

Our School

Welcome to The Bridge SEN School Newsletter

Hello to you all and best wishes for a happy March and Spring. This week is International Women's Week. During the last 100 years in Britain, a great many things have changed: women can vote, equal pay is now a legal right and women participate in politics and public life as never before. And yet, women are still underrepresented in all fields, even in research into autism. We have a long way to go before true gender equality is achieved, and so as ever, the fight continues. At the same time, let us take this week as an opportunity to rejoice in and celebrate the hard work of women throughout the ages, those heroines who have helped make our lives what they are today. Wishing you all a brighter, happier and more equal 2021!

-Edith Eneanya-Bonito – Principal

Fortnightly News: 12th March 2021



Educational

This week the learners have been transitioning back to being at school after a long period of remote learning for many of them. Being back in a communal environment has meant we have been focussing on social skills and reminding everyone of the importance of appropriate behaviour in school and in the wider community. We've also been focussing on sharing activities and group work as well as utilizing reading activities based on St David's Day and International Woman's day for concentration building skills to help reinforce these positive habits.

Autism Advice – Transitioning Back to School

As we all know, changes to routine can be upsetting to people with autism. But change is what this month brings. Not only is spring on the horizon, but learners are returning to school.

After many months of studying at home, people will now have to get used to this very big change, which likely affects autistic learners the most.

But there **are** ways of managing these increased levels of stress and anxiety. This depends on the school and on those working directly with the learners. The single most important thing is to try to understand what the specific learner needs, now that their environment has changed. The [Autism Education Trust](#) has put together a series of 6 videos filled with practical advice. Have a look here and **send us a comment**.

Creative Ideas For St Patrick's Day

You don't need to be Irish to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day.

For **arts and crafts**, you could start by making a [cut out four leaf clover](#) or [shamrock wreath](#). A little more advanced are these [paper potted shamrocks](#), a kind of origami which also involves cutting. This is lots of fun and has a quite beautiful design.

You can listen to traditional Irish music, learn to dance the Irish way or even colour your favorite drink with green food dye. But perhaps the most inviting idea of all is to try **baking** these delicious [Irish Green Cupcakes](#), which are definitely NOT traditional.



The Bridge SEN School runs an **ASD Activity Club** on **Saturdays**, 10am to 4pm. There are lots of activities available for young learners within the ages of 16 to 25 years. These activities range from bowling, snooker, photography club, Art and Crafts, Museum visits, Cooking, Interior Decoration, etc. We receive referrals from members of the public and local authorities; please contact the school on admin@thebridge-school.co.uk or Tel: 02077038587

Culture&Society

International Women's Day

Every year on 8th March, [International Women's Day](#) is celebrated across the globe. It's a day to recognize women's achievement and a call to action, encouraging everyone to stand up for women's rights and gender equality. **Gender equality** means no matter your gender, you have the same rights, privileges, and access to opportunities as everyone else.

Throughout history, women have had to fight for the freedom we enjoy today. 150 years ago, women couldn't **vote, stand in parliament, receive proper medical attention, own property, access fair legal support, get paid the same as men**, and so on.

So how did things change? Someone didn't snap their fingers and then Bam! women had rights. Change came slowly through the efforts of women and men, fighting together for what is right. In the late 19th Century, the fight for women's suffrage gained power. Suffrage means the right to vote. Back then, only men could vote. This meant all the political decisions were taken by men, including those that only affected women. As time passed some women grew very frustrated by the lack of progress and failure to achieve suffrage. One of these women was [Emeline Pankhurst](#), who responded by forming the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903, which encouraged a tougher kind of activism. This led to years of protests, rallies and strikes. Women got arrested, jailed, injured and some even lost their lives.

When the **First World War** began in [1914](#), suffragettes shifted their campaign to encourage women's involvement in the war effort. The devastation of war brought the nation together and attitudes began to change. Women took on responsibilities and jobs that they were previously excluded from, like working as mechanics and drivers. In 1918 the Representation of the People Bill was passed, giving women the right to vote. However, it was only some women, of a certain age and social class. It wasn't until **1928** that all women over **21** could finally vote. The right to vote helped create a fairer society. If everyone has the same rights and freedoms, a society can grow and develop in a way

that benefits everyone. Once women were able to vote, access to greater opportunities, fairer pay, and working rights increased. It wasn't until 1979 that Britain had its first female Prime Minister, 76 years after Emeline Pankhurst first established the Women Social and Political Union.

