

Dear Parent/Carer

World Mental Health Day – Finding time to talk

Thank you to those parents who rang or emailed us to express their concerns about 'All Souls' Day' which will take place on 22nd October 2018, as the actual calendar event is during our half term.

As a Church of England school, we are taking the opportunity to draw students' attention away from the commercialised and confusing celebration of Halloween, and refer students back to the traditional and real opportunity of 'Hallows Eve' and 'All Saints and All Souls' Day'.

These days are intended to remember our loved ones with pride and joy and to celebrate their lives. We certainly do not want to dredge up sad memories for students, in fact, quite the opposite, we want to celebrate lost loved ones and remind ourselves that they are always with us in our memories. We are clear as a school, that taking time to talk and share our experiences is important. It also removes the fear and anxiety that can occur for students if we don't address these issues and they suffer loss.

As we prepare our students for 'All Souls' Day' we see the smiles on their faces as they remember a family member, family friend or pet. We laugh together at the funny stories they have and this is ultimately the purpose of the day.

The day itself will involve students attending dressed in something that represents the person, pet or loved one they wish to remember. Examples of this could be their favourite normal outfit with a badge or photo of their beloved pet, a family member's favourite football team shirt or whatever contributes to a memory.

Period 1 to 3 will be normal lessons and during Period 4 and 5 students will be in tutor groups creating memory catchers and the end results will form part of our stage display. We do have some resources in school but if you can help supply a plastic bottle, felt, wool, cloth, lace and something to wrap around the memory catcher [ribbon or string] we would be very grateful. Examples will be in this week's Newsletter.

In addressing this issue, we have identified a significant number of students who are anxious over current loved ones or loss. These students will have been reminded that support is available through the Learning Zone. As a parent, if your child is suffering from loss or worry or you have any concerns, we are here to help please email the Learning Zone on learningzone@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk. For those students where loss is very raw, we will speak to them individually about how they wish to approach the day. If you have any further concerns please contact the school on 01763-271446.

Thank you in advance for your support

Yours sincerely

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