



Dear Parents

This term your child will begin learning about mindfulness in their PSHE lessons as part of a classroom-based curriculum called **Paws b**. 5S and 5H will be taught by Mrs Webb and 5K will be taught by Miss Vontzalidou.

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

Feedback from children who have taken part in **Paws b** around the world 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.

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/> where you can hear pupils speaking movingly about their experiences of developing mindfulness skills.

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>

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

Yours sincerely

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature on the left is 'N Webb' and the second signature on the right is 'E Vontzalidou'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mrs N Webb and Miss E Vontzalidou