part of the Enterprise Adviser Network, and they now have further capacity in the team to bring on more schools.

The Enterprise Adviser Network matches schools and colleges with senior business volunteers to help create powerful, lasting partnerships between schools, colleges, employers and careers programme providers.

Enterprise Advisors link schools and colleges to employers and help them to deliver world class careers support for all young people by:
Building Networks: linking schools and colleges to employers and other external careers providers through the Enterprise Adviser Network and Careers Hubs.

Supporting Careers Leader: providing training and support for Careers Leaders in schools and colleges.

Backing the Gatsby Benchmarks: supporting implementation of a best practice standard for careers support, the Gatsby Benchmarks, with tools and targeted funding.

Every participating school gets a dedicated member of the Enterprise Coordinator team to work with them and the Enterprise Adviser. There is no cost to mainstream schools and joining gives schools access to funded CPD and specific local resources. Visit the website: <https://lep.org.uk/ean/> for more information on the benefits to your school.

Delayed Conferences

Unfortunately, it was necessary to postpone the TSA Conference and the SENCO Conference due to Covid-19. We still plan to organise these important events and will reassess the situation in the summer term.

Keep an eye on the summer newsletter for more updates...



Mental Health & Well-being at Ivanhoe College

Since the start of the pandemic, like many schools, Ivanhoe College placed more emphasis on activities designed to boost the mental health and well-being of their staff and students. For World Mental Health Day, students took part in the 'Beyond Words Challenge', which encouraged students to write about how their 2020 had been and express how it made them feel. Students created some fantastic poetry, pieces of writing and artwork.

The College has also introduced 'Magic Monday', an extended tutor time on a Monday which has a focus on the students' well-being.

The College always promotes physical health and the benefits of exercise to our mental health. In November, the Girls Active Leaders, Ivanhoe's 'Miss Motivators', who are sports leaders that promote girls developing their confidence and getting physically active, were shortlisted for the National Girls Active Award for their fantastic work, and one of the leaders won the National Girls Active Leader Award.



Wellbeing at our partnership schools...



Pupil Wellbeing at Hugglescote Community Primary School.



Physical and mental wellbeing is one of our key drivers throughout our school community. We strongly believe that children need to be happy and feel good to thrive and learn. Over the last two years we have embarked on a journey to establish a whole school approach to the teaching of what 'good' mental health and wellbeing is. We are still on our journey ...

How do we feel?

During the last academic year, we introduced the concept of the Zones of Regulation to all the children. The aim of this was to teach the children about the vast range of human emotions, how their bodies feel when they feel these emotions and how to successfully manage these feelings. The Zones of Regulation allow children to think of 4 different zones: blue, green, yellow and red. Within each zone there is a range of different emotions and how they may make you feel.

Our Zones of Regulation

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
sad	happy	frustrated	mad
disappointed	proud	jealous	angry
bored	thankful	scared	embarrassed
shy	calm	worried	stressed
sick	excited	focused	distraught
tired	relaxed	loss of some control	out of control
moving slowly	ready to learn		

drink of water	stop and think	inner-coach, positive thoughts
quiet, calm activity	inner-coach, consequences	inner-coach, size of the problem
fresh air	talk to someone, size of the problem	talk to someone, explain or offend
breathe	quiet place	walk away

How to regulate our emotions?

We teach that there are no bad zones or bad emotions but just emotions that if understood can be managed so that our choices about our behaviour remains good.

We learn about what may trigger us all in having an emotional response which in turn may affect the choices we all make in how we behave. Additionally, we learn about how 'big the problem' is which triggers a response and with the older children talk about if the response was appropriate for the trigger. Children are taught about different tools they can use in their toolkits to help them. Here are some examples of tools for their toolkits.

Keeping Ourselves Physically Healthy.

As the old saying goes – a healthy body equals a healthy mind. The links between physical fitness and mental health are known to all. We take part in the Daily Mile each day to boost our good exercise emotions. If the weather is not good, then we will dance, do circuits or move in any way we can to get our hearts pumping!

Although we have a designated pastoral support worker as well as a trained ELSA, wellbeing is everyone's role at our school. We make sure that all of our children can name several (at least 2 from school) adults that they can talk to. Furthermore, we teach the children about speaking out to help their friends and to not keep a secret if that secret worries them.

WELLBEING AT WOODSTONE DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC



I think we can all probably agree that 2020 has not been an easy year. The disruptions to normal school life have been many since March with adults and children struggling to come to terms with the new-found issues.



At Woodstone Primary School we have always looked for solutions rather than problems. The staff share a very 'can-do' attitude, which is why we welcomed ALL children back to school before the summer holiday. It was important for the children's wellbeing to have an 'end' to the year, to re-engage with learning, to see their friends again and to rescue the poor parents from the dreaded home learning.

