

## **Miss Dowdye's Termly Newsletter**

### **Welcome to my first newsletter**

Even though I have not been as visible as normal, I am still here! I was very busy over the previous term building on my role to provide great advantages for the children in the work I do with them.

As some of the parents may know, I am now trained to deliver the Massage in Schools Programme. This consists of teaching the children a clothed massage routine which they carry out on each other within the classroom setting. This Programme has many benefits, some being an increase in confidence and self-esteem, better concentration and calming behaviour as well as it being fun! To find out more about this intervention please see me or visit [www.misa.org.uk](http://www.misa.org.uk)

If this intervention is to take place within your child's class then a letter will be sent out to you before it begins.

Around the school you will see that my name has been added to the list of safeguarding officers. Alongside my role as learning mentor I am now trained as a safeguarding officer. Please be assured that this does not take me away from my role as learning mentor, and I am still undertaking my main role of providing support and assistance to your children.

### **Housing Difficulties**

The housing situation in London has become an issue that we hear about each day. Here in the borough of Lewisham, families are having to endure major changes due to housing problems they are facing. Housing in Lewisham, as in other London boroughs, is in short supply. Currently, Lewisham has 14,000 applications for social housing,

but only has 1000 properties available to meet the demand. If you find that you are experiencing difficulties with housing, please visit the Housing Office in Catford with all your relevant paperwork. Another avenue for you to pursue could be to visit your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in either Catford or Peckham. Charities such as Shelter may also be able to advise you further.

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)  
[www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)



## AFRUCA



A few weeks ago here at St James, we were lucky enough to have a visit from members of AFRUCA (Africans Unite Against Child Abuse). AFRUCA is a charity working with African communities to safeguard African children in the UK. They provided parents with a relevant and very useful free child protection training. The training workshop covered key UK laws on child protection, cultural practices and their impact on safeguarding children in the UK as well as other safeguarding issues such as; internet safety, domestic violence (DV), physical chastisement and leaving children home alone. The parents who attended had such great things to say about the training and also wanted to get more involved with the project! If you missed out and would to find out more information about the organisation please visit their website [www.afruca.org](http://www.afruca.org). I would also like to give all parents and carers a gentle reminder that the Diocese of Southwark provides guidance on discipline. To see this information in detail please see the leaflets which are available outside the school office.

## Healthy Minds and bodies

A high priority of our school is the wellbeing of our children. Without us realising, there are so many small things that we can do to ensure that our children are emotionally and physically healthy. Being this way allows our children to be in the right frame of mind so that they are able to learn and achieve at high levels. As you may have seen or heard on the news, this week was Children's Mental Health Week (8th - 14th February 2016) and the theme for this year was 'building resilience' and teaching children to 'bounce forward' from life's challenges. Every family is different and will encounter different life experiences whether planned or unplanned. Regardless of what you experience, myself and all the staff at St James are here to help in anyway that we can to support you and your child to cope with any of the events that life may throw at you.

There is a great organisation called Place 2 Be which have set up a designated phone line for parents and carers around the topic of children's mental health. Please give them a call (0808 168 9144 - Freephone number) for general guidance and information or visit their website [www.place2be.org.uk](http://www.place2be.org.uk)



## Mind, Nutrition, Exercise, Do it! (MEND)

A way of increasing positive minds is through our diets and lifestyles. We are lucky to have the MEND team based in our school for a second time. MEND empowers children and adults to become fitter, healthier and happier. It's free to attend and run after school, so please come to the school hall on a Monday afternoon (4 – 6.30pm) to see the great workshops they are running.

Some useful tips to get us on our way to a better lifestyle....

- Get a good night's sleep
- Reduce our sugar and salt intake and increase our water intake



### Reminders to Parents and children

Drop in sessions take place on the following days:

**Tuesday** (lunchtime) – Children only

**Wednesday** (2.15 – 3.15pm) – Parent/ Carers only

**Thursday** (lunchtime) – Children only

**Please feel free to contact me at any other time to make an appointment or find me in the playground after school.**

## This Terms Attendance & Punctuality Highlights

Attendance	Punctuality
Reception: 85.2 %	83.8 %
Year 1: 95.5 %	93.1 %
Year 2: 94.6 %	93.0 %
<b>Year 3: 98.4 %</b>	<b>95.6 %</b>
Year 4: 97.5 %	95.0 %
Year 5: 94.3 %	90.8 %
Year 6: 95.0 %	91.9 %

**Congratulations to Team 3 for having the best punctuality and attendance so far**

### Your school counsellors need your help

Your school council reps this year are:

Destiny and Jacob (Team 3)

David and Maria (Team 4)

Eden and Othniel (Team 5)

Kelvin and Tessie (Team 6)

They meet every fortnight to discuss any issues that you may have, as well as identifying ways to make our school a better place.

### Special Thanks....

Thank you to the following pupils for taking the time out to help me recently:

**Fatim, Jennifer and Brandon (Team 6)** undertook a wonderful job for me and discussed the role of peer mediating with some of the younger children.

