



Pitmaston Primary School

# FAMILY SUPPORT NEWSLETTER

Vol.9 (Autumn Term 2021)



Dear Parents/Carers,

I'm sure I'm not alone in saying this, but how is it almost Christmas?! After what has felt like a very busy few weeks, I'm sure many of you will welcome a break from the constant pressure of washing school uniforms, packing lunches and getting up in the dark! Many parents will be looking forward to the extra family time over the festive period, while others might be feeling a little daunted by the pressure it brings. Whichever way you feel (maybe it's a mixture of both!) both are valid emotions at this time of year. You may notice similar emotions in your child — high levels of excitement can lead to overwhelm. Hopefully the top tips in this newsletter will help you to understand and better support your child with those big feelings over the next few weeks. Finally, to those celebrating, a very merry Christmas!

Stay safe, Kelethé

*Family Support Worker (FSW) at Pitmaston*

To make an appointment please contact me via telephone [01905 423710] or through my direct email address [kpusharski@pitmaston.worcs.sch.uk].

**FSW DROP IN - EVERY FRIDAY MORNING**

*No appointment needed; just pop by the office after morning drop off and ask to speak with Kelethé (Family Support Worker)*

## YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Worried about your mental health over the school holidays? These services can provide quick and confidential support:



### Free, safe and anonymous mental health support

Over 18s in Worcestershire are able to improve their mental wellbeing with our free, safe and anonymous platform.

On Qwell, you can talk to a professional, engage in community support or simply read our thousands of self-help articles - all for free.

for free, safe and anonymous support:

**qwell.io**



[www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net) — call 0800 585858 between 5pm and midnight 365 days a year or visit the website to access web chat

[www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk) - call 0300 304 7000 between 4:30pm and 10:30pm every day of the week, or leave a message on 07984 967708 for a call back

[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org) — under 35's can call the Hopeline on 0800 0684141 between 9am and midnight, message on 07860 039967 or alternatively send an email to [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)

[www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk) - call on 0808 8002222 or send an email to [askus@familylives.org.uk](mailto:askus@familylives.org.uk)

Christmas Eve - 9am - 1pm  
Christmas Day - Closed  
Boxing Day - Closed  
27th December - Closed  
28th December - Closed  
29th December - 9am - 9pm  
30th December - 9am - 9pm  
New Years Eve - 9am - 1pm  
New Years Day - Closed  
2nd January - Closed  
3rd January - Closed



And the Grinch,  
with his grinch-feet  
ice-cold in the snow,

Stood puzzling and puzzling:  
"How could it be so?"

"It came without ribbons!  
It came without tags!"

"It came without packages,  
boxes or bags!"

And he puzzled three hours,  
till his puzzler was sore.

Then the Grinch thought  
of something he hadn't before!

"Maybe Christmas, he thought,  
doesn't come from a store.

"Maybe Christmas . . . perhaps  
. . . means a little bit more!"



## HOW TO AVOID OVERWHELM AT CHRISTMAS

While **EXCITEMENT** is generally considered a positive emotion, for some children it can conjure the exact same response in their body as **STRESS** or **OVERWHELM**. These top tips will help you to navigate any big feelings from your child this Christmas season:



**CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF** - Children are like little sponges that will pick up on the feelings of those around them. If you are feeling stressed or in despair at the tasks ahead, it is likely your child will feel this too. Part of being a good parent is recognising in yourself when you are starting to 'lose it' and take some time out to regulate yourself.

**CREATE YOUR OWN CHRISTMAS** - Christmas brings with it many changes in routine and a whole heap of expectations. Don't worry if you have to avoid or adapt certain Christmas traditions in response to your child's needs. Let go of expectations and create a Christmas that is right for you and your family!



**PLAN IT OUT** - Try to create some form of routine by creating a Christmas schedule (keep this simple). This will help to keep Christmas explicit and predictable, reducing some of the stress and overwhelm that comes with the unknown. Think about what your child's triggers are (e.g. not going to bed on time) and try to form a plan that will help to avoid any unnecessary stress (e.g. we need to leave Nanny's by 7pm to be home for a 8pm bedtime).

**KEEP IT SIMPLE** - It doesn't take much for gift buying to get out of hand. Try not to overwhelm with a mass of presents—children really don't need much to feel special! If you are part of a big family where grandparents, aunts and uncles will all be buying gifts for your children, try to space out the present opening if you can.



**TIME OUT** - During noisy Christmas parties or busy festive gatherings, make sure your child has somewhere quiet they can go and be by themselves for a little bit. Don't be afraid to let your child go off and play in their room, or read a book/watch the iPad for half an hour in a quiet corner. This will help to regulate any wobbly emotions in order to prevent overwhelm.

A thought provoking mental health message from Santa.

*Copy and paste the link below into your browser.*



<https://youtu.be/NOGnZHsJFU0>



This excellent graphic—shared by Mrs Williams, one of our Thrive Practitioners—highlights the many benefits of creative play.

Some children may find it difficult to express how they feel, but through different forms of creative play (for example, role-playing, storytelling, dressing up, modelling and painting) parents are able to gain a sense of what their child might be feeling. In turn, parents are then able to support their child by putting words to those big feelings ('lending your adult brain').

Creative play also helps children to understand that it's ok to be different. When engaging in creative play (such as singing, drawing, acting, painting, playing a musical instrument) children begin to understand that when given the same resources some children can do things that other children can't. This helps children to understand that other people are different to us, and that this is OK! We are all unique and we all have our own individual talents.

Most importantly, creative play between children and their parents is a great way to take time out from the perpetually busy lives that we lead and to enjoy a few moments where there are no rules. In creative play there is no end goal in mind, which means there is no fear of 'am I doing this right?'



# NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION IDEAS

The new year brings with it an opportunity for parents to try and work **with** their child on addressing some of those 'problem' behaviours seen at home. Explain that a 'resolution' is like a promise to yourself that you will try to do something better. Model this to your child by agreeing on your own personal goal and sharing this with them—talk about the various ways you will try to keep it and explain that occasionally you might need their help to remember.

Why not come up with a 'family resolution' that everyone works on together? e.g. we will try not to shout inside the house this year.

## PRESCHOOL

- I will try to brush my teeth every morning and night.
- I will try one new food each week.
- I will practice better listening.
- I will learn a new word each day.
- I will help to clear the table when I have finished eating.
- I will stop hitting my siblings.
- I will start making my bed every day.
- I will sit still when I'm buckled into my car seat.

## KS 1

- I will go to bed on time every night.
- I will start eating at least 3 fruit and vegetables every day.
- I will stop interrupting when someone is talking, saying 'excuse me' and waiting instead.
- I will learn to tell a grown up when I feel sad or upset.
- I will learn a new skill e.g. riding a bike.
- I will help lay the table at dinner time.

## KS 2

- I will learn to make a simple meal.
- I will learn how to tidy my room properly.
- I will chose one author and read every book they have written.
- I will have one screen free day every week.
- I will save £20 in my money box.
- I will eat fruit and vegetables with every meal.
- I will stop leaving my clothes on the floor.
- I will help my parents clean the car once a month.