Alongside this proactive move, the staff were also very keen to use the fabulous outdoor environment at Woodstone to support children's wellbeing and to help re-build their self confidence and self-esteem. Back in 2017 Woodstone designed and created its own forest school area in a three-acre plot of woodland attached to the school. The children named the woodland Dusty's Wood (after the very popular Dusty Beesley, from Beesley's Garden Centre, who was always a great advocate of the village and of our school).



One of the basic principles underpinning forest school and outdoor education is that it aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners. In our experience nearly all children and young people love Forest School and outdoor learning in general. It is particularly significant when working with children who almost always express negative

emotions in relation to school. Children who struggle with the classroom environment tend to find Forest School an easier place to excel, as it provides more of what they require, for example plenty of space, opportunity for lots of movement, lack of pressure, and opportunity to do things in their own way.

Here at Woodstone we strongly believe that forest school and outdoor education has given noticeable improvements in...

- ✦ Social and emotional development
- ✦ Attendance
- ✦ Academic attainment
- ✦ Environmental attitude and knowledge

With the benefits being so clear to see we have developed an ambitious programme of outdoor education for our children. Three classes have forest school sessions every week

(no matter what the weather!) whilst two other classes in the autumn term have enjoyed extensive blocks of seven or eight weeks.

We have found that no matter what the age of the children, they are now willing to give everything a go, enjoying the opportunity to follow their own interests. Some children who have had friendship issues have proved to be excellent participants and leaders in the forest whilst others who have struggled with turn taking or listening to other children's ideas during play, resulting in disputes, seem to 'transform' in this outdoor environment.



Parents have reported that on 'forest school days' they have no problems getting their children up, dressed and out of the house! They have said that children are noticeably much calmer, more relaxed and more playful in the evenings when they return after an outdoor learning session.

We have seen a noticeable rise in children's self-esteem once they know they are able to achieve and successfully manage relationships. They are proud of what they learn in the forest which is so rewarding for our staff to see (it certainly improves our mental health!). Teachers have also commented that children are happier and more confident in school which they attribute to coming to forest school sessions.



We have reflected on why forest school sessions make such a difference to children's mental wellbeing. Our thoughts are that the different expectations of the outdoor setting seem to increase children's confidence. Some children appear more relaxed and less anxious in the setting and therefore better able to engage in activities. We also think that the child led pedagogy of forest school sessions allows them to engage in tasks that they are interested in and which they feel they are good at. Children have time to play, and this is encouraged and valued by staff, away from the constraints of the curriculum. The mixing of ability groups allows children to become both leaders and helpers, roles where they often flourish as they may have more skills or knowledge than their peers.



Finally, reflecting on achievements at the end of sessions and choosing photographs to put on forest school displays, help us to celebrate the children's achievements, which, again, is a crucial part of raising self-esteem and confidence.

So, whilst we don't claim to have solved every child's anxieties, we are lucky enough to have a remedy at our fingertips which we are proud to say meets the needs of many of the young people in our care, allowing them to flourish emotionally and develop skills which will last them a life time.

FWTSA Network Groups

FWTSA Network groups will all be held on-line again this term.

Book your place at - www.bookwhen.com/forestwaytsa

Joining instruction will be emailed to the delegates before the start of each meeting.

Primary Maths Group

Lead: Ellie Johnson

Mon 25 January 2021 - 1.30 to 3.30pm

Computing Network

Lead: Kathryn Lester | Russell Thornewill

Wed 3 February 2021 - 2.00 to 4.00pm

Primary Literacy Group

Lead: Leanne Woolcock/Emma Mitchell

Tue 9 February 2021 - 1.30 to 3.30pm

Early Years Practitioners (Schools)

Lead: Lisa Hicks

Wed 24 February 2021 - 4.00 - 5.00pm

Primary SENCO Collaborative Meetings

Lead: Donna Kirby

Mon 1 February 2021 - 1.30 to 3.30pm

Deputies and Assistant Heads Network

Lead: Nicky Walker

Mon 8 March 2021 – 1.30 to 3.30pm

PHSE Network Meetings

Lead: Rob Cooper

Tue 9 March 2021 - 1:30-3:30pm

Cover Supervisors Network Meetings

Lead: Elle Mead

Fri 29 January 2021 - 1.00 to 3.00 pm

FWTSA Training Opportunities

We have converted our Training Course to on-line wherever possible. Some courses need to be Face to Face and these have been postponed to the Summer Term when hopefully restrictions will have eased.

Delegates are being kept informed by email of the current status of courses they are booked on to.

Please see our booking website for courses available, the website is kept as up to date as possible.

<https://bookwhen.com/forestwaytsa>

Science Learning Partnership

We have a number of On-Line STEM courses for both Primary and Secondary running this term.

See our website for details:

www.forestwaytsa.org/science-learning-partnership.html