



# SPRINGWELL SKY

Where learning matters for everyone

Issue 20 – December 2017



## THE HEADLINE

To all our parents, carers and friends of Springwell, it is a pleasure to share all the fantastic magical moments of what has been a busy term with you before we break up for the Christmas holidays.

The autumn term commenced with the breaking of sad news to the Springwell Learning Community, that Josie Thirkell (latterly Teasdale), O.B.E founder and first Head teacher of Springwell passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> August. Josie was the inspiration and leader behind the creation of Springwell and her legacy remains in the wonderful child centred building and grounds. Her belief that inspiring a love of learning in children through immersive experiences and the creative arts and relationships is essential to engage them in second chance learning continues to influence how we work. Josie will be sorely missed but our aim is to honour Josie's vision and continue to make Springwell a happy school where children and young people thrive. It is also with regret that we share further sad news that Mick Tinch, a longstanding governor of 14 years and supporter of the school also passed away suddenly on 23<sup>rd</sup> October. Mick, was our safeguarding link governor and a passionate advocate for ensuring that the children and young people at Springwell are provided with the highest quality education to enable them to achieve their best outcomes. We will miss his humour, commitment and invaluable input to our governing body.



On a more positive note, before we close for the Christmas break it is important to reflect on all the wonderful achievements that have taken place across the organisation that are shared in the newsletter.

There has been a strong focus on spreading a community of kindness across the organisation and beyond. In October Mrs. Britton announced that the grand total for our fundraising for the Lincs2Nepal charity to support the building of a new classroom was £876! Thank you to all parents and carers for your support with our fundraising. During the first term our children and young people have also made a positive contribution to the local community. During Kindness week pupils in Year 7 collected food for a food bank to support our local community and Year 10 pupils have just delivered mince pies and biscuits to Valley Park Care Home. The Red Cross and Refugee Council held workshops across the Special and Alternative Academies to raise awareness of the experiences of refugees coming to the local area. The focus of the fundraising at Springwell will be on local charities including for local refugees and Sarah Sonne from the Refugee Council will be providing activities and information at Family Learning Day.

During the autumn term we have welcomed 32 pupils into the Alternative Academy and 4 pupils into the Special Academy and we hope that all our new pupils and parents and carers enjoy being part of the Springwell Family.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and wish you a merry Christmas and peace and joy in the New Year 2018 and to finish with the ever-resounding words of our late Headteacher Josie Thirkell, 'Onwards and upwards!'



### Key dates for the diary – Spring Term 2018

- Academies open for Spring Term: **Monday 8th January**
- INSET Day – Academies closed to pupils: **Friday 26th January**
- Academies close for half term: **Friday 9th February**
- Both academies re-open: **Monday 19th February**
- INSET Day – Academies closed to pupils: **Friday 9th March**
- Family Learning Day:
- Academies close for Easter: **Friday 23rd March**
- Academies open for Summer Term: **Monday 9th April**



# Keeping our students safe online

In a previous newsletter, we discussed how a few years ago our biggest concern with regard to pupil safeguarding was ensuring that all staff and visitors to Springwell had a clear criminal record check. Times have moved on so quickly that we are finding ourselves dealing with issues that didn't exist in the public eye just 4 or 5 years ago. Yes we still ensure every staff member and unsupervised visitor has a full and enhanced debarring check, but we also go much further.

Although we run regular assemblies reinforcing the important message of internet safety, post guidance on the school website and remind our pupils constantly about cyber bullying, sexting and other key issues, sadly it still occurs. Social networking sites are blocked in school, preventing pupils from using Facebook etc. to intimidate each other, but we still deal with cases every week and they all have one thing in common. Messages are sent in haste from home in the evening, having nothing to do with school and yet we pick up the fall out the following morning. If you get chance over the Christmas break to speak to your child about cyber bullying, please do so, or better still keep a close check, for their own sakes, on their social media accounts. Check their internet history and their apps; we have dealt with issues involving Snapchat, What's app, Instagram and a range of other social media.

