



LIGHTHOUSE
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP



December 2020 Newsletter



For School Leaders, Teachers, Support Staff, Governors and Trustees



A message from Gary Lewis, Chief Executive

None of us have experienced anything like the past nine months.

Almost all of us have had worries about our own wellbeing and the health of our family and friends. Our own personal lives have been tremendously affected too.

It is a year since I have been able to be physically present with my father and many of us will have missed out on really important times with people who matter to us.

At least we can look to 2021 with the hope of this siege being lifted.

Continued....



Throughout these difficult times the staff of the Lighthouse Schools Partnership have been getting on with our jobs in a characteristically business-like way. Every time that I have been on a school site I have been overwhelmed by the normality of the experience for the pupils, despite all the changes that we have had to make. Your hard work and spirit of public service have meant that, by and large, the 'ordinary magic' of learning has been able to do its work. Our belief that school is the best place for young people has been emphatically confirmed and we have perhaps made a greater difference now than ever before.

Many of our headteachers have shared with me messages from parents and neighbours that pay tribute to the work that you have been doing. I hope that this public recognition is getting through to you too. We do not ask for it but when our communities notice the additional hours, the quality of our online provision and our personal commitment to children it is tremendously motivating.

One other area that has been lit up by the challenges of the pandemic is our network of professional skills. The workload and additional complications of making sites and systems COVID safe has been enormous. We all recognise that no child can learn in a school if the site is not open, clean and safe and the IT, financial and administrative systems fully working. Our caterers and some of our other contractors have also gone far beyond the extra mile in responding to the crisis. For teachers and teaching assistants the classroom has been an even more demanding place than ever. It has been absolutely remarkable to see our huge team adapting and working so brilliantly together and our schools engaging in such deep partnership. If we have ever taken this for granted before, I hope that we never do so again.

For our headteachers, the team ethic of the Trust has perhaps made leadership a less lonely experience than it has been in some other contexts but every one of our heads has nevertheless faced difficult decisions. I know how much they have agonised in balancing the mission of the school with the wellbeing of their staff. And they have also worked so hard. It means a huge amount to them to have the support and loyalty of their teams and our solidarity together has been a massive help.

This staff newsletter tells some of our story over this last term but can only capture a fraction of what we have done. I feel intensely proud of our work together and on behalf of our Board I extend a sincere thank you to you for your commitment, achievements and resilience. As we anticipate that January will be a significant challenge it is all the more important to do our best to have a proper break over the holiday.

I wish you a very Happy Christmas and hope that you and your families will stay well and enjoy time together, even if that is on zoom!

With warm best wishes
Gary Lewis





Wellbeing Support for Staff during the Festive Period

2020 has been a challenging year for many, and the festive period is likely to look different this year.

The LSP Gateway provides all LSP staff with wellbeing support and guidance 24/7 including a freephone helpline.

Offering advice on many topics including; budgeting, exercise (including workout videos) and healthy eating (including recipe ideas) as well as support for mental health and wellbeing.

You can access professional advice and counselling on a whole range of legal, medical and domestic issues - from making a Will and dealing with noisy neighbours, to consumer disputes and seeking nutritional or health advice - at any time of the day or night.

EASE provides a 24hr Freephone Counselling and Information Line which gives you immediate access to free and confidential advice from a team of friendly, qualified Counsellors, Medical Advisors and Lawyers. **EASE** can help with issues such as:

- Stress
- Family difficulties
- Money management
- Relationships
- Substance misuse
- Anxiety
- Bereavement
- Depression
- Problems at work

What's more, up to 6 face to face counselling sessions can be arranged for you by your telephone Counsellor when you call the Freephone Line. The cost of these sessions will automatically be covered for you.

If you wish to speak to a Counsellor, Medical Advisor or Lawyer, simply call the 24hr free-phone* **0800 092 0987** and quote the special Scheme Number **72114**.

Beat the
winter
blues



Westfield Health have produced a number of guides for keeping well during the winter months.

Their articles cover all sorts of wellness topics including:

- How to create a mind-body connection to stay calm
 - Winter nutrition tips to stay fuelled
 - Winter exercise and quick stress-busting yoga poses

[Click here](#) to access these free resources.





