

Our School

Welcome to The Bridge SEN School Newsletter

Fortnightly News: 08th October 2021

Controversy arose in the SEN community this week with the regrettable comments of Solihull's local counsellor. While it is not for us to discuss these comments directly, they do nonetheless highlight areas of ignorance which accompany the issue of autism. As part of the SEN community, we at The Bridge wish to express our solidarity with families who in some form or other live with autism. It is categorically not our view that autism is the result of parental negligence, and we recognise the hard work and love which such families dedicate to their children. But rather than focus on the negative comments of individuals, we prefer instead to foster and celebrate a culture of compassion, understanding and empathy. May all of you enjoy a prosperous autumn. **-Edith**

Eneanya-Bonito – Principal



Educational

This week the learners are doing activities to emphasise the importance of respecting and tolerating others. They are focusing on the importance of respecting personal space and boundaries as well as recognising that different people dress and act differently but everyone is equal. They are also learning about empathy, and recognising how behaviour affects people's feelings.

ADHD Awareness Month

October is ADHD awareness month. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD is a condition that affects people's behavior. It can make people seem restless, have trouble concentrating and act on impulse. It is often noticed at an early age and may improve with age but those with the condition can continue to experience problems all their life. It is a condition often associated with autism as the two were so commonly diagnoses together they have occasionally been believed to be the same thing. However, the two are distinctly separate conditions. The awareness month is being celebrated around the world through art and testimonials about living with ADHD.

Find out more about ADHD at the ADHD Foundation:

<https://adhd.foundation.org.uk/>

Hate Crime Prevention Week

The 9th to the 16th of October is National Hate Crime Awareness Week. A Hate Crime of course being any offence against a person motivated by hostility towards their race, religion, sexuality, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Young people with autism or learning disabilities are more at risk of abuse from other people and crucially may struggle to explain that they are victims of this abuse. With so many myths and negative stereotypes still existing around people with autism and learning difficulties it is very important people of all ages are educated about tolerance, respect, and challenging these negative perceptions. Embedded throughout the Bridge SEN school's curriculum is the importance of treating others with respect and tolerance.

We also include lessons on recognizing when inappropriate or abuse behavior occurs and who can be contacted to stop it.



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

Activities & Advice

Parenting is Not to Blame for Autism

On the 24th of September a Solihull councilor stepped down from a committee after her comments during a meeting suggested that parenting skills were partly to blame for autistic cases. Her comments caused outrage in the SEND community and caused them to question the professionalism and credibility of the council. Families of autistic people often face many obstacles and so harmful myths spread by those in a position of authority can only exacerbate these difficulties. The councilor has since apologized and left her position after affirming that autism is indeed a real condition and that she had no intention of blaming parents. Sadly such ignorance is not a new issue and many people often attribute autism to a range of sources including poor parenting.

In some of the earliest studies of autism the researchers noted the lack of warmth among the parents of autistic children. This lack of perceived warmth led to the coining of the phrase 'refrigerator mothers' or 'refrigerator parents', parents being blamed for causing their children's atypical behavior through lack of affection. Although the theory gained popularity in the 1950s, by the end of 1960s it was being challenged and even the key original researcher, [Leo Kanner](#) officially denounced the theory. However, despite the amount of opposition to the theory it has persisted even to this day as the unfortunate comments made by the Solihull councilor demonstrate.

Such a broad, complex neurological condition such as autism is very challenging when it comes to diagnosis. The fact that there is no biological test for autism means that diagnosis

must be verified through intensive behavior therapy. There is also currently no clearly agreed definite cause.

According to the National Autistic Society, there is evidence that autism can be caused by a variety of physical factors that affect brain development, but not due to emotional deprivation or the way that a person has been brought up. Parenting is crucial to the support of autism as early intervention is vital to the proper support of any individual. Parenting styles obviously vary and can certainly help a child negotiate the world but there is no evidence that it is the root of autistic behavior.

The full report about the Solihull councilor in this BBC article: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-58678201>

MENU for week 11th October 2021*

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>
Meatballs with roasted peppers and tomato sauce	Chicken and kale quinoa with roasted tomatoes	Pea, ham and parmesan fusilli.	Chicken breast with Roasted potatoes	Home-made pizza chilli, basil and prosciutto
Parmesan mashed potatoes	Green Salad and Tomatoes	Green Salad and Tomatoes	Caramelised carrots	Rocket and parmesan salad
Chocolate, ginger and pear tart	Berries, mango and fresh Greek yoghurt	Plum cake with Greek yoghurt	Fresh Fruit	Grapes and Greek yoghurt

*In subsequent issues we will publish the upcoming menus for the weeks ahead.

Disability Represented Well in Film and TV

In 2018 BuzzFeed News wrote an [article](#) about how TV depictions of disability have greatly improved, mentioning ABC's [Speechless](#). However, in 2019 The Huffington post published an [article](#) lamenting the lack of positive or accurate representation of disabled people on film. Thankfully, things do seem to have moved in a positive direction and now there are a growing number of films and TV shows demonstrating positive examples of disability. [NRS Healthcare](#) recommend these:

The Silent Child **Special** **Unrest**
Notes on Blindness **Atypical**

Our Activities Centre



This week in the activity centre the clients are getting ready for the winter and for Halloween. They are harvesting the vegetables they've grown and practicing cooking. As more and more sites open up they are exploring different sites to visit, including this trampoline park.

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.

- Weekly tests are carried out on learners and staff
 - 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

- Half term 25th – 29th October
- End of term 17th December

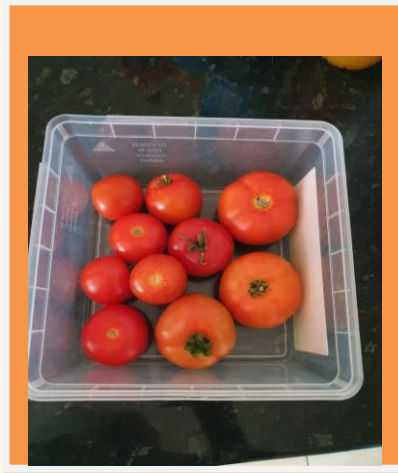
Beginning of New Academic Term 1st January

Please visit our website: www.thebridge-school.co.uk for full Academic Year 2021/2022 Calendar)

ACTIVITY CENTRE

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

Drawings/Pictures of the month



OPENING TIMES AT LIRAL VEGET COLLEGE LONDON

Liral Veget College Limited 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

“Wisely, and slow. They stumble that run fast”

– William Shakespeare

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.