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Dear Parents,

I'm so pleased that all of the children seem to be so settled here already, the September wobbles seem a thing of the past and Monkton is full of fun and laughter again. I do appreciate that it is still difficult for parents as you can't come in and see all of the fun, and I hope you have enjoyed receiving the photos by email. If you are not receiving photos or emails please send me an email (address above) and I will add you on the parents list and the appropriate room list.

I hope you have also received my email about 'Parents Evening' – our November Parents Evening is usually more of a social event for parents to meet one another and the staff in the room, have a glass of wine and some nibbles, and a brief chat with their child's keyworker. As this will not be possible this year, we will put together a pack for each child with their Baseline Assessment / recent observation, and some information about how they are settling and what their next steps are. We will ask you to send back some comments and if any issues are raised your keyworker can then arrange a telephone call to discuss further if necessary. If you feel that you would prefer a face to face meeting, please let me know by email urgently, and we will then get back to you with appointment details for a socially distanced face to face meeting. I know that a few people have mentioned zoom as an alternative – I'm afraid this isn't possible as we only have a couple of iPads, 26 staff and 140 children so it's just not feasible to do it with such limited technology. We also have very temperamental WiFi which doesn't help!

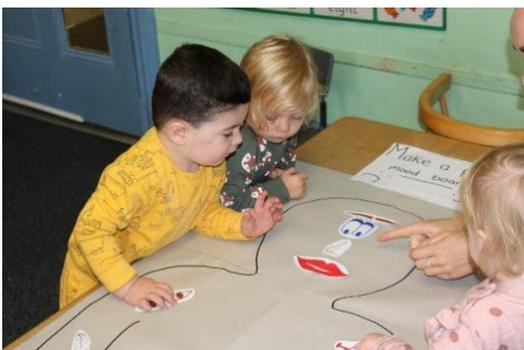
I also wanted to thank you all for your ongoing compliance with Covid-19 precautions. I know we are all becoming a little weary with it all, but we must continue to insist that face coverings are worn at pick up and drop off. If your child or anyone in your household has any symptoms, please do isolate and get tested, and I very much appreciate being kept in the loop. If your child tests positive we need to know immediately so please call me on 07990553706 if it is not in nursery hours. I have been really grateful that everyone has been more than courteous and has been letting me know about every cough and cold – it is definitely better for me to have too much information than not enough! So thank you 😊

So on to more fun