Festive fundraising and celebrations at Wraxall School

The children at Wraxall Primary have been taking part in a big fundraiser for the school as they collectively race from Wraxall to the North Pole by Christmas! This is a whopping 2,665.54 miles! They began running and totalling at the beginning of Term 2 and are still going.

They are also having a special Winter Wonderland in the final week of term. This will include an elf hunt, Christmas jumper day, Christmas cinema and a special nativity trail. Hopes are high for a visit from Father Christmas himself too!

Finally, to help raise cheer in the run up to the big day Wraxall has produced a special advent adventure with messages, artwork and photographs being shared with all our families each day of Advent from 1st–24th December.



Nativity at St Peter's

This year's nativity performance by the Reception children at St Peter's was held outside due to COVID-19.

However it did mean they could be joined by some four legged friends to help set the scene!





Improving facilities for our communities

All-weather pitch at Gordano School

Gordano School's new all-weather playing surface is now ready for play. The pitch will be used by students during the school day as well as hosting local hockey and football clubs after school and at the weekends. T

his project has only been made possible thanks to substantial financial support from some of the school's key partnership organisations (GSCT (Gordano School Community Trust), Sport England, National Hockey Foundation and North Somerset Hockey) for which the school is extremely grateful. Now our students, members of the community and local sporting clubs can all enjoy this high-quality playing surface for club hockey, football training and curriculum use.

Highlights of the pitch include - new floodlights, covered spectator viewing areas and changing facilities. Headteacher Tom Inman said "The all-weather pitch is an integral and essential part of delivering the curriculum and as a community resource and I am extremely grateful to our partners in helping us futureproof our school facilities."



New Build at Backwell School takes shape

Incredible progress is being made on the new sports hall and classrooms at Backwell School. The project is due to be completed in May 2021 with the school benefitting from a new Sport England compliant sports hall, new sciences labs, classrooms and changing facilities.





Improving facilities for our communities

Original artefacts for Backwell Junior School

We are so pleased to share that the scaffolding has been removed from the 1862 building and the school are getting back to using the old school building for some lessons and small group work.

The original school key has been found; it must have been very heavy to carry around in years gone by. The original school bell has even been ringing on a couple of occasions, which was very exciting.



This picture (taken on a sunny November day), is a perfect opportunity to highlight our beautiful 1862 building.



Library improvements at Blagdon Primary

Blagdon Primary School have continued work on their buildings to redevelop the school library and areas of the school grounds.

The Library is now a welcoming place to spend time and is already inspiring children to sit in there reading for pleasure. They look forward to being able to allow more children to use it when COVID-19 allows as currently it is only open to one bubble at a time.

Donations from the Blagdon Ball last January paid for furniture, decorative items and books as part of the refurbishment and parents have generously donated books for the library through an Amazon wish list.





LSP Gateway
Rewards, benefits & employee resources

Wrap up your

Holiday Shopping



Help yoursELF to some amazing discounts and get your shopping list sorted early, only at:
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Currys

PC World

M&S
EST. 1884

Sainsbury's

ASDA

ASOS
discover fashion online

Check out the exclusive savings at:
lspgateway.org.uk

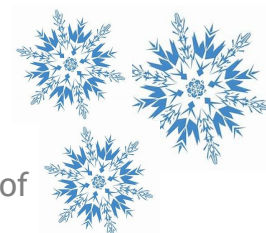
E4Education Website Project

Over the past few months many of our schools launched a new website as part of our redesign project with E4Education.

Seven of our primary schools, including Portishead Primary, Blagdon and Bishop Sutton & Stanton Drew as well as Gordano and Chew Valley secondary schools are now live!

Designed specifically with schools in mind the new E4education websites are clear and user friendly for external viewers as well as being easy to update and administer for school staff.

We look forward to seeing further schools move to their new websites after Christmas.

