



DIARY DATES

January 2021

Jan 18th

10:30 live assembly
with Mrs Gallagher

Jan 21st

Mr Miller Live PE
session via Zoom:
09:00 Nursery
09:45 Year 2
10:30 Reception
11:15 Year 1

Jan 25th

10:30 live assembly
with Mrs Gallagher

Jan 28th

09:30 Virtual 'Meet the
Headteacher' Open
Session – Nursery
2021/22 admission

Mr Miller Live PE
session via Zoom:
Times as above

February 2021

Feb 1st

10:30 live assembly
with Mrs Gallagher

Feb 22nd

Nursery 2021/22
Online Admissions
Open (New Date)

Feb 25th

20:00 Raising Boys –
an online seminar by
Steve Biddulph

March 2021

March 2nd

Virtual 'Meet the
Headteacher' Open
Session – Nursery
2021/22 admission

March 4th

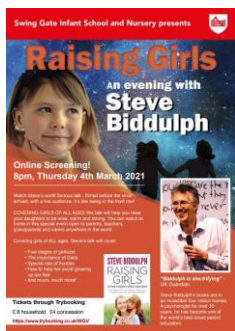
20:00 Raising Girls –
an online seminar by
Steve Biddulph

15th January 2021

It has been another busy week this week, with the ever changing Government guidance and requirements for schools. Thank you once again for your kind messages of support and understanding.

Steve Biddulph Parent talks

We are excited to be hosting two talks from Steve Biddulph, the world renowned parenting expert. They are Raising Boys on Thursday 25th February at 8pm and Raising Girls on Thursday 4th of March at 8pm. Please see the attached flyers for further information. The cost to attend each talk is £8 and concessions are



£4. You can book your place for Raising Boys [here](#) and for Raising Girls [here](#). These talks have been organised by Swing Gate but are open to all schools in Berkhamsted and to your family and friends. So please book your place as soon as possible.

Guidance and expectations for remote learning

We know that you really appreciate the work that teachers are doing to deliver a balanced remote learning provision for all our children.

The DfE have laid down their expectation for the amount of learning time that should be provided by Key Stage:

- 3 hours a day for KS1
- 4 hours a day for KS2 for their big brothers and sister in junior school.

The recommendation is less for EYFS (Reception and Nursery), so we are recommending two hours a day. This includes all schoolwork, including watching teacher videos and live lessons. We have suggested daily timetables but it is up to you as a family to make remote learning work so there is no set time for when your child should be complete their schoolwork.

We also wanted to remind everyone in our school community that we are aware of the pressures that you are facing; many of our staff are in the same situation.

We cannot wait to welcome all of our children back as soon as it is safe. We are confident that we can help, support and fill any learning gaps, as we did in the autumn term after the last lockdown. We hope that you can enjoy remote learning and send back to school, children that are happy and have had the chance to be active.

Please take time to prioritise your health and wellbeing and make the current situation as balanced as it can be for your family.



Pause for thought



Side entrance to school update

Due to the continuing poor weather, we have now closed the side entrance to school until the works are completed. We have contacted all the families with children currently accessing school to explain the new drop off and pick up arrangements. The work was due to start on Monday 18th January, but there have been delays as one of the contractors is self-isolating.

Parent Forum

On behalf of all the staff, can I thank you for your overwhelming messages of support and gratitude at this morning's meeting. It was a very positive start to the day with useful feedback for us to work on and consider.

Timetable of live events

One piece of feedback from Parent Forum was in relation to creating a timetable of live events. Teachers will be creating a timetable for each year group to be shared on their Google Classroom. In the meantime:

- Monday Mrs Gallagher's live assembly
- Thursday live PE with Mr Miller
- Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday live story telling with a teacher.

School learning



Year 2 have been keeping active and inspired with their learning this week.



Voiles enjoyed taking part in Mr Miller's PE session.

Year 1 made fruit kebabs using their D&T skills of cutting and threading. The children really enjoyed making and eating them.



And Reception have created a fantastic 'What am I?' riddle:

What am I?

My eyes are yellow like fire.

My beak is black like smoke and pointy like a witches hat.

My claws are so sharp they grip like nails, holding onto trees.

My feathers are soft like a sofa, keeping me warm.

Answer An owl.

Remote learning

The teaching staff have really enjoyed seeing the children's home learning that has been uploaded on to Google Classroom and Evidence Me. They are getting to grips with the technology and are responding to the work sent in. Please remember to send any pictures you are happy to share in the newsletter to admin@swinggate.herts.sch.uk as well.

Inspired by Swing Gate, Archie in Foxes, with the help of his big sister, has been writing and colouring positive messages to put in his window.



