



In Foundation Stage the ideas between mindfulness, wellbeing, and readiness to learn are intrinsically linked as so much of what the teacher does at this stage encompasses aspects of them all. They are separated into two sections within this pack for clarity. However, there are overlaps and the teacher should use professional judgement as to when to use each activity. We also acknowledge that many children are coming to school with no prior knowledge of what it is like and getting these children ready to learn is the 'bread and butter' for our Foundation Stage colleagues. Ideas and activities can be amended, adapted, and differentiated as required by the teacher to meet the needs of their children.

Wellbeing and Mindfulness

A Mindful Good Morning



The teacher could start the day either in the classroom or in the playground with this short rhyme. If it is in the playground, the parents/guardians of the children may be included, social distancing permitting. This will help the children with the settling process.

The teacher could greet the children, and their parents with this rhyme:

'Good Morning! Good Morning!

How do you do?

Good Morning! Good Morning!

And welcome to you!'

Then the teacher could call the children each by name to welcome them into the school/classroom.

Older children could be encouraged to learn the rhyme and repeat it back to the teacher. They could be encouraged to adapt the rhyme to change it as they see fit. This could be done as a class Writing activity. The children could then learn the response. For example, they might decide to add how they are feeling into the rhyme.

They may come up with their own individual rhymes to include their own name.

Examples:

Good Morning! Good Morning!

I just cannot wait!

Good Morning Good Morning!

Being back is so great!

Good Morning! Good Morning!

I feel really cool!

Good Morning! Good Morning!

I love being at school!

Mindful Goodbye for the end of the day



Take a few minutes before the children leave for home. Ask them to mention one thing that they would like to say thank you for, reflecting on their day. Initially the teacher may give suggestions for the children. Lead with the phrase, **“Today I want to say thank you for...”**

“Today I want to say thank you... for my friends who played with me.”

“Today I want to say thank you... for the story we heard.”

For the first few day’s model ideas and suggestions for the children.

Flower registration and Display

This is a simple activity to allow the children to record their own attendance. The teacher should explain to the children that they are going to colour flowers for the days of the week that they attend school (should your setting be alternating attendance).

The children should have a template of a flower. For the older children, they can write the days of the week on the 'petals' of the flower.

In the centre part of the flower, the child's name should be written by them or scribed by the teacher. Alternatively, a photograph of the child can be added to the centre of the flower. A sample template is provided below. Alternatively, the teacher or the children could also draw the outline of the flower.

Each child will have a flower for one week/5 days attendance. For each of the days that the child attends they colour a petal. The children may also colour petals at home to create a record of the days they worked at home as well.

The completed flowers could be added to a display to create a 'garden' or 'flower bed of friends'. This display will depict all the children from one class, as a whole entity. It will show how they all belong together, especially if they are working in separate groups at the beginning of the year. The children will be able to see the other children who are in their class but not with them physically.

Each child can be designated a friend from the other half of their class, and they could spot if their friend attended this week and leave little positive messages/pictures for their friend, telling them about how they like their flower or congratulating them on their attendance. The younger children could have photos taken with a 'thumbs up' or clapping gesture. They could be placed side by side on the display. This simple activity promotes connectedness and communication, in a novel way for FS children.

To enhance their display the children may add other things, such as drawings or paintings of mini beasts they would expect to find in their garden or flower bed. They could add general positive messages or affirmations to the garden. Of course, the

teacher could help with these by discussing relevant quotes or statements. The affirmations could include statements like:

‘We Are All Growing Together!’

Note: New starters may colour a flower each day as it may be difficult to get them to colour one petal at a time. The idea is really based on them recording their attendance and understanding that some of their class may be in school at a different time/place to them. The object of the display is also to remind them that they are all one class, who will be able to work together very soon!

Petal Poems- Writing Activity

This is a simple, yet effective way to write a basic poem with FS children.

Using one of their coloured-in flowers, the children will compose a poem.

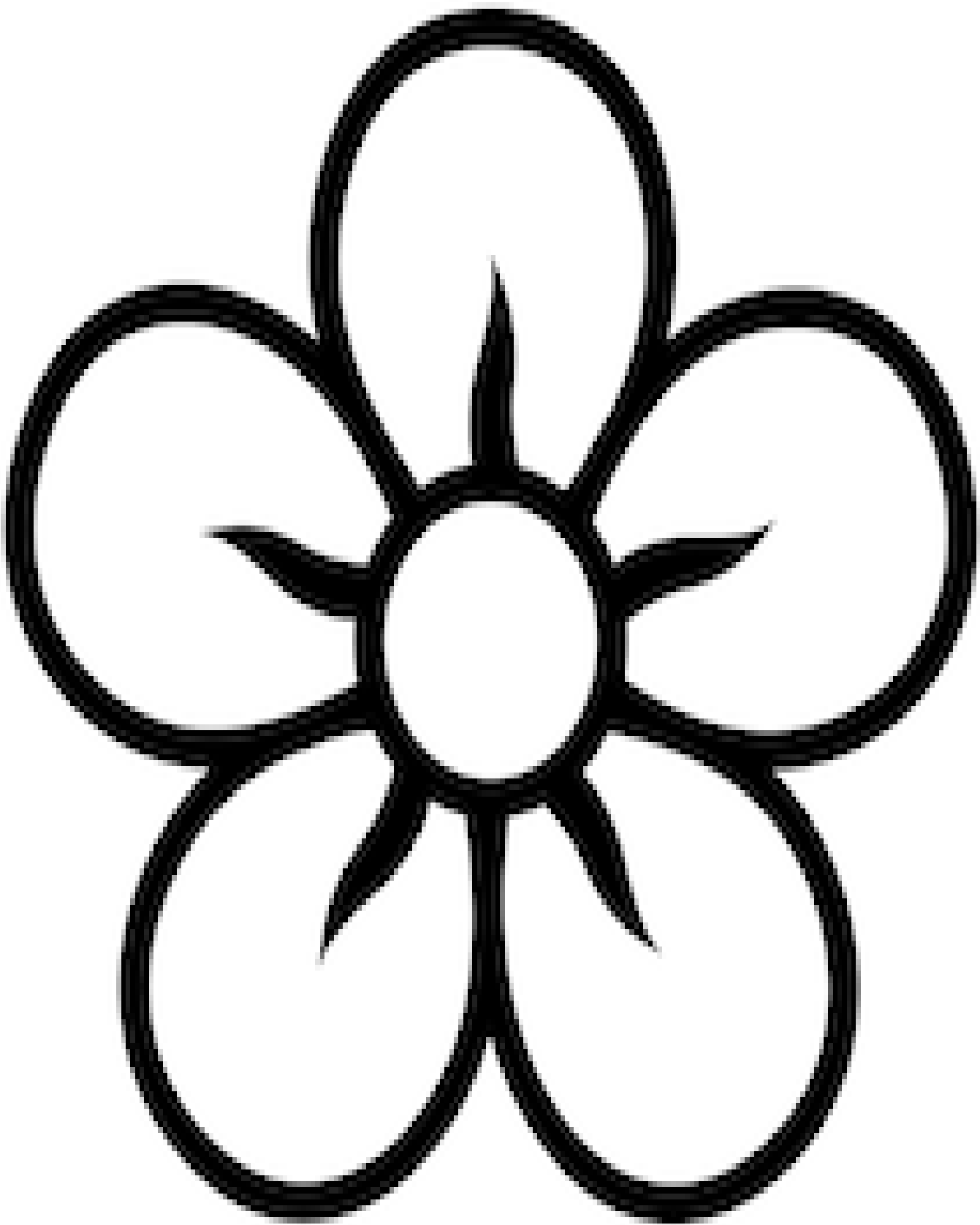
Around the centre of the flower the title of the poem could be scribed by an adult.

This title could be, ‘School is...’ and the children could then be helped to add a word to a petal each day for 5 days. At the end of the week they have a poem on their flower!

The words could be generated by the child or a bank of suitable words could be collated from discussions based on the upcoming activities in this pack, other activities designed by the teacher, and specific activities to help the children articulate how they feel in school. Discussion could centre on positive emotions about being at school.

Example words may include happy, safe, friends, friendly, exciting, wonderful, cool, great, good, colourful, fun, smiles, smiley, play, playing etc. The teacher can help the child pick a word a day to add to their flower. The word could reflect how the child felt about school that day. At the end of the 5 days a flower will be complete and that creates the poem.

