



29th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

With our recent WAS (Wellbeing Award for Schools) accreditation, we are keen to participate next week in **Children's Mental Health Week** when many children around the country will be learning about promoting positive mental health and ways in which to keep their own minds fit and well. As you are already aware this is really important to us at St. Mary's. The national theme for this year's week is to '**express yourself**' and children will be encouraged to celebrate the many things that make them who they are.

In the midst of the current COVID pandemic, we recognise that not only are our children more susceptible to the anxiety associated with mental health illness right now, but so are our families and the wider community too. Of course, there is no magic wand to resolve the issues we are all facing at the moment but we do know that bringing people together in families, local and wider communities can help us all to feel that we are not alone. We saw this in the first lockdown with the 8pm clapping on a Thursday and the rainbows placed in windows – both of which helped to bring about a sense of community spirit and understanding that we are all in this together.

To recreate such spirit and perhaps to add a small sense of hope for those people living amongst us who may be struggling right now, we would like to invite you, along with as many members of the local community as possible, to join us in using the theme of the week to connect the community. Perhaps you could ask family and friends? You can do this by filling in a puzzle piece (see picture below) with words, drawings or colours that represent you and/or your family. This is to symbolise that we all have a part to play during this difficult time, to recognise the value of that part and the bigger picture that we are all part of.

Once your puzzle piece is completed, please put it into your window during Children's Mental Health Week so our school family and members of the wider community can see it when they get out and about for their daily exercise. You can also share a photo to join the wider campaign by emailing your photo to help@picture-news.co.uk by Friday 5th February. You can find out more about this by watching this video: <https://vimeo.com/499634422> and remember to use the hashtag **#partofthepuzzle** on all associated social media posts.

We hope you are able to find the time to join us and look forward to spotting puzzle pieces in windows across the community.

Stay safe and well everyone,
With best wishes from Mr Bond and all at St Mary's