Sexting is the sending of inappropriate images and messages via the Internet and this is a growing national issue and we are not exempt from the problem. The legalities of this are clear and they are reinforced with the older pupils regularly. Coercing and indeed bullying a person into sending inappropriate pictures is illegal. Having or sharing inappropriate images of a child in any form is also illegal. Pupils still see it as a bit of fun... until the relationship turns sour and recriminations creep in. Again if you have the opportunity to discuss this with your child (specifically our secondary aged students) it would certainly help us to reinforce the issue. Our stance is clear... we will invariably involve the police.



Every member of staff has undergone a 2 hour Home Office programme regarding the national PREVENT programme to identify extremist behaviour and how to report it. With recent events in Rotherham being both fresh in our minds and geographically very close to us, we have also taken the opportunity to discuss the risks of Child Sexual Exploitation with our youngsters, highlighting safe practice and how to avoid potential situations such as grooming.

All of the issues outlined above are revisited with the pupils regularly and themed days refresh the dangers and discuss any recent cases that may be appropriate. Your support and input on any of these matters is much appreciated.

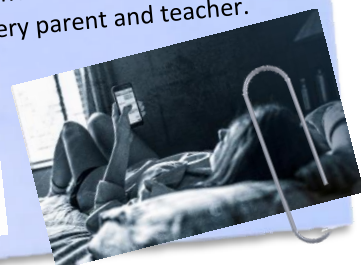
**STAY SAFE WITH TECH THIS CHRISTMAS!**

- IPADS**  
Be careful what you download  
Play games appropriate for your age  
Ask to set up agreed parental controls with you to help
- CONSOLES**  
Take close care who you play with online!  
Try to play games that are suitable for your age.  
Make sure to take it in turns playing games with others
- PHONES**  
Ask permission before taking a photo or video  
Do not show off your phone in public  
Make sure you keep enough credit to make calls
- LAPTOPS**  
Make sure to take care with what information you share!  
Be careful about online games - are they appropriate?  
Make sure you know who you are talking with
- SOCIAL MEDIA**  
Use social media appropriate to your age  
Use a safe profile picture  
If you are pressured into sharing something you aren't comfortable with ask an adult
- FAKE NEWS**  
Don't believe everything you read online, including email  
If unsure, ask a trusted friend or adult  
Don't share stories that aren't true

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Brought to you by Mark Anderson @ICTEvangelist  
ICT EVANGELIST

**'Until you see someone go through this, you can't connect with it.'**

Please scan the QR code to read the online safety special, describing the harrowing experiences that officers face every day in the fight to bring online offenders to justice. A must read for every parent and teacher.





## A note from the Chair – Ben Finley

My first term as Chair of Governors has gone quickly. There have been some really good experiences and some sadder ones. The passing of Mick Tinch was a sad event for all who knew him. Mick had been a governor for many years and had agreed to act as Vice Chair a few weeks before he passed away. At our most recent meeting his absence was felt and we talked about our experiences of a colleague whose values drove his commitment to young people generally and the young people at Springwell in particular. He will be missed.

During my first term, I have been able to visit almost all the sites. During my visits I was really impressed with the calm and purposeful environments created for young people. I was really pleased to see some fantastic examples of care for young people, challenging and stimulating lessons and evidence of the relationships built with young people by you, that are the engines of their success.

I was also able to attend some training on trauma and support for young people. It was great to see you all contributing and great to have the opportunity to sit in on some excellent training. Understanding trauma and learning about how it affects our young people is going to be a really important part of how we learn and develop in the future.



Mick Tinch

**Thank you for your ongoing commitment. Have a great Christmas Break and New Year and I look forward to seeing you next term.**



**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
SPREAD  
KINDNESS**

*Springwell Kindness Week 2017*  
**NOVEMBER**  
**13TH - 17TH**



### Understanding QR Codes

You will have noticed a number of these strange looking square codes throughout this newsletter. They are QR codes and can be scanned to get information. They can contain images, links to websites, sounds, numbers and messages.

