St. Paul's CofE VA Primary and Nursery School
Nurturing a Love for Learning and Faith
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Diocese of St. Albans

Dear parents

I am writing in response to some worries from a few parents regarding the use of Mindfulness in our school. We introduced Mindfulness a year ago as part of working towards achieving Healthy Schools Status. One of the criteria we had to meet was to show that we are using mindfulness to build resilience.

With the rise in anxiety, stress and depression in young people and adults, mindfulness has been introduced to schools to aid everyday mental well-being and to support learning. Research has shown that mindfulness practice decreases stress and anxiety, increases attention, builds resilience, improves interpersonal relationships, strengthens compassion, among a host of other benefits.

We use Mindfulness in school to clear children's minds so that they are completely focused on the moment and not thinking and worrying about something that has happened in the past or in the future.
For example, after playtime we might spend a few minutes breathing deeply and picturing something in our heads, such as a spinning sparkly jewel; or blowing a pretend bubble with worries and watching it float away. This helps them children to forget, for example, any problems in the playground and not worrying about what we are doing next. Pupil voice has shown that the children really enjoy this, they understand why they are doing it and we've found that it really calms and focuses them ready for learning.

I just want to reassure you that Mindfulness is not going against our Christian ethos and we would never teach the children something that might offend you or give you reason to feel uncomfortable. Mindfulness is simply a technique, not a religious based activity. It is one part of a variety of ways we encourage the children's well-being, which also focuses greatly on God as a support in our daily lives and well-being.

I hope that this has helped you understand why we are using Mindfulness. Do not hesitate to ask any more questions that you may still have.

Kind Regards

Anna Wilson (PSHE Leader)