Flower Registration Suggested Outline:



Belly Block Big Breathing

Young children, like all others, benefit greatly from being able to slow down, be calm and be present. However, it is more challenging to help them become aware of their breathing. This can be made easier if their breathing is made a physical reality.

To help the children notice their breathing, take them to the PE/Assembly hall and allow them to run around for a while, whilst ensuring social distancing is maintained.

Ask them to lie down. If mats cannot be provided the children could bring a towel from home or a clean space is OK. Give each child a small block/toy. It should be placed on the child's tummy. Encourage the children to notice and discuss that the block is moving up and down as they breathe. Explain that that is because they have been running, so the block is moving up and down quite quickly. Ask the children to begin to take deep, slow breaths. Guide this breathing by counting inhales, holds and exhales with the children. For the younger children counts of 3 should do.

Begin to talk slowly to the children, helping them to regulate their breathing, by guiding them to breathe in and then out slowly and more regularly.

Ask the children to see if they can hold their breathe for a few additional counts. Again, take time to talk about what happens to the block on their tummy.



Once the children have noticed and established that the block slows down and only moves gently as they slow their breathing, the teacher could play some soft music and encourage the children to breathe slowly and gently, as they listen to the music.

Ask children to sit up and discuss what they noticed about how they felt when they slowed down their breathing, when the block was moving gently up and down. Did they feel good? Why did they feel good? How did the music make them feel?

Use this strategy a few times to allow the children to notice their breathing and to notice how they feel when they breathe this way. Perhaps the activity could be used to round off PE lessons. Once the children understand the concept it can be developed further. The idea is to get to the point when the block they have used in the activity, to notice their breathing, can become a 'trigger' for the child to help them begin to slow their breathing and to calm down. So, once they have the concept begin to give the children the block to hold in their hand as they calm down and breathe slowly. They could listen to the music holding the block. Encourage them to notice the block in their hand as they slowly and calmly breathe in, hold and breathe out again.

For a few times in the hall or classroom, allow the children to hold the block in their hand and **visualise it** on their tummy as they slow their breathing.

This practice should allow them to learn to use the block as a 'trigger'. So, when the teacher needs to calm the children down or to diffuse a situation, the children could be asked to hold their blocks and to feel as they calm their breathing and themselves. The children can be trained to use this strategy in different scenarios. They might need to take part in the calm breathing as a class or as a group. Perhaps if they have been annoyed or upset, they could use their 'block trigger' to hold and to help them as they calm their breathing down and resolve the situation.

This is also a good way to introduce a 'quiet time activity' or to get the children ready for listening to the teacher or to a story. They can simply be asked to hold their blocks, and this triggers them slowing down and breathing mindfully, getting ready to better participate in their learning.

We Are Brand New

This activity may be used a few days after the start of the term, especially if any children are finding it hard to settle in to school life. The teacher could use a cuddly toy/puppet for this activity. This could be done in the school playground with the children and their parents, or in the classroom.

The teacher should introduce themselves to everyone and then hold up their 'brand new friend, the cuddly toy/puppet. The teacher could give the toy/puppet a name and introduce it to the group of children and parents. The toy/puppet could pretend to be shy, hiding behind the teacher, whispering questions and 'looking nervous'.

The teacher could explain that the 'brand new friend' is worried about starting school and ask the children to help it to settle in. Pretend that the toy/puppet is asking questions and have the children answer them. Using the toy/puppet, encourage the children to talk about what they already know about school and the school day.

Remind the 'new friend, that it is fun at school and how everyone is brand new too!

Ask children to tell the toy/puppet about their favourite thing about school. What they did and liked did the day before. This sets the tone for a positive start and attitude for the day. The toy can be checked on regularly to ensure it is ok and is settled. Use the toy to ask the children how they are feeling, giving the children a chance to articulate how they are feeling throughout the day.

Brand New II

The new children should think of all the 'brand new' things they got for coming to school. They could create a display of all the 'brand new' things by using images of the objects. These things could include:

- Uniform
- Pencils and pencil cases
- Schoolbags
- Shoes, PE shoes and socks
- Books or stationery
- Lunch boxes/ bags
- Water/ drinks bottles

Help the children sort these objects into two categories; the things that they can bring to school at present and things that need to stay at home for now. The titles on the display should show what can be used in school and what needs to be kept at home. The teacher may like to take photos of the children and add them to the display. The teacher could give a small toy as a 'gift' to the children and ask them to talk about how it feels to receive something 'brand new'. Encourage them to use words such as **special** and **exciting**. Record all the words the children connect to things that are 'brand new'.

Help the children understand that they are 'brand new' in the school (if applicable) and that because of this they are special. Everyone in the school is looking out for them and everyone will be taking care of them. Everyone in the school believes that they are *just* like the words they have collected. Go over the words they came up with earlier to reinforce this message. Prior to this activity, the teacher can visit different locations within the school and take photographs of the people who will be involved in looking after the children. The photos could be taken in the "special place" where each person works. If possible, a short message could also be recorded by each of the people who will be looking out for the children and who will be helping them. Consider using:

- The teacher, in the classroom

- The Classroom/Learning Assistants in the classroom
- The secretary, in the office
- The canteen staff, in the canteen
- The caretaker, in their store
- The Principal, in the principal's office
- Other teachers, in the staffroom
- The patrol person, on the road

The teacher could print the photos for each child to have and then each day they could be introduced to one of the people who will be helping them by video, using the pre-recorded short message. In each message the person delivering it could say:

'Hi I am I am the(role)..... I know you are brand new in our school, so I want to say hello! I will be looking after you! I will be keeping you happy, healthy and safe!'

Children select and match the correct photo of the person speaking that day in the video. They could discuss with the teacher who the person is and what they do in the school to help them. Each day they could keep building up the number of people they hear from and who they can identify from the photos.



The people who help, could then be displayed on a board in the classroom. The photos of where each person can be found could also be displayed. The display could have the classroom as its centre. Then in the surrounding zones, the Principal, secretary, and others could be depicted surrounding the classroom.

The teacher should take time to explore how the children feel having so many people looking out for them and taking care of them! Also consider the jobs of the people outside of school who look after them too and who will be helping them to learn at home.

Note: Children returning to the school again can equally do this activity given the time that has passed since they have been in school. They can be reminded of the people in the school who will be helping them, and the video message can be more developed and more personal.

Brand New Activity III

There will be 'brand new' rules in school for the older children to get used to. The returning children could think about how 'brand new' things are fun and exciting, and they could then discuss the new rules they can identify that have changed in school/class from their first year. Make a list of the rules that they can remember from the year before in their classrooms. The teacher should reinforce the idea that we have rules to keep us **happy, healthy** and **safe**. The teacher could show the children the below images for these concepts:

Happy



Healthy



Safe

Ask the children how they know from these pictures that the children in them are:

- Happy?
- Healthy?
- Safe?

Help the children understand that we can see from their smiles, their faces, their hands, their legs, their arms that these children in the pictures are all three things, happy, healthy, and safe! Extend this connection by working with the children to create new rules for their classroom that relate to the same body parts the children have been discussing. The idea being that if they want to be happy, healthy, and safe they need to follow rules with:

- Their hands
- Their feet
- Their faces
- Their mouths
- Their hearts

Use the template below. The teacher can amend this to suit their needs. The examples can be enlarged, printed, and used to create class rules display.

Extension Activity for Rules

Discuss the rules for the classroom with the children. Provide the images of the children who are **safe**, **happy**, and **healthy**. Go through the rules one at a time and allow the children to consider if the rule is designed to keep them happy, healthy, or safe. They could show this by matching the appropriate image to the rule.

Happy



Healthy



Safe
























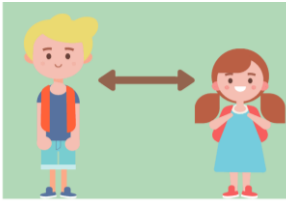
Templates for both activities are below.

Template 1 use as the children create the rules with the guidance and support of the teacher.

Template 2 is for the extension activity and should be completed in a group with teacher support.

Template 1: Our Rules

Rules for our... 		
Wash your 	Put your 	up! Don't touch... 
Rules for our... 		
		
Walk in the classroom!	Don't run!	
Rules for our... 		
		
Always listen to the teacher	Always listen to the bell	
Rules for our... 		
		