#### How do QR codes work?

You can scan the QR code on a device, like a smartphone or tablet. You need to make sure you have a QR reader, like Qrafter, for free from the app store. The QR codes within this newsletter will direct you to further information or even videos that the pupils have produced.

1. Open the QR reader
2. Point it at the QR code
3. Scan it and the link will open. Easy!

## Our amazing upstairs and downstairs brain

Sometimes our brains can become overwhelmed with feelings of fear, sadness or anger, and when this happens, it's confusing – especially to children. So giving children ways to make sense of what's happening in their brain is important. It's also helpful for children to have a vocabulary for their emotional experiences that others can understand.

Learning neuroscience is certainly not on every parent's agenda. But what if a little insight into your child's brain could diffuse at least one angry outburst a day?

Dr. Dan Siegel, the author of *The Whole Brain Child*, developed a simple demonstration to help children and parents what's going on inside their head and how we can respond effectively.

Make a fist with your thumb tucked inside your fingers. This is a model of your brain; your fist is the brain and your wrist and forearm are the spinal cord.

Your thumb, tucked in the middle of your fist, is the midbrain. This is where our emotions and memories are created and processed, as well as where the fight-or-flight reflex is triggered. The midbrain is our "emotional brain."



The back of your hand and fingers, encasing everything, is the cerebral cortex. This is where higher functioning occurs. This part of our brain allows us to think logically, act with kindness and empathy, and it houses our reasoning and problem-solving abilities. The cortex is our "rational brain."



Take another look at your brain-fist. See where your fingernails are? This is the logic and reasoning part of the brain that kicks into gear when we have a problem to solve. But sometimes the emotional brain (thumb) and the rational brain (fingers) don't communicate so well. The emotions of the midbrain are simply too overwhelming, our fight-or-flight reflex triggers, and we "flip our lids." Now make all four of your fingers stand straight up. Flip.

See your fingertips now? See how far away from the midbrain they are? When we "flip our lids," our rational brains have a very poor connection with our emotional brains. Our feelings are intense, and we're not able to access the logical, problem-solving part of our brain. In order to restore our rational brain to its coherent state, we need to calm our anger and ease our fears (close fingers over thumb again).

Of course, our brains don't actually change shape like this, but this simple demonstration is a valuable tool in understanding how they function during emotionally charged situations. Both children and adults experience flipped lids. But as the human brain isn't fully mature (all parts communicating effectively) until the mid-twenties, children flip their lids much more often. They need a lot more help "re-connecting" the rational brain with the emotional brain—that is, calming down—and learning how to respond to strong emotions.

So, what can parents do when emotions run high?

**Hugs, Positive Time Out, Focus on Solutions, Apologise.**

So, flipping your lid, while not ideal or sometimes even avoidable, does provide an opportunity to model and teach some valuable skills to our children: cooling off, self-control, problem solving, and, probably most importantly, emotional recovery and reconnection after a hurtful situation.



Scan the QR code to see Dan Siegel's scientific insight into why we 'flip our lids!'

## The Refugee Council visit Springwell

On Monday the 27<sup>th</sup> November pupils at Springwell had a fantastic learning experience from Sarah and her team. They learnt a lot about the difficulties refugees have when they arrive in our country. They talked to a refugee in person and they watched clips of the sordid journey children their age who are refugees have to endure. The pupils then wrote a message of support to local refugees.

They now understand the difference between a refugee and an asylum seeker and they are beginning to develop empathy for these people. Thank you very much to Sarah and her team for a well-planned and delivered workshop.



SUPPORTING AND EMPOWERING REFUGEES



## Workshops with Jas Singh

random acts of Kindness

As part of Kindness week in Springwell Jas Singh came in to work with KS3 pupils. He talked about how we are all unique but how we can all come together as part of a community. Pupils made a communitree as a class. The trunk represents the things that bring us all together, the branches represent our individuality and each leaf is what we think we need in order to be a community.

Pupils worked well together and KS3 had another successful Kindness week.



## Art at Springwell

This term all our pupils have taken part in an international festival of drawing called, "The Big Draw". This has resulted in a short animated clip of the children's work which will be shown at the Christmas concert.

We had fun drawing in all kinds of ways. Upside down, with our pens on sticks and even without looking. Here is an example.





## Spanish Visit

Six months ago I 'accidentally' agreed to let a visiting group of touring Spanish teachers come to Barnsley and visit Springwell. Then, in October, after six months had passed, the email reminder arrives and 40, highly enthusiastic, Spanish teachers and head teachers are arriving in a week.

*Note to self .... Be careful not to speak too fast when working with a translator.*

After using Google Translate to cleverly turn my power point presentation into Spanish we were underway. Feeling a bit like Del Boy, practising his French phrases, I set about welcoming our visitors to Springwell. Four hours later, after touring the school, visiting classrooms, talking to kids and been blown away by Miss Watts and Mr Ross's presentations, they left in awe of what happens here at Springwell Barnsley.

It was a delight to host such an interested and passionate group of educationalists. They were fascinated and amazed by the work we do. The children were amazing and allowed, without distraction, groups of visitors into the classrooms.

As always, the staff were a credit. Intimacy, warmth, banter and trust were evident everywhere. It was even noted that the calming influence of the school actually calmed our visitors down as they enjoyed their Barnsley tapas lunch.



**TEAM SPRINGWELL CONQUER THE THREE PEAKS**  
**STOP MEN DYING TOO YOUNG**  
JOIN THE MOVEMENT FOR MEN'S HEALTH  
[MOVEMBER.COM](http://MOVEMBER.COM)

Did you know that somewhere, every minute around the world a man takes his own life? One in eight men in the UK have experienced a mental health problem, with three out of four suicides being men. This can't continue! On November 18th, a team from Springwell raised awareness for Movember Suicide Prevention by climbing the Three Peaks in one day. They walked 25 miles, climbed 5000 feet and managed to complete the challenge in 12 hours, some of it in complete darkness! The message: **Talk, Ask, Listen, Encourage Action and Check in!**

A massive £1200 was raised for both Suicide Prevention and another great cause close to our hearts, the leukaemia ward at Sheffield Hallamshire Hospital. Well done lads, everybody at Springwell is very proud of you!





## Toys

This half term all the pupils in primary have been working on the topic of toys. We have followed the journey of a little teddy bear called Patch who was lost in Barnsley a few weeks ago. All the children became detectives and followed a series of clues that arrived in school each week. The first clue was delivered in a large cardboard box. Inside was a letter in a foreign language, a series of large picture postcards and some Brie (cheese), garlic and a baguette. The letter was translated by Mrs Britton from French into English. The pupils soon deduced that the teddy was in France and started to research all about the country.

As part of their learning this half term about toys; the pupils watched a short play where a rag doll and a robot come alive in a little girl's playroom and start to argue about which toy is more important. The toys were acted superbly by Miss Watts and Mrs Witherspoon. Following this, the pupils asked the toys lots of questions about their life with the little girl and about their feelings of rejection and jealousy. This helped develop their ability to express their own feelings and understand the feelings of others.

# TOY STORY



## Archery masterclass with Danielle Brown.

Pupils and staff at Springwell were privileged to spend the day with Paralympic gold medallist and world archery champion Danielle Brown. Master classes were delivered to groups throughout the day in which Danielle shared her knowledge and experience in the sport. Archery is a favourite at Springwell and is on offer to pupils as an extracurricular activity. Pupils that attend are currently in training for their first competition that will be hosted at Springwell in the new year.



## Space, the final frontier!

Year 7 were up for a treat during their topic about space when they visited the Bradford Museum of Photography in October. In the foyer of the museum was the pod in which Tim Peake- the famous British astronaut- came back to Earth. They had a look at the pod, the parachute still attached to the pod and they enjoyed some "space" activities throughout the different levels of the museum. It was a great day enjoyed by all!