Equal Opportunities today? We are fortunate to live in a time and place where opportunities are in abundance. Everyone can get an education, access healthcare, get a job and speak their minds. However, there is still work to be done. One way that Gender Inequality plays out in our everyday life is through **stereotypes**. A stereotype is a generalized opinion of a person or group of people. Ever heard someone say: You throw like a girl? or, Boys don't cry? These kinds of phrases exist because of centuries of restrictive ideas about gender that aren't true or fair. People are too unique and complex to fit in a box. Girls and boys can be athletic, fast and strong. And of course, everyone cries. It's normal and healthy to express your feelings, and to be vulnerable. Stereotypes can be really damaging and can prevent you from being yourself and reaching your potential. Today, women are still the minority in parliament, leadership roles and career fields like science and engineering, as well as making less money than men. So, this International Women's Day, think about what you can do in the fight for equality. Everyone benefits when we are all treated equally.

Thinking about world we are in, it is worth remembering that many of our so-called Front-Line Workers are women, which means that more women than men have been exposed to Coronavirus.

Interestingly, fewer women than men are diagnosed with autism. Many women with autism don't receive a diagnosis until they are in their [20s or beyond](#). The reasons for this are not completely understood. One credible explanation is that these tests have been designed with males in mind. Autistic women are at a higher risk of abuse and assault than members of the non-autistic population. It is also believed that, due to social pressure, women are more likely to [camouflage](#) their symptoms.

Going back to our point about [stereotypes](#), given what society typically expects of women – to be shy and quiet, for example, autism can be mistaken for so-called correct female behaviour, and therefore go unnoticed.

So let's join together and celebrate [International Women's Day](#), Week, Year, and Life, and make a change today!

Our Activities Centre



This week in the activity centre, the clients have been working on sensory activities. Each week now we have been focusing on different senses. Last week we focused on visual stimulation and this week we have been working on tactile sensations.

Now the weather is improving, we are planning to begin a garden for the clients to spend more time outside and practice nurturing skills and consistent activity.

Geovannessa Wedderburn - Activity coordinator

The Bridge SEN School admits students all through the academic year between the ages of 14-25. If you are interested in placing a student at the school or obtaining more information, please contact admin@thebridge-school.co.uk

COVID 19

We are in regular contact with the local authorities to ensure that we react appropriately and in a timely fashion to any development. We observe the most up-to-date rules concerning COVID 19.

- Social Distancing measures are in place
 - Regularly handwashing is mandatory
 - NHS Track and Trace QR Code are signposted around the school.
 - Face masks are worn throughout classes
- Our Full Policy is available on our Website**

THE BRIDGE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

EDUCATION

EASTER HOLIDAY – 5th April

AUTISM AWARENESS WEEK - 29th March – 4th April

Please visit our website: www.thebridge-school.co.uk for full Academic Year 2020/2021 Calendar)

ACTIVITY CENTRE

Our activity centre in Thornton Heath is open throughout the year, Except on Bank Holidays.

Drawings/Pictures of the month



LEGE

LONDON

Liral Veget College is the sister company of Right Support Management, under which The Bridge SEN School is now operating. We offer a variety of **English language courses**, **After School Club** and **Life in the UK Preparation classes**. Our current opening times are 8.30am – 18.00pm Monday to Friday and 10.00am - 14.00pm on Saturdays. **Academic Manager** - James Nuttall.



QUOTE OF THE FORTNIGHT

'We have to free half of the human race, the women, so that they to help to free the other half.'

— Emeline Pankhurst, Political Activist

We publish our newsletter fortnightly. Copies will be emailed to you and made available on the school's website (<https://www.thebridge-school.co.uk/our-school>). Thank you for your feedback. If you would like to contribute to our newsletter, please email me at admin@thebridge-school.co.uk - Maryanne Orakah.