Be kind to everyone	Say thank you to everyone	
Rules for our... 		
		
Smile! Be Happy!	Cover when you cough!	

Rules for our...	
	
Cover when you sneeze!	 
Rules for our...	
	
Stay one metre apart	

Template for Extension Activity:

Rule	This keeps me...
Rule	This keeps me...
Rule	This keeps me...
Rule	This keeps me...
Add more as necessary...	

Further activities

Below there are several short activities which can be used to form the basis of thinking and discussion. The teacher may use these with the whole class or in small groups. Alternatively, the activities could be used with individual children who need targeted support. The purpose of each activity is to get the children thinking about, and expressing how they feel safe, happy, and healthy at school with their classmates. They are designed to focus on positive feelings and to promote that sense of positivity. The short activities should instil a sense of wellbeing in the school environment. They will allow the children the opportunity to acquire relevant language and to express how they are feeling.

Activity 1 allows the children to talk about the concepts of feeling safe, happy, looked after, being kind to each other and any other positive emotion the children are able to identify and discuss.

Activity 2 allows the returning children to consider what's good about being back in school.

Activity 3 allows the children to consider how school is a happy place, reinforcing the previous activities.

Activity 4 allows the children to consider how they stay healthy in school. This could include healthy eating, PE, and games, social distancing measures, and personal hygiene.

Activity 5 allows the children to consider what is done to keep them safe in school. For example, doors are locked, adults taking after them, etc.

Activity 1

In our classroom we know we are...



Activity 2

Back to school is good because:

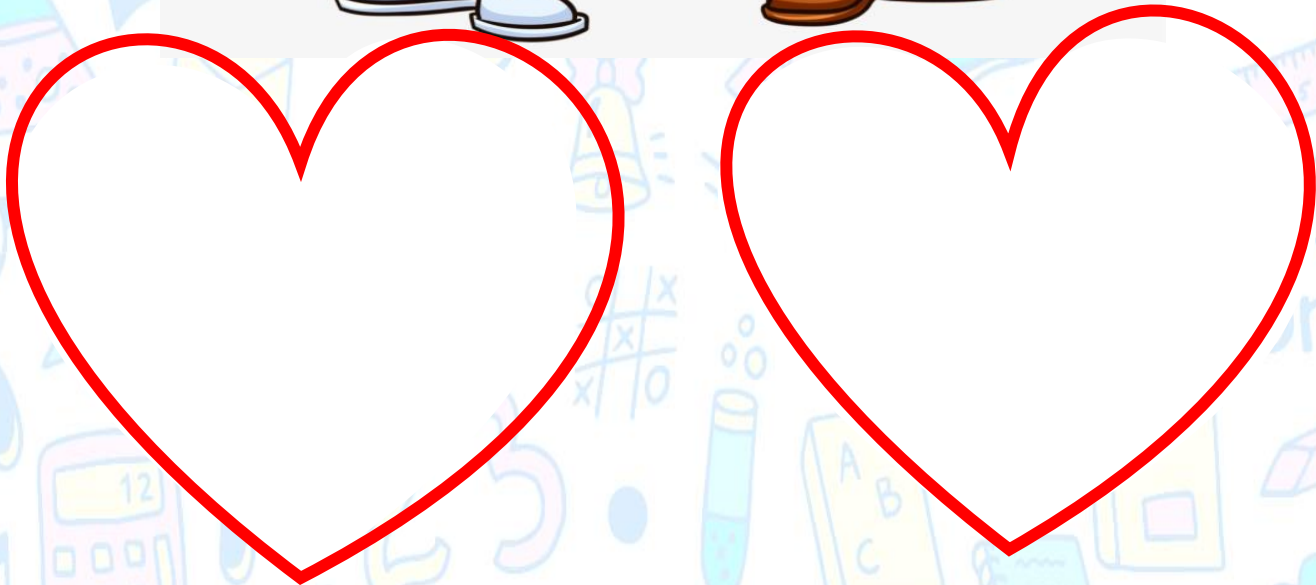
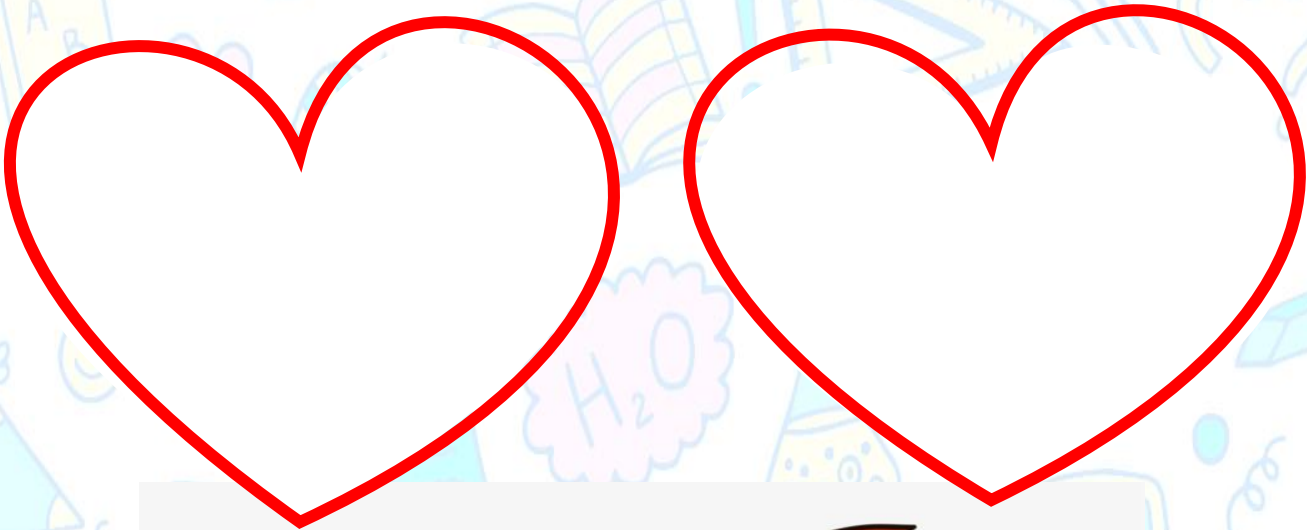


Back to school is not so good because:



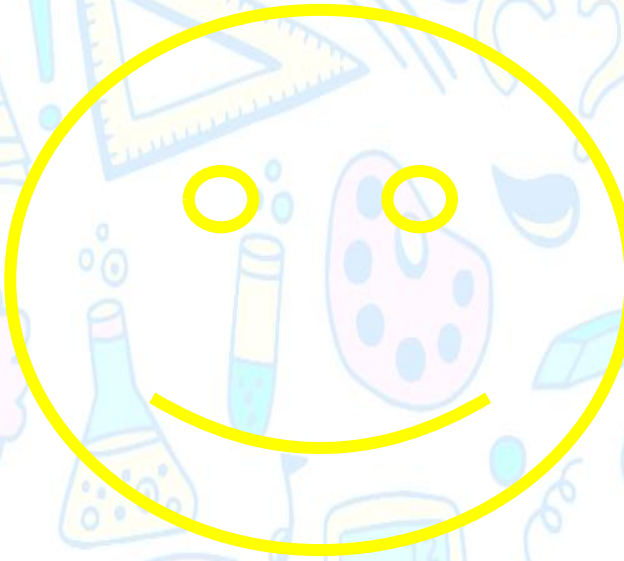
Activity 3

School is a happy place! I love it because:



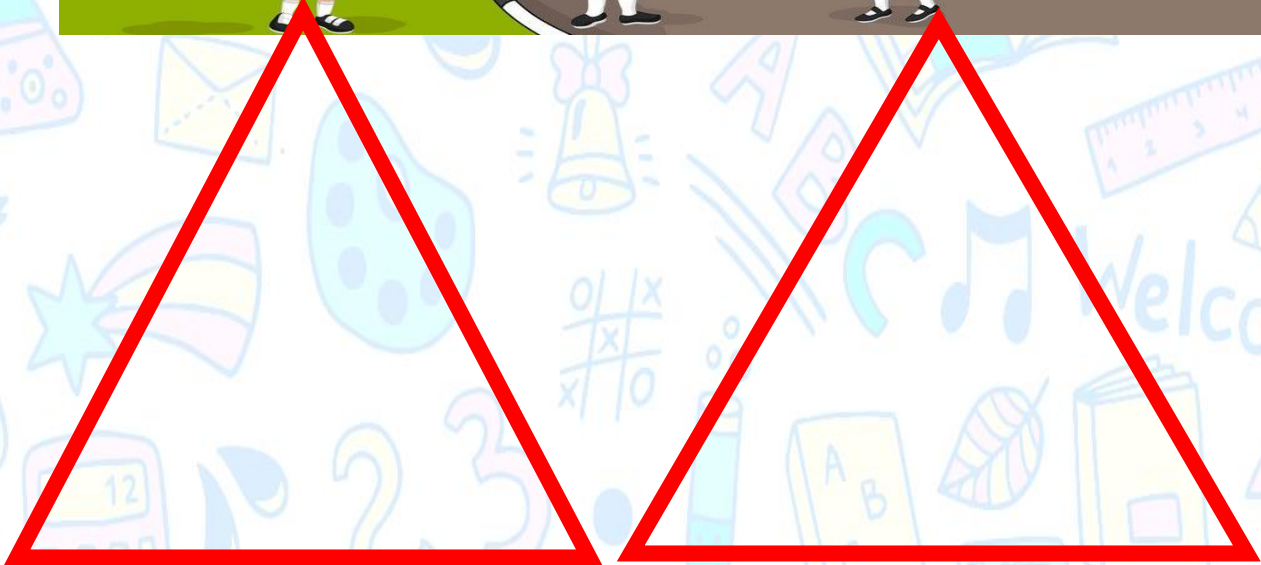
Activity 4

I stay healthy in school by:



Activity 5

In School we are safe because:



For the younger children, the teacher could use images to prompt them. The children could add pictures to the speech/thought bubbles and other shapes. The older children may be able to record simple answers or work with the teacher to provide answers for the teacher to scribe. The teacher can use these resources as a hard copy or saved on flipcharts on the interactive whiteboard.

The purpose of these activities is to allow discussion around concepts of being, and feeling safe in school, to dispel notions of schools being 'dangerous' or places where children should be afraid or worried about. Some may pick up on this through media coverage and parent discussion.

The repetition of the concepts affords the children the opportunity to acquire the relevant language. Having this language and being able to articulate their thoughts can enhance the wellbeing of the child as they are equipped with an understanding and knowledge of their new safe, happy, and healthy environment. They could even be encouraged to share this wealth of knowledge with their parents or guardians!

As well as reassuring children the above activities also allow for those children who have any specific concerns or worries, a time to voice them and to address it in a positive and constructive manner.

By feeling safe and happy in school and aware that they can *still* be children will allow them to settle in and be ready to learn in a near as normal school environment.

The teacher can adapt and amend any of these activities to suit the needs of their learners or to address other issues that may arise. These activities may be used as ways of reinforcing rules as well.

Weather Check-in Activity

This is designed as a morning activity. It is based on the children using the weather to let the teacher and their classmates know how they are feeling. It involves the use of three weather images or symbols. The teacher will need to take some time to help the children to understand the concept of these symbols. This could be done by giving examples or scenarios, pretending they have certain feelings themselves and matching the appropriate image to how they feel. The teacher may need to use the images several to help the children recognise the connection between the image and what the teacher is saying. Once the children understand the concept of matching the image to how they feel they can begin to use them in the 'Check-in' Activity.



to illustrate happiness/ feeling particularly good



to illustrate feeling just ok



to illustrate not feeling good/ unhappy

Ask the children each morning to select one of the images to represent how they are feeling. Encourage them to explain why they have picked this image. Children share how they are feeling with the class, the teacher, some friends or whoever they wish to share with. Some children may only be able to articulate how they feel.

Encourage children to share **why** they feel how they do. Again, they can choose who they would like to share that information with. They may wish to share with everyone, the teacher, or a few selected friends. However, children should never be forced to share anything that they do not want to share.

Once the children understand the images, they can be used in many ways and during many situations to illicit from a child how they are feeling and why they are having those feelings. For the older children, the range of emotions included can be added to and developed. This will improve the range of emotional language the children acquire and can articulate.

The images can also be used at times when children need to be mindful of how others feel. For example, when they have hurt someone or need to consider other people's feelings in scenarios that arise in the classroom.

The teacher could use the weather images to explore how children are responding in different situations during the school day. If there has been a conflict issue or a problem has arisen which needs to be considered the images can be used to help articulate the feelings and responses of the children involved. Having that visual representation and being able to reference times when children have had the feelings themselves can be a powerful but simple way to help children understand how they have affected others by their actions.



Sunny words could include:

happy	excited	great	good
nice	lovely	cool	amazing
awesome			

Sometimes children can be encouraged to articulate how they feel by talking about characters they know from stories or rhymes, by referring to superheroes and other popular characters. They have the language of popular culture and this can be tapped into. They use words they have heard these characters use.



Cloudy words could include:

ok	just ok	not good	not great
not happy	A little bit upset	A little bit...	all right

Sometimes children can be encouraged to articulate how they feel by talking about characters they know from stories or rhymes, by referring to superheroes and other popular characters. They have the language of popular culture and this can be tapped into. They use words they have heard these characters use.



Rainy words could include:

sad	unhappy	not good	not great
not happy	upset	not ok	scared
worried	nervous	missing Mammy	

Sometimes children can be encouraged to articulate how they feel by talking about characters they know from stories or rhymes, or by referring to superheroes and other popular characters. They have the language of popular culture and this can be tapped into. They use words they have heard these characters use.

Extension ideas

Older children could extend this by writing their own personal weather forecasts/reports for the day.

The children can keep a ‘weather/ feelings diary’ to log how they felt during the week and to be able to talk about this with their teacher or with a friend.

For younger children they could record their feelings for a day by sticking pictures of the images on a strip of paper divided into the different events of the day. These events could be depicted as images also. The children could record if they liked that part of their day by selecting a weather symbol picture and sticking it on the strip.

Note: the teacher should encourage the children to use language beyond happy and sad. Development of a range of emotional language, and the confidence to express their feelings are crucial aspects if children are to become more mindful.

Activities to help children develop Emotional Language

To encourage the children to express how they feel the children first need to have the language to express themselves. Emotions can be difficult to explain for adults, let alone our youngest children in school. Set out below are a range of ideas to help them acquire some new words which should help them better articulate how they are feeling when required.

- The teacher could mime an emotion and see if they can guess what it is. The children could pick a picture to match. The teacher could model the language for the mood and ask the children to point to the correct picture. The pictures could then be used as means of getting the children to independently identify the emotions and to use the correct language themselves. Pictures are included below.
- Get your children pulling faces to match the feeling you call out. They enjoy this and this can be an extension of using pictures to represent the emotions.
- Sing 'If You're Happy and You Know it,' but change the emotion for each verse. For example, 'If you're sad and you know it, make a frown.' P2 children could engage in making a wider range of 'verses'.
- Play snap and matching games with pictures of different feelings. When the children find a pair, they have to say what the emotion is. Also, in the playing of the game they should be articulating the names of the emotions and identifying them.
- When the teacher reads stories, they should point out the emotions characters are feeling. Children can hold a picture of the emotion to identify it or be encouraged to use the appropriate language to describe how the character is feeling and why they are feeling the way they are.
- The teacher could use images of emotions with the class to point to one of the faces/emotions and then the children could be asked to tell stories about times that they felt these emotions.

Extension Activity for older children

- The teacher could make one of the feelings the 'emotion of the week' and include stories which are relevant to that emotion in the books they read with the class. They could focus learning around the emotion by highlighting it. Children could be asked to record when they feel the emotion on a whiteboard or similar display which is made accessible to them. They could record by simply adding a dot with a marker. Then at a time during the day the teacher should ask the children to stand up if they have added a dot to the record today. The children who stand have a chance to say why they experienced that emotion when they did.
- Lead a conversation encouraging the children to think about, discuss and even act out practical things they can do when someone feels any one of the common emotions.
- The teacher could invent scenarios for each emotion and use role play to bring them to life.



















Note: any of this work can be linked to recent experiences regarding lockdown, return to school and what is happening regarding coronavirus. Opportunities within these activities may present to help children articulate their experiences or to dispel fears, anxieties they may have.

Opportunities will arise to focus on the more positive emotions and connecting these to the children's experience of life in school.

