

Our School

Welcome to The Bridge SEN School Newsletter

Fortnightly News: 26th March 2021

21st March was the International Day for the End of Racial Discrimination. Despite the restrictions placed on public gatherings, it is heartening to see people, especially young people, out in the street, protesting, uniting and engaging in the struggle for racial equality. Covid itself has exposed dire inequalities in British society; the BAME community, in fact, is at disproportionate risk of Covid infection. We salute those, both young and old, who soldier on for justice in the name of equality for all. Meanwhile, we at the Bridge continue our commitment to a fair and equal work environment, one which benefits both learners and staff alike, and one which seeks to nurture and celebrate the uniqueness and creativity of all.

Wishing you all a very equal 2021!

-Edith Eneanya-Bonito – Principal



Educational

This week the learners have been learning about equality avoiding discrimination. They have been doing activities to identify differences between us but that these should not cause us to treat one another differently or unfairly. We have also been celebrating British festival and events by doing activities related to Easter and St Patrick. By participating in group activities they increase their awareness of the need for community and working together.

Creative Ideas For Easter

Easter is a happy time and always fun for children, and there are lots of activities you can do that will stimulate their senses and their imaginations. In case you're running low on ideas, here are some to get you started.

First, an Easter Sensory Bin. This is an exciting idea which can be filled with surprises that encourage both motor-neuron and recognition skills.

Take a tray or box and fill it with shredded grass paper to make a kind of nest. Inside this nest you can place all kinds of treats for your children to discover. Sweet treats as well as toy animals are good ideas, and you can even make foam eggs which

have your children's names on them.

Alternatively, you might enjoy baking and there are certainly plenty of Easter related recipes you can choose from. To start you off, here is one for [Bunny Cupcakes](#).

While the recipe itself is fairly simply, these cupcakes can be more than just a baking activity. First, you can sketch out the cakes and especially the rabbits so that your child has an idea of the design and look of the finished thing.

Second, moulding the shape of the rabbit based on the drawing and then decorating the top of the cake is an excellent way for your child to practice hand-to-eye coordination.

Activities like this are both fun and educational and can help to give your child a real sense of satisfaction and happiness. For more ideas, take a look [here](#).



Health&Wellbeing

Healthy Gut, Protected Brain

We learn more and more about how the brain and body are linked all the time. Science shows that meditation takes stress out of the body and how sleep improves concentration. But what is less known is just how much what we eat affects how we think. That was, until recently.

New research by neuropathologist Matthew Anderson has shown that in certain kinds of autism inflammatory issues often appear in the brain, particularly in the area known as the blood-brain barrier. This is a kind of membrane which coats and protects the brain from infection.

The conclusions drawn so far are that people with a higher rate of inflammation also tend to have poorer gut health. The most significant factor in this area is thought to be gut biodiversity.

The thinking here is that a decrease in gut biodiversity (which is all the microbes and bacteria that our guts require to be healthy) leads to a weakened immune system, the brain therefore becomes more vulnerable to infection, which in turn will lead to cognitive impairment.

Immunoglobins which protect the blood-brain barrier were shown to begin life in the gut and then migrate to the brain. Experiments with mice showed that by depriving mice of gut biodiversity, not only did their immune system weaken, but also they were vulnerable to a higher rate of brain infection.

Interestingly, one of the defects of antibiotics is that they tend to decrease gut biodiversity by destroying its bacteria. Mice that were given antibiotics were at greater risk of gut and brain infection than those who were not. What's more, the trajectory of the developing brain itself was liable to be affected and therefore associated with a number of disorders.

The overall health of these mice, then, both in physical and mental terms, depended on a highly complex relationship between gut and brain, and the prevalence

of microbes was related in no small way to diet.

Anderson's research suggests overall that gut biodiversity plays a crucial role in cognitive health by protecting the brain from infection, blocking harmful pathogens from the brain. Despite these findings, it is important to bear in mind that these studies were conducted not on human beings, but on mice, and that further studies are necessary before conclusions can be taken as definitive fact.

Nonetheless, the link between diet, overall health and mental health is not a controversial subject and findings like these will likely add clarity to an ongoing debate. Furthermore, a better understanding of the dynamic between gut health and cognitive development may well have important implications for the future of autism studies, treatment and management.

For a fuller article on the link between gut biodiversity and autism, you might want to take a look at the most recent edition of [Autism Eye](#).

For more information about general gut health and diet, have a look at this entertaining TED Talk [animation](#), as well as this [video](#) about kinds of food and overall brain health.

Happy eating!



Our Activities Centre



This week in the activity centre, the clients have been making a start on their own garden and vegetable patch. Gardening allows autistic learners the opportunity for sensory exploration in a safe environment and creates opportunities for building consistency, responsibility and a sense of community. Being able to use their own vegetables for cooking gives the clients a powerful sense of accomplishment, too.

- Geovanessa – 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 or Tel:02077038587

THE BRIDGE ACADEMIC CALENDAR

EDUCATION

EASTER HOLIDAY – 2nd April – 16th 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

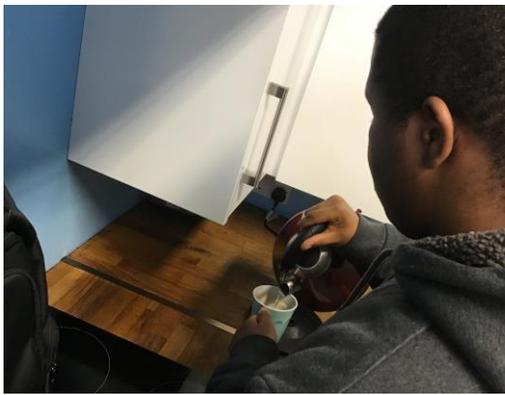
Our activity centre in Thornton Heath is open throughout the year, Except on Bank Holidays.

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**

Drawings/Pictures of the month



OPENING TIMES AT LIRAL VEGET COLLEGE 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

'Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.'

[Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)