



Great Gaddesden Cof E (VA) Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to introduce myself as this term, I am delighted to have been invited to work with the KS2 pupils at Great Gaddesden School, following a programme of 'Mindfulness practice'. I am an experienced classroom teacher and is trained to teach the Paws.b mindfulness curriculum to children aged 7-11years

During the Autumn term, your child will be learning about mindfulness once a week as part of a 6 week classroom-based curriculum called 'Paws b', starting **on Thursday, 4th October**.

In order to give you a greater understanding of Mindfulness and the benefits for your children, I am holding an introductory session for parents. This will take place on **Thursday, 27th September at 2:45 pm** in the school hall. All of you are most welcome to attend. It will be an opportunity for you to ask any questions that you may have.

Mindfulness involves training our attention to experience the present moment with greater curiosity and kindness. This helps us to not only appreciate what is going well but to respond more skilfully to life's inevitable challenges.

You may have heard of mindfulness or read some of the recent media coverage about it. A great deal of this media interest has arisen as a result of the growing body of rigorous research evidence regarding the potential benefits of mindfulness for young people. These include randomised control trials and neuroscientific studies.

As Professor Katherine Weare observed in her award-winning research summary: Evidence for the Impact of Mindfulness on Children and Young People, schools who engage in mindfulness are likely to see 'beneficial results on the emotional wellbeing, mental health, ability to learn and even the physical health of their students.'

During the course they will be learning about many things, including:

- Specific areas of the brain and how these affect our ability to focus, make good choices, recognise when we need to steady ourselves when our body or mind is busy or out of balance.
- Ways that mindfulness can support them in many day-to-day activities, including concentration and memory, behavioural self- management, and in relationships with family and friends.
- Ways to respond rather than react – and therefore make better choices and take best care of ourselves.



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The feedback from children who have taken part in Paws b is very positive. They report enjoying the lessons and find the learning supports them in a broad range of situations from being able to concentrate and focus more easily in school to helping them feel calmer in exams and competitions. Many have described sharing the learning with other family members and finding it helps them with their relationships with family and friends.

To hear children sharing their views on their experiences of developing mindfulness skills, I would encourage you to view the ITV News item <http://www.itv.com/news/wales/update/2013-12-08/new-mindfulness-techniques-used-in-schools>

Should you be interested in reading further about the body of research evidence around mindfulness, you may find the following document by Professor Katherine Weare: <http://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/MiSP-Research-Summary-2012.pdf>
Further research studies regarding the benefits of mindfulness for young people can be found on the Mindfulness in Schools Project Website: mindfulnessinschools.org - Research

Finally, if you are interested in learning more about mindfulness yourself then please let me know, as greater parental involvement is one of the things we wish to explore in the future.

Chris Alekkou

Kind regards,



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