Mr Miller PE Session

We hope, if you were able to join Mr Miller's PE sessions, you enjoyed yourselves. It was great to see so many of the children happy and active! These will be a weekly session accessed via Google Classroom. Unfortunately the Year 1 session had technical difficulties and so Mr Miller is going to do a longer session to make up for this next Thursday.



Nursery Admissions

Berkhamsted Headteachers have decided that owing to the current COVID-19 lockdown that the Nursery Admissions process will be slightly delayed this year. The online application process will open on Monday 22nd of February. New dates and more information can be found on our [website](#).

Governors

We are delighted to welcome Amy Smith (Squirrels mum) and Kylie Harvey (Owls mum) to our Governing Board as Parent Governors.

Families First e-newsletter

You can access your free e-copy of Family First magazine [here](#). Packed full of information to help keep children happy, learning & entertained at home during lockdown.



Blue Peter YouTube channel

Blue Peter is the longest running kids TV show in the world and their free [YouTube channel](#), suitable for 5-11 year olds, with many videos of world record breaking challenges, arts and crafts, environmental videos, cooking and baking how to's, inspirational films, gaming, celebrity appearances, dance routines and music performances. They also feature ways of getting a Blue Peter badge, behind the scenes footage and extra content about presenters Adam, Lindsey, Mwaksy, Richie and Henry the Blue Peter dog.

Wellbeing in Action

A colourful and seasonal recipe...

Beetroot soup

Serves 6

Preparation time less than 30 mins

Cooking time 10-30 mins



Ingredients

- 3-4 medium beetroot (about 500-600g/1lb 2oz-1lb5oz) grated coarsely, or chopped into small dice
- 500g/1lb 2oz ripe tomatoes - halved
- 1 clove garlic chopped roughly
- 1 medium onion peeled and finely chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 500ml/16½fl oz beef (chicken or vegetable) stock
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 125g/4oz feta cheese

Method

- Place the halved tomatoes in an ovenproof dish. Throw over the garlic and drizzle over half the olive oil.
- Roast for 25-30 minutes in a fairly hot oven (190C/375F/Gas 5) until soft and pulpy. Rub through a sieve to remove the skin and pips.
- Heat the remaining oil in a pan and sweat the onion for a few minutes until soft. Add the beetroot and the stock and bring to the boil. Season lightly with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Simmer gently for 7-10 minutes until the beetroot is tender.
- Stir in the tomato purée, transfer the soup to a blender and process until completely smooth. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary
- To serve cold, chill the soup in the fridge, then divide between six bowls. Using your fingers, crumble a little feta into each bowl. A sprinkling of grated raw beetroot makes a good garnish for the cold version
- To serve hot, reheat the soup until thoroughly hot but not boiling. Divide between warm bowls and crumble over a little feta into each bowl. Serve with crusty bread.



Mindfulness

The Mindful Jar

This activity can teach children how strong emotions can take hold, and how to find peace when these strong emotions feel overwhelming.

First, get a clear jar and fill it almost all the way with water. Next, add a big spoonful of glitter glue or glue and dry glitter to the jar. Put the lid back on the jar and shake it to make the glitter swirl.

"Imagine that the glitter is like your thoughts when you're stressed, mad or upset. See how they whirl around and make it really hard to see clearly? That's why it's so easy to make silly decisions when you're upset – because you're not thinking clearly. Don't worry this is normal and it happens in all of us (yep, grownups too)."

[Now put the jar down in front of them.]
Now watch what happens when you're still for a couple of moments. Keep watching. See how the glitter starts to settle and the water clears? Your mind works the same way. When you're calm for a little while, your thoughts start to settle and you start to see things much clearer. Deep breaths during this calming process can help us settle when we feel a lot of emotions".

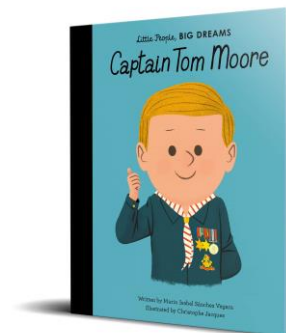
This exercise not only helps children learn about how their emotions can cloud their thoughts, but it also facilitates the practice of mindfulness while focusing on the swirling glitter in the jar.

Try having your child focus on one emotion at a time, such as anger, and discuss how the shaken verse settling glitter is like that emotion.

And finally...

I hope that your child enjoyed seeing their friends and listening to my assembly on Monday. It worked well for a first attempt and we were grateful to everyone for muting microphones swiftly. Parents can you please stay with you child during any live sessions from school to ensure they comply with our protocol sent by ParentMail this week.

If you didn't manage to log on I read the 'Captain Tom Moore' book from the Little



People, Big Dreams series, which shares in the lives of outstanding people.

I miss seeing the children that are not in and all the parents and families, but please take comfort in the fact that we are trying to keep our loved ones and ourselves safe in these unprecedented times.

*Francesca Gallagher (Mrs)
Headteacher*