The children could have the chance to identify emotions they feel connected to aspects of their day in school. They could then match how they feel to the events of the day.

Weather Reports

			
At the start of the day I felt:	At breaktime I felt:	At story time I felt:	At home time I felt:
			
			
			

Additional Materials

'I am I can!'

During this activity, the children are encouraged to talk about themselves in a positive manner. It is also a way of getting the new children to school introduce themselves.

It is a quite simple activity and it can be used in many contexts to affirm and develop self-confidence and allow the children to acknowledge their 'talents'.

Encourage the child to think of three things they **can do**. If the children cannot yet write the things, they can do then they could pick ideas from a selection of images. If they cannot yet write their name, the teacher should scribe it for them.

The simple idea is to record the three things they want to tell people on a basic proforma, example is provided below. Once the children have selected three things, they can draw pictures or paint themselves doing these things.

Then they can add emotions to the pictures by telling their teacher how they feel or by selecting emoji faces to depict their emotions.

To extend this activity, older children could read out or say their name and the three things they can do. The next child repeats the child before and says their own. So, for example:

Child 1- I am David, I can run fast, I can ride my bike, I can write my name.

Child 2- He is David he can run fast, he can ride his bike, he can write his name
I am Ali, I can play football, I can ride my quad, I can tie my laces

Child 3- He is Ali he can...

I am Martha I can... and so on.

The teacher may wish to specify that the children pick things they can do in school and at home or in certain contexts. For example:

I am	I can (In school)	I can (At home)	(I can At play)

Extension Activity

Ask the children to pick one or two things that they would like to be able to do that they cannot do at present. Have them set a goal or target to achieving that.

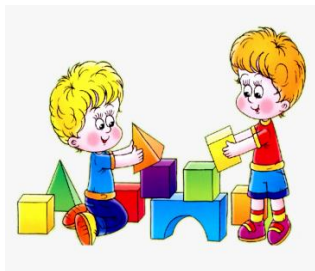
The children should identify what they would like to be able to and the people who could help them to achieve their goal. They could think about ways to achieve their goal and how they will know when they have achieved their goal.

A date later in the term can be set for all children to have achieved their goal. On that day, the children will have the chance to tell everyone what they could not do and how they can now do what they had wanted to be able to do!

This can be a celebration event and the children could be presented with a reward or certificate to recognise their achievement.

Sample images for activity:

I can-



Sample images for the 'I CAN' emotions/ emojis



Happy



Proud



I am a star



I feel like a superhero



'I can't' sample record/template

I am.....



I can't



I will be able to

When?



or



Then I will feel...

Feather Following- Activity

Many mindfulness activities involve watching or imitating something such as the clouds or balloons to notice how things exist and to move gently in imitation of them. In this activity the children should be allowed to play with feathers or similar items that will float slightly or be gently carried on the air.

Ask the children to work in silence and throw the feather up and watch how it floats and falls. The children could then be asked to move gently and to replicate how the feather falls. If they are asked to move inside the classroom, they should be asked to maintain their social distancing as they do. If they are moving outside, they should have adequate space to move freely, as they imitate the feather. Moving gently and noticing others should be emphasised as the children participate in the activity.

To extend the activity ask the children to return with their feather, to their seats. In their places the teacher should have placed the following template for the children to trace with their finger several times. As they trace, they should think about their feather and how it moved. After a few times tracing the children could try to trace with their eyes closed. Then the teacher could give the children some paint and ask them to use the feather to dip in the paint and follow the spiral with it. The children should be encouraged to use several colours to trace over the spiral with the feather.

Once the feather paintings dry, the teacher could lead a discussion about words to describe how the feather moved. A bank of words could be collated and displayed. The children could have the opportunity to work with the teacher to read over the words and decide which words they want to add to their feather painting. These words could be scribed for them. They could pick which colours they want the words to be written in.

Words considered could include gentle, gently, floating, floaty, falling, flying, spinning, twisting, swaying, swooping, light, lightly, looping etc.

The words, when added to the feather painting, allow the work to become a piece of visual literacy. Children could be encouraged to write the words along the lines of the spiral to create a very simple shape poem which could be called; Gentle Feathers,

Falling Feathers or similar. The children could think of a title for their piece themselves.

The teacher could further extend the work by adding music, A piece of suitable gentle music could be used. The children could close their eyes and imagine their feathers falling to the music. Then they could be allowed to move to the music to create feather dances. The teacher could explore how the children felt as they moved like the feathers to the music. Did they feel calm and peaceful? What did they notice when they were moving? A basic shape/spiral has been included below for use in the tracing activity. Alternatively, the children could draw their own outlines.

Useful links

Feather Falling Music

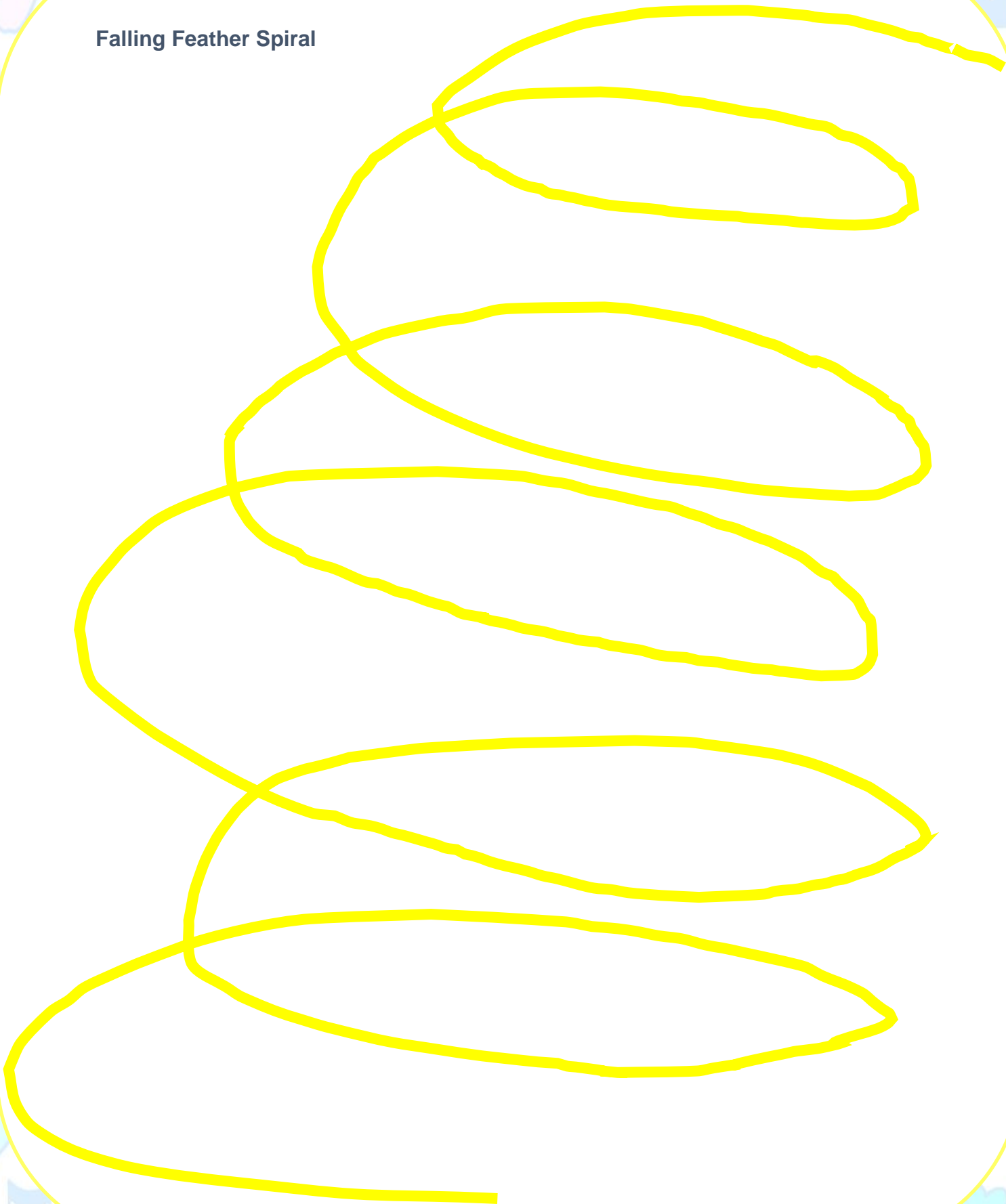
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRC4GLKL1_M

Falling Feather Image



Use feathers or images of feathers. Create a backdrop to depict the ground and the sky. Children could use sponges or paint brushes to contribute to the creation of the backdrop. They could paint themselves lying down. Feathers could be stuck to backdrop and children could stick on feathers themselves. Words to describe how the feathers fall and how the feathers feel could be added to the backdrop.

