

MINDFULNESS AT HOVE JUNIOR SCHOOL



Parents –

It has been my absolute pleasure to introduce the concepts of mindfulness, wellbeing and resilience to Year 6 children this year. Mindfulness is a very practical set of tools that allow children to become aware of how their brains work and how their thoughts, feelings and actions are related to this! By practising quiet breathing, for example a child can self-calm and make better choices. Relaxation techniques we have practiced in school also help with sleep, school anxieties (tests, friendships and so on) and help to build self-esteem.

The children will no doubt have told parents some of what we have been practising in class, but here are a few things you can try to put in place over the Easter break with your children to keep everyone on track! –

- *Candle breath* to begin relaxation – an arm held body width away with a single finger up, ask the child to inhale and very slowly blow the candle out... try this 3 times, and then seated, with eyes shut, just imagining the candle, whilst taking 3 long slow deep breaths in and out.
- Make a *glitter bottle* – with water, a little sand and a handful of glitter – this represents our brain in stress or anxiety when shaken, and can be used at home during the day if things become unruly, or at night, - asking a child to shake it and then practice breathing as the glitter settles
- *Conveyor belt of worries* – closing our eyes, imagining 2 things that are really worrying us, wrap them in a brown paper box and place them on an airport like conveyor belt, sent away, out the hatch, not bothering us anymore... allowing us to control our thoughts by observing them, and then letting them go.

My name is **Dr. Catherine Kelly** and I am passionate about bringing wellbeing, mindfulness and resilience skills to children in schools. I have worked in education for 22 years and also research and publish in the field of wellbeing. I have diplomas, 2 degrees and a PhD. I am a mother of 2 young boys and also run my wellbeing work through my **CoreJourneys** work (www.corejourneys.com) and also, as a firm believer in wellbeing through nature and the outdoors, I run WildBeachSchool, which offers children a chance to have guided learning and play by the sea (not in it, but next to it!) – www.wildbeachschoolbrighton.com

I run evening and weekend workshops in mindfulness for parents and for children, and can offer sessions if a few people together want to have something in a smaller group. I'm hoping to establish after-school clubs in relaxation in the next academic year, if there is interest in this.

Please contact me on corejourneys@gmail.com or wildbeachschoolbrighton@gmail.com for further information, or have a look on the websites!

Your school and headteacher are progressive and forward thinking in their approach to children's wellbeing and it is a pleasure to be part of this environment, and other schools in Hove.

Catherine Kelly, CoreJourneys.