

## Learning Mentor News Letter

As most of you know by now, my name is Marina Cawley. I am the Learning Mentor here and I have been at Stanford School for about 3 years.

Before I came to Stanford, I worked for the Educational Psychology Service and before that, I was a Behaviour Mentor at a senior school. I have worked with the Education Welfare Service and the Behaviour Support Service in another county and thoroughly enjoyed all roles and hope I made a small difference to the lives of some of the children I have crossed paths with. I love it when we go out and the children recognise me; they seem so surprised that I live outside school!

My role as a Learning Mentor is wide and varied, dealing specifically with the nurture programme and Safeguarding, but my role also includes in-house training, liaising with outside agencies, such as Social Services, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), The Education Welfare Service (EWO), School Transport and School Nurses, as well as parent liaison. I am also involved in the Healthy Places Award scheme.

We run a Breakfast Club 3 times a week. We vary the menu from a hot winter menu of beans or spaghetti on toast and hot chocolate to a refreshing summer menu which includes fruit smoothies. The children also have 10 – 15 minutes of exercises in the form of a Wake Up, Shake Up programme.



The children are free to drop in and speak with me at any break or lunch time to discuss issues they may have. This could range from support with friendships, ways to get to school on time or bereavement. I also make referrals to outside agencies to bring in extra support for children if we or parents have specific concerns.

We have regular visits from outside agencies such as the local PCSO, and the NSPCC to make children more aware of their own safety in terms of 'stranger danger', e-safety and generally keeping themselves safe in a number of ways.

We have held successful workshops run by the Food for Fitness Team. Invited parents attended an after school cookery event with their children whereby they learnt about healthy lunch boxes and tasty alternatives to tempt the children with. There was high praise and positive feedback for the team who may well return for a second round. The children said: - "Everything was great. My favourite bit was cooking with my Nanna" (Leon). "My favourite bit was squishing all the meat into balls" (Jayden). "I liked the part where the food was cooking in the oven because I could smell them and they all smelt amazing" (Brook).



Getting back to parent liaison, it has been decided to set up a parent drop in surgery once a week, whereby parents or carers who wish to discuss the behaviour or emotional welfare of their children, will be able to do so in confidence. We can then signpost to other agencies or refer back to the class teacher for further advice. The time and date suggested is Friday afternoon between 1:00 – 3:00pm. This is with immediate effect. The school nurse will also be available, but details of this are to be confirmed.

We hope you find this a useful resource as we aim to ensure positive links with parents and the wider community.

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