Falling Feather Spiral



Section2 - Readiness to Learn

Paying attention with our 'inside' bodies- Part One Windmill Activity

This activity can be used to reinforce the mindful breathing that was outlined earlier in the pack. Perhaps this could be used for older children and Belly Block Activity could be used for the younger children.

This activity requires a plastic/paper windmill. Ideally each child would have one, but present limitations may prevent this. Therefore, the teacher can use just one to demonstrate or you may want to create these in an art lesson.

We can learn to pay attention on the inside and the outside of our bodies. When we pay attention, we can use mindfulness, and this can help us remain calm if we are sad, angry, or frustrated. It can also help us feel happier and more content.

The teacher should introduce the idea of paying attention, explaining that we pay attention with our bodies too. Explain that we know someone is paying attention because we can see:

- They are looking forward
- Their body is calm
- They are not talking

The teacher should pose the question- what happens inside our body when we pay attention?

When we pay attention, in a special way, sometimes our bodies automatically become still, and we calm down. We can notice our breathing and our hearts beating slowly.

The teacher should ask the children to **notice their heart beating**, to feel their heart beating and to listen carefully. To do this they can close their eyes.

The teacher should ask the children to **notice how they breathe** when they are calm. They should see that they are breathing slowly and calmly.



The children should consider what they need to do to make the windmill move? They should try to move the windmill by taking deep breaths and blowing on it (if they have their own). They should experiment with gentle breathing and strong breathing. They should discuss what happens to the windmill. Then the teacher should ask the children to notice how **paying attention** slows their breathing right down. The children should practise strong breathing and slowing down by breathing gently, using the windmills.

This simple activity of changing their breathing could be used as a calming activity at any time during the day, to bring their thoughts back to the learning and for the children to be present. Two strong breaths, followed by two softer, followed by two very soft breaths on the windmill.

As part of the activity the children should be allowed to think about and discuss how they feel when they are breathing in the different ways.

They should also discuss how they feel when they are breathing calmly.

They can feel their stomachs and feel how different the physical side of breathing in the different ways is. They can talk about how their tummy raises and falls as they breath in and out.

The children can discuss how they are more ready to learn when they are mindful, present, and calm.

Extension Activity

Create a 'Paying Attention' sign or flag. This will be raised as a symbol for the children. They should learn that when they see the flag raised, they must pay attention with their bodies. The children should be able to tell the teacher what the flag/signs means and what they must do. They should know the mantra:

- Look forward
- Calm body
- No talking
- Gentle breathing

Paying attention with our 'outside' bodies- Part One Bell Activity

Just before the bell for a break the teacher should ask the children to wait for it and to listen for it. The teacher should ask the children to decide how they knew the bell rang. The answer of course is that they listened to the bell or heard it with their ears. The teacher should tell the class that they need to pay attention to the bell because it is telling us something. This bell is telling us that it is time to go outside to play.

Once the children are back in class the teacher should ask them if they heard the bell at the end of break. What did they do when they heard the second bell? So again, how did they know the bell rang? They heard it.

The teacher can explain that we paid attention with our ears and we knew what to do- to line up or to go out. The teacher should help the children understand that the bell is a signal and it tells us what we need to do. We pay attention to the bells.

When the children come back in, the teacher could also take a little time to ask them how they can get ready to learn. They could use their windmills to calm their breathing. They could sit up straight and be ready to learn. They could listen and look forward.










The children should have time to practise all these things.

They should talk about how they know they are ready to learn by looking at what our bodies need to do. Just like our ears listening we use other parts of our bodies to be ready to learn.

Use these two images to decide which children are paying attention and how we know by looking at what their bodies are doing.



Complete the table based on what the attentive children are doing in the image.
Think about what the body parts will be 'doing' if and when you are ready to learn.

	
Ready to learn? What are our hands doing?	
	
	
Ready to learn? What are our feet doing?	
	
	
Ready to learn? What are our ears doing?	
	
	
Ready to learn? What are our hearts doing?	
	
	
Ready to learn? What are our mouths doing?	

**Ready to learn?****What are we doing with our bodies?**

The Daily Routine Activity

Note: Some of the following ideas are taken from the Foundation Stage Theme 'A Time to Rhyme', by Anne McErlane. The theme is part of the Thematic Planning Process which creates a whole school approach to WAU (World Around Us) planning and delivery.

As usual, FS children will be introduced to the concepts of self-registering and the school day and routine. This is a normal activity for this time of year and can be revised with returning children, especially this year given the previous academic year was cut short.

As a new concept the children will also start to learn about timelines which is the foundation of skills relevant to WAU, particularly, History.

Using images for the different times/events of the day such as:

- School starts
- Saying prayers/assembly
- Self -register
- Break time
- Lunchtime
- Home time
- Tidy up time

Children organise a set of appropriate images of different times in the school day into correct order. This allows them to develop the skill of chronological order but also get them used to the routine of the school day. The images should represent the most relevant aspects of the school day and can be added to, as the school day develops for the new starters. For return to school post coronavirus/lockdown, **the image of hand sanitising can be added**. So, images could include:

Morning Prayers



Break Time



Lunch time



Home Time



Washing hands



Extension Activity

The visual Timetable should be photocopied, and a set of images given to the children. They can use the images in a group activity to carry out a similar task ordering and sequencing events and times etc. This is a much better way to introduce the concept of Timelines than photos of the children as babies, toddlers etc. Using the images from the visual timetable reinforces the concept of routines and lets the children see how time changes in manageable amounts in ways that are relevant to them.

These activities can be extended by developing the sets of images into '**Daylines**'. To complete this, children explore and discuss what happens before, after and during school. So, images can be included to show morning and night-time routines. Alternatively, the children could create pictures themselves to use as parts of the 'daylines' they create.

New starters could use the images to copy a day as set out by their teacher, for them to follow. They could 'build a day' as it happens, putting the parts down as they encounter them, to get them used to the roll out of school days and to help them see how time changes.

Older children could use the images to set out the visual timetable to show how a day has gone, or how they would plan a day in school. They could set out a day they would like to have. They could be the 'teachers' for the day, deciding how the day will go.

The teacher may wish to provide parents with copies of the visual timetable to help them plan and discuss home learning with their children. They do not have to set out an entire day for their child but having the elements of the timetable would allow parents to:

- Discuss with their children the things they had done in each day in school. The child could try to recall the order of the events of the day or part of it. They could tell their parent how the day had gone.
- Use the images of the visual timetable to set out what they are going to be doing at home for learning in that environment
- Allow the child to plan their learning or decide what order to do different tasks
- Help the child understand what they are going to do at home that day. The use of the same images as used by the teacher may help to formalise the learning a little and help the children understand that they are undertaking schoolwork but at home (if applicable, however this can be applied generally to homework).

Using the visual timetable in both environments will hopefully help the children as part of their readiness to learn. Using the images will reinforce routines and habits of learning for the children.

Social Distancing Activity in Early Year Classrooms

How We Are Superheroes?

Introduce the idea that superheroes need room or space to work. Ask the children to think of as many superheroes as possible. Ask the children about how all superheroes fight 'baddies'. Discuss how the superheroes need room to move around and to do their actions. Explain that in school we are being superheroes by keeping coronavirus at bay, by not spreading the bug! Then, discuss with the children that as they are all being superheroes, they will need to have plenty of room around them. One way we are doing this is by social distancing. Just like all superheroes we need space and room to fight the bug! It's our 'baddie'.

The children could 'fill' the space around them with signs and reminders to be superheroes and to stay apart. This would allow them to fill the spaces between them and others with positive ideas and images. The teacher could create a few of these and the children could choose which they would like or draw them, and the teacher could scribe text on them.

For example:



Note: images can be amended to adhere to the rules and regulations in place, at present.