## Christmas Shoe Box Appeal in Year 11

This half term, year 11 decided to raise money in order to create four shoe boxes for the 2017 Christmas shoe box appeal. As a class, we discussed what age groups we would like the shoe boxes to be for and brain stormed ideas for how the money could be raised. A class vote confirmed that we would bake buns and cakes in order to sell to staff and also donate an amount from the year 11 reward budget. Within a few days, thanks to generous donations, we raised a fantastic £65! The pupils all contributed to the baking, wrapping of the boxes, making xmas cards and packing the boxes.

A fantastic gesture for a great cause.



**KS3 @ Holy Trinity** have had a fantastic half term. We welcomed visitors from the Barnsley regiment of the British Reserve Army, they shared with us life in the army, the highs and lows – they didn't put us off even with the tales from tours of duty in Afghanistan and the ration packs! Their visit inspired us to write letters and diaries and develop pencil sketching skills to produce stunning artwork of war artefacts. We have linked our cooking to the type of traditional deserts served in Germany. The apple pancakes were a favourite for many, as were the jam buns!



A key aspect of the learning at Holy Trinity has been working collaboratively with others and how we fit into the global community. We have looked at Charities, their work and their impact, rights and responsibilities and how these affect us and other young people around the world and importantly how we are all part of a community.

Mrs Witherspoon-Smith has worked hard to teach us new skills, knitting and cross stitch have both been a success!



Within our Learning Community we keep as up to date as we can with technology. Below is our Twitter feed for if you wish to follow us to see what we are 'tweeting' about...

@springwellLC



The whole of Primary went to the pantomime on 14<sup>th</sup> December to see Aladdin at the Academy Theatre in Birdwell. The show was fantastic and the pupils had a great time!

Some of them even got to meet the actors after the show!





## Valley Park Care Home

On Monday 11th December, staff and four students visited Valley Park Care Home in Wombwell to deliver mince pies and shortbread biscuits to the residents. Year 10 enjoyed making the pies and biscuits during their Food Technology lesson, and worked together to decorate the biscuits with a festive silver spray. Kiera and Emma served the residents with the tasty treats. They were very grateful that our students had taken the time to bake for them and welcomed their company. We all chatted and wished everyone there a "Merry Christmas!"

*Kindness*



**ATTEND TODAY**  
**ACHIEVE TOMORROW**

At Springwell, we continue to strive for excellent attendance and celebrate those who attend regularly.

At the end of term each child who has achieved 100% attendance receives a high street voucher for their efforts. We are grateful to Tesco who have donated chocolate reindeers to give to the 100% attenders as additional awards.

We would love to distribute more vouchers next term so encourage your child to come to school every day to give them the very best chance of success. Thanks for your continued support!

**TESCO**

# THANK YOU

First of all, thank you to anyone who made a cake for the coffee morning. We raised £156 on the 28<sup>th</sup> September for the World's Biggest Coffee Morning for Macmillan Cancer Support. A big well done and thank you goes to everyone who got involved.



**'LAUGHING,  
YUMMY CUPCAKES,  
GETTING TOGETHER...  
AND HELPING FAMILIES  
AFFECTED BY CANCER.'**

**Save the Children  
CHRISTMAS  
JUMPER DAY**

**WE'RE MAKING  
THE WORLD  
BETTER WITH  
A SWEATER**



On Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December we all donned our daftest, most wonderful woollies to help raise funds for Save the Children.

It was a great day with plenty of smiles and we managed to raise £92.



**THE ROYAL BRITISH  
LEGION**

As ever, we are proud to have contributed to this year's poppy appeal. As a learning community we raised £120. Thank you to all that helped. Without the donations, The Royal British Legion would be unable to continue their vital welfare and benevolent work. Scan the QR code to view our Armistice Day video.



*Merry* CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY *New Year*