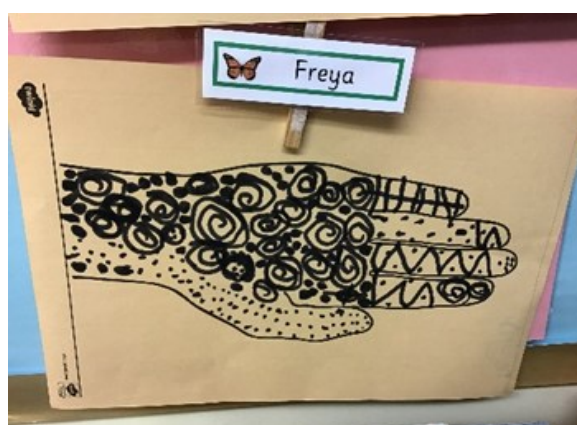


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Diwali Celebrations at West Leigh Infant School

West Leigh Infants have been learning about and celebrating Diwali the festival of light. They enjoyed the story of Rama and Sita and learnt about different ways Hindu's celebrate. The children used their thumb to push a hole into the clay and decorated the outside using a pointy clay tool as well as making Rangoli patterns using a template and chalk on a large piece of paper.

Finally, they learnt about Mendhi patterns and how hands are decorated with patterns using henna. The children then had a go at painting their own on a piece of paper.

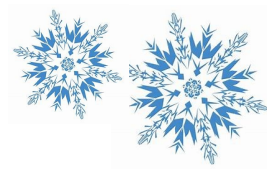


Regional recognition for HLTA colleague

Massive congratulations to Natasha Senior who has been announced as The Unison 'Stars in Our Schools' staff member for the South West.

Tash is a HLTA at St Peter's in Portishead.





Gordano School students perform at online music festival

Congratulations to the Gordano School Concert Band who are featured as part of 'The Future Is Now', a National online music festival celebrating young talent. Their lockdown performance from earlier in the year is now live on their website and it's great to see the talent within Gordano being championed by such an aspirational national platform.

#TheFutureIsNow, is an online event from @musicforyouth that took place on the 4 & 5 Dec! Students had the opportunity to join live workshops & music sessions, get help & support from music leaders and view 250+ inspirational music videos from young artists. Including Gordano Schools rendition of "Welcome to The Jungle." The video that the band put together can be viewed on the Music For Youth website [here](#)

It doesn't stop there; the music department has had great success this term with their extra-curricular provision, having risen to the challenge of year group bubbles and the hurdles of the ever changing government guidance. Music is a huge part of life at Gordano and they weren't going to let something like a global pandemic stop us in our tracks. This term has seen 59 students join our bubbled-up school orchestra. An impressive 52 in our bubbled-up chamber choir, and a whopping 50+ students have joined our brand new Year 7 choir with Miss Day.

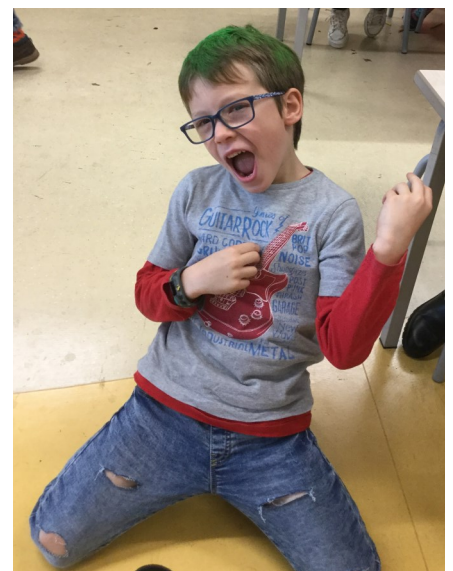


Winford are Rockstars!

Term 2 at Winford has really rocked! At the beginning of the term all of the children in school dressed up for the now annual 'Times Table Rock Stars day', with crazy hair, rock star attitudes, fake tattoos and a whole lot of denim and hair dye!

Later in the term children from Years 1 to 6 participated in the first whole school eliminator TTRS tournament, which has seen some unbelievable scores and efforts from all the children.

At time of writing, the Year 6 children are locked in a heated final with Year 4, with teams edging towards the 100,000 point mark already!



Mindfulness at St Mary's, Portbury

The INSET day at the start of this academic year saw the staff team lying down (at a safe distance!) in the main hall and visualising something that was very important to them.

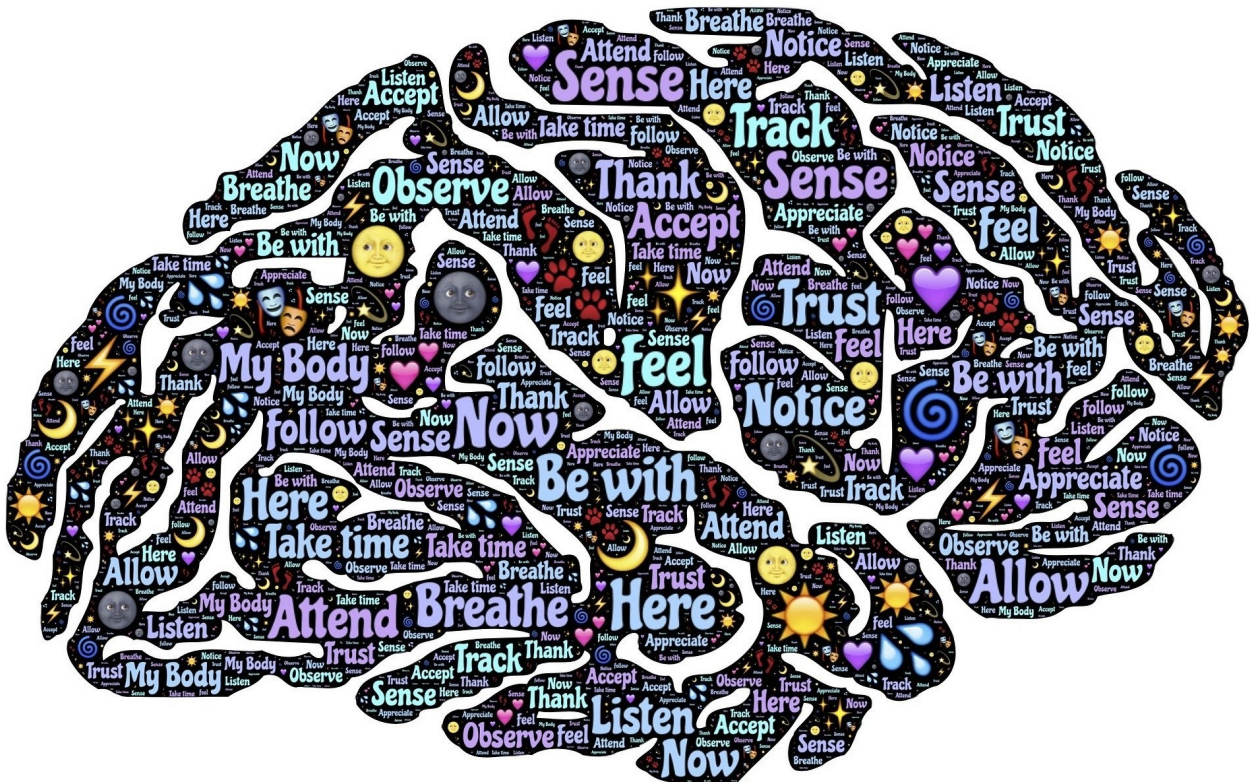
Skilfully led by Andy Baker, they deepened their understanding of the importance of developing skills of self-regulation in our children and providing still moments throughout the school day to pause and reflect. It was a really wonderful way to start the new year, not only because it served as a reminder of the importance of well-being for us all, but it bought the school community together at such a challenging time.

Classes are now exploring mindful exercises each day and Andy Baker has led some engaging sessions alongside staff. We are keen to see the longer term impact of mindful moments at St Mary's.

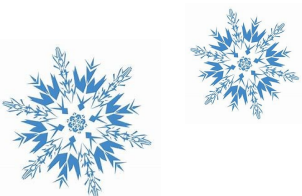
Some thoughts from a few of our Year 5/6 children:

Mindfulness is:

- is being calm
- is being peaceful
- helps you calm down when you are feeling excited
- you can use it before a test to calm yourself down
- if you're a bit stressed and you need a bit of a break, you can listen to some mindfulness for 5 or 10 minutes, then come back to the real world when you feel better



Staff can find out more about mindfulness, including exercises and techniques, on the LSP Gateway Health and Wellbeing Section



Healthy Eating rewards Backwell School student with a new bike!



Students' canteen choices entered them into a draw to win a brand new bike. Aspens, Backwell School's catering contractor, ran the competition to encourage healthy food choices amongst students at Backwell School.

Daniel, in Year 8, bought the most healthy items during the competition period, meaning he is now the proud owner of a new pair of wheels.

Daniel, who is a big fan of the fresh fruit sold in the school canteen said "The food at school is really tasty. I really like the fruit pots, I buy one every day"

David Britton, Operations Manager at Aspen's, explained the idea behind the competition "We wanted to encourage healthy eating in the schools in which we cater to promote a healthy mind and a healthy body."

Portishead Primary—BIG Award

Congratulations to Portishead Primary who have been awarded the The Bullying Intervention Group BIG Award for excellence in challenging bullying.

This award is testament to the hard work of the children and staff who are supportive, honest and open when dealing with concerns, in an age and context appropriate way. The award recognises work covering behaviour and attitudes in school, outside of school and online.

To find out more about The Bullying Intervention Group [click here](#).



Black History Month at Portishead Primary

Portishead Primary School was pleased to take delivery of a wide range of black history books that have been kindly provided through the fund-raising efforts of our Friends of School. These books have been added to the school library and will be displayed in their own section.



The picture is just a very small selection of those donated.

It is really important to us that we work hard to educate our children on the diversity of the school and wider community and that we recognise the achievements of all people regardless of background.

Sadly, in history this has not always been the case and the achievements of many people have been passed over in the history books. Taking time out to rediscover these forgotten stories and to celebrate the richness and diversity of our community benefits us all and we are delighted that we have been given these books to help deliver on this important aspect of the educational offer.

It is more important than ever than we educate our children in a way that promotes inclusion and respect and challenges all forms of prejudice and injustice.

Field of Poppies at Whiteoak Schools



Schools have had to find new ways to fundraise for charities as the COVID-19 restrictions continue. Students at Hannah More and Grove decided to create a field of poppies in our school hall to commemorate Armistice Day.

Each child from Reception to Year 6 took a poppy home to decorate with their families so that we could create our own field of poppies. We had a Teams assembly to talk about the meaning of Armistice and remembrance and then we built our display to remember those who had fought and served our country all around the world.

The school raised more than £125 and created a beautiful display.

Remembrance activities at Yatton Schools

Children and staff from Yatton Primary were able to attend local armistice commemorations:

Mr Heywood was very proud of the group of Y6 children who accompanied him to join in a ceremony of remembrance at Rock Road War Memorial at 11:00 am with representatives from the Royal British Legion. Prayers were led by Revd Tim Scott, Team Rector of Yatton Moor Team Ministry. The children participated impeccably, each of them laying their own wooden poppy cross on the memorial as well as wreaths from both schools.

Also, special 'virtual' Remembrance Services were shared in classrooms in both schools with silences held to pay our respects. The school placed a wreath on a large cross outside the main entrance of the school site along with class poppy crosses inscribed with children's messages.





Stanton Drew students help brighten up their village!

Students from Stanton Drew Primary planted bulbs in the village supported by local residents. The students walked through the local area and planted many spring flowering varieties to bring a little cheer to 2021.

Headteacher Dieter Cook was delighted the children were invited to be involved "It's great to be involved in projects in the community and it will be so exciting for the children and village to see the results in the Spring term! It's great that our strong community spirit lives on!"

Anti-Bullying Week at High Down Schools

During this term, High Down schools supported Anti-Bullying Week where the theme this year was 'United Against Bullying'.

Their children discussed different forms of bullying and how the school values, in school and also in our wider community, enable us to be better citizens. The Junior Anti-Bullying Ambassadors organised a quiz for the children and arranged an 'Odd Socks' competition. Children across both schools wore an amazing range of odd socks!

The student ambassadors, together with the rest of the children, understand the importance of care, kindness and respect which enables us all to learn and play together.





Wishing you all a restful, well deserved
festive break!



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