Children could paint or draw themselves in superhero costumes. Alternatively, the teacher could take a photo of each child's face. The children could draw their costume below their face to create **SUPERHERO SELFIES!**



Extension for older children

This concept can be developed for the children to help them think about what else they can do as superheroes. They may discuss how superheroes should:

- Cough or sneeze in tissues
- Play at a distance
- Work individually
- Help others

Posters or messages could be created from the children thinking, talking, painting, drawing, or selecting relevant images that have been provided by the teacher.

The children can help the teacher to create notices related to helping stop the spread of the bug by using the slogans:

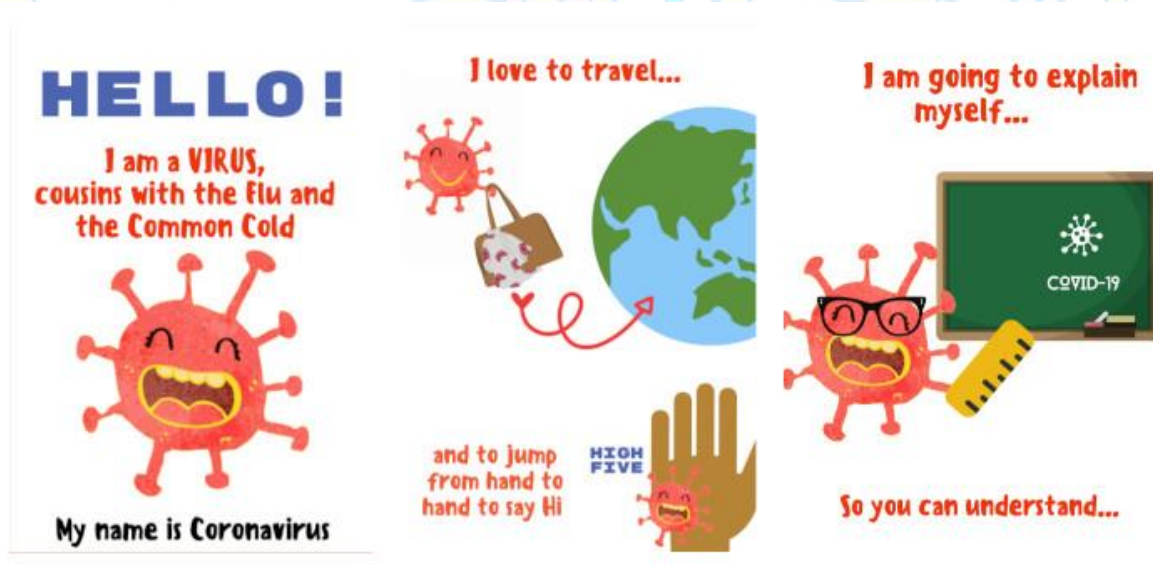
Catch It

Bin It

Kill it

They can include their favourite superheroes on these.

Optional Activity



The teacher could use this image to discuss how the baddie in this case is the coronavirus and to lead a discussion on how we are doing everything we can to beat it! There has not been too much emphasis placed on this in the packs at any Key Stage as we want the packs to promote the more positive aspects of moving on and adapting to our 'new normal.'

What we need to learn

I am ready to learn

Although some of the learning environments in school are restricted, there should be some access to spaces outside the classroom. However, there will a greater emphasis on learning as an individual, due to social distancing measures. This activity helps to reinforce social distancing and to focus on individual work. Each child should have access to a small tray of sand. The children explore how they will be ready to learn and know that they are ready to learn in certain environments. It allows them to identify what they have learned and to record it in basic ways.

I can learn on my own in school:

In this activity the teacher can help the children identify how they can be ready to learn at school and at home.











I can learn - Outdoors

Some suggested activities:




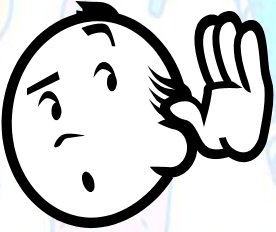


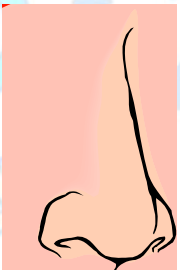




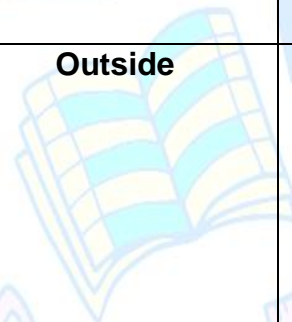



Children could complete their **'My Outdoor Passport'**. To do this, they should have the opportunity to attempt all the activities suggested and given a stamp for each upon completion.

'The Senses Passport' is a similar activity, but this can be done inside and outside as well. The teacher could amend the activity sheet to use it separately in both environments.

My Outdoor Passport; Hey! Hey! Look at me I can...

<p>Jump</p> 	<p>Stamp</p> 	<p>Skip</p> 	<p>Stamp</p>
<p>Run</p> 		<p>Hop</p> 	
<p>Dig</p> 		<p>Hide</p> 	
<p>Climb</p> 		<p>Stretch</p> 	
<p>Throw</p> 		<p>Bat</p> 	
<p>Catch</p>			

My Senses Passport; Hey! Hey! Look at me I can...

See 	Inside 	Outside 	Stamp
Hear 	Inside 	Outside 	
Smell 	Inside 	Outside 	
Taste 	Inside 	Outside 	
Touch 	Inside 	Outside 	

Teacher should encourage children to show that by using their own sand tray they can do the following.

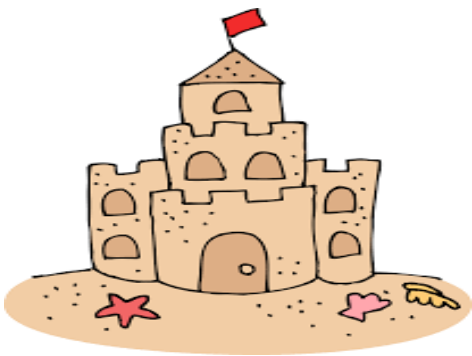
In my sand tray I can:



Write



Make prints



Build



Fill



Draw



Bury



Draw a happy face



Draw a sad face



Draw a cheeky face



Write my name



Just play and have fun!



Spill

More Creative Activities

Hey! Hey! Look at Me! Emotions Bunting

Teacher cuts large triangles and each child is given one to paint and attach pictures of themselves alongside their name, birthday, and age. Alternatively, the children can decorate with stickers or similar. The triangles could then be stapled to ribbon or string to create bunting which can be displayed in the classroom.

Bunting could be made for different purposes, such as displaying the current rules in place in the school/classroom.

Hand and fingerprint pictures. Class handprint collage.

Make collages of rainbows using finger or handprints on sheets of card.

Cut these up to create cards for the children to use to send as thank you cards for the people who are helping them in school or at home. Observe regulations about sharing things.

Washing Hands with Slippery Soap Rhyme

Teach this simple rhyme to reinforce washing hands with the children.

It encourages the children to wash each part of their hand.

Slippy soap song

Slippery soap on palms.

Rub! Rub! Rub!

Slippery soap for fingers

Scrub! Scrub! Scrub!

Slippery soap on backs.

Rub! Rub! Rub!

Slippery soap on thumbs.

Scrub! Scrub! Scrub!

Rinse off with water

Slosh slosh slosh

Wash germs away

Splish splash splosh!

Anne McErlane

The children could learn the rhyme and decorate it with images of their hands made of handprints or drawn and painted by the children. Alternatively, the children could make a short film, recorded by the teacher showing them saying the rhyme and washing their hands. The teacher could narrate the rhyme for the younger children who simply learn the actions.

Happy Bubbles Activity

The word 'bubble' will be one the children will hear used a lot as they return to school. Bubbles generally engender happy and feeling good...they are fun! In this activity the children will play with bubbles, make bubble paintings and pictures, and write about bubbles in quite simple form.

Provide the children with a variety of sizes of bubble blowers or even use a bubble making machine (it may be that only adults can use these due to hygiene restrictions. Alternatively, disposable cups could be used, especially given the contents of the liquid being naturally clean). The poem below, can be read before, during and after the children have a chance to play in the bubbles and to make them.

Blow bubbles inside and outside and talk about what happens in each location. Ask the children to discuss how they feel when they are blowing or making bubbles. Look at bubbles and discuss how beautiful they are. (Pictures below)

The Poem***Bundles of Bubbles***

Splish and splash in water and soap,
Plenty of bubbles from this I hope.
Dip in the stick, and gently blow,
See them dance, watch how they go!
Bundles of bubbles bouncing by,
Beautiful colours catch my eye,
See the yellow, the purple and pink.
Children, doesn't it make you think.
How something so lovely, so fragile and bright,
Can catch the colours and keep the light
Round watery rainbows, from heaven they fall,
Then POP! They disappear!
Leaving nothing at all!

By Anne McErlane



Encourage the children to talk about what they see in the bubbles. Some questions:

What colours do they see? What does the poem say about the colours?

Look for the rainbow in the bubbles. Can they see all the colours of the rainbow?

What colours are mentioned in the poem? Do they see those colours in the bubbles or in the pictures? What other colours are there in the bubbles?

Notice what the light does to the bubbles. What do the bubbles look like? Can we catch bubbles? Why not? How do bubbles make us feel?

Make bubble paintings

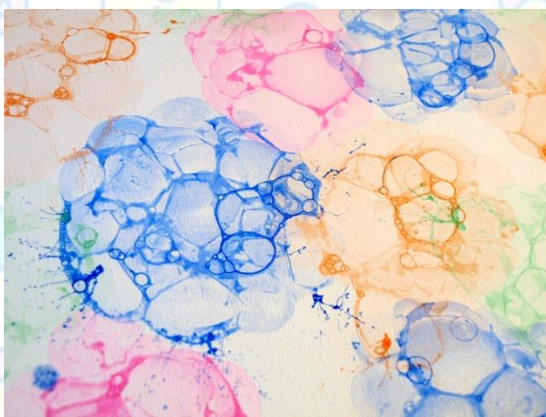
Let's try 'keeping' bubbles by painting them!

You need:

- a tray or tin foil carton
- washing up liquid
- water
- a few different colours of paint
- a plastic/ metal straw

Mix your paint with a little water, and a good squirt of washing-up liquid, stir it up and then blow into it with a straw to create lots and lots of bubbles. You then gently place the paper over the bubbles to take a print from them, remove, and allow to dry. Do not push the paper into the water...be gentle!

This is the basic technique, but you can vary it. For example, you can use a large tray of bubbles to cover the whole sheet. Alternatively you can use several small pots of different coloured bubbles, as in the example below, and print them one at a time on the same page, (or cluster them together and do them all at once) to create multi-colour bubble circles. Another variation is to try layering one colour print with another using bubbles of a different colour.



Write Bubble Poems- Feeling Bubbly

Ask the children to think about and discuss all the good feelings they have when they see, make, or play with bubbles. Record the 'feeling words'. Then discuss all the colours they see in the bubbles and record. Read through the words collected by the children and scribe them on to pieces of paper-

All the feeling words could be written on squares of paper. (one word on one square)

All the colour words could be written on circles of paper. (one word on one square)

Allow the children to work in groups (distanced) to match a circle word with a square word to make a pair.

For example, they might select the word 'happy' and match it to the colour word 'yellow'. Because yellow is a happy colour.

For example, they might select the word 'fun' and match it to the colour word 'red'. Because red is a happy colour.

Begin to build the poem with the group using the pairs they have made.

Set the phrases out using the round and square words and the tagline, 'Bubbles are...'

Bubbles are happy and yellow

Bubbles are fun and red

You can allow the children to create drafts by discussing the order of the words:

Should the round or square words go first? So should the poem be:

Bubbles are yellow and happy,

Bubbles are fun and red

The poems can be as long as the children wish or as is appropriate for their age and ability. Once the children have created enough lines they can decide upon the name of their poem. Then they should just get blowing bubbles for fun!

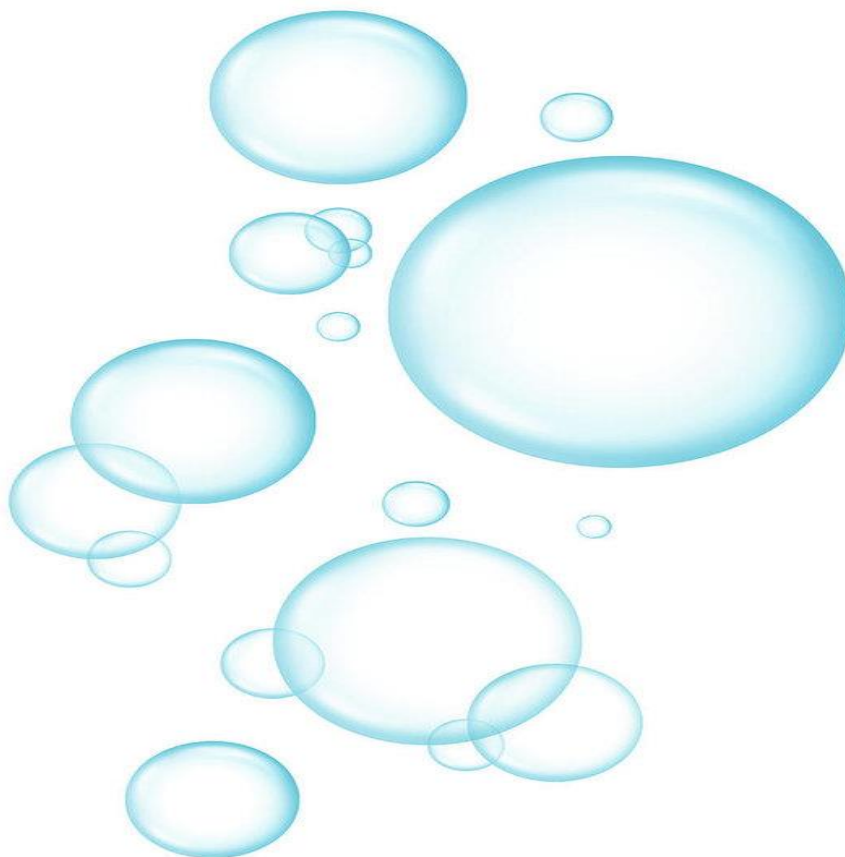
Extension Activities!

The activities presented above related to being safe, healthy, and happy could be repeated using the titles...

We are happy in our bubble!

We are healthy in our bubble!

We are safe in our bubble!

Happy Bubbles Activity

Show the children this picture of bubbles. Ask them to think about a couple of times they were incredibly happy. The children could draw or write their ideas on the bubble image on A4 or A3 paper.

Loopy Love

Practise some short mindful breathing exercises before beginning this activity.

While the children are relaxing and breathing deeply and slowly ask them to visualise all the things they love about home. Then allow them time to draw all the things they thought about on a strip of paper.

Repeat the activity, either straight away or at another time, using the same strips of paper. This time have the children think about all the things they love about school.

They can draw these on the reverse of the strip.

Eventually, the strips can be joined to create a chain which can be displayed around the room!

The Happy Tree. The Sad Tree. Which will it be?

A simple activity to ascertain if a child, group, or whole class are happy with something or not. This can be based on an activity, an event, a whole day or anything of the teachers choosing. The idea is to have two trees which are easily reached by the children, displayed on the wall. One tree has a smiley face on it and the other a sad face. The tree could be hand drawn or printed. Each child is given a leaf and they must place their leaf on the Happy Tree or the Sad Tree. The leaf could be cut from something self-adhesive or from card with blu tac on the reverse. Older children could write their name on their leaf. For new starter children, the teacher could record their selection as they place their leaves on the tree of their choice to show how they are feeling.

Poem Picture Sort – Emotions Activity.

When I'm happy!

When I'm sad!

When things are good!

When I'm in a bad mood!

However, I feel today!

I can just say!

Please remember always share!

There's always someone who'll care!

Share the poem with the children. Give them the emotion pictures to try to match the statements.

For new children, take each pair of statements and give them the matching two pictures so they can decide which emotion is which.

For older children, allow them to try to match the pictures to the statements.

Then the children could draw pictures of themselves to match the statements. They could talk about times they felt these emotions.

Alternatively, the children could make faces to match the emotions and the teacher takes photographs. When these are printed, they can be matched to the statements.

Images for picture sort activity:



People who care images can be generic images downloaded from the internet, or the teacher could provide photographs of the specific people in their own school setting such as school Principal, Classroom Assistants etc.

This will help the younger children identify who is there for them to share with.

This may also be important in the context of the 'bubble' arrangement within the school, to identify who exactly children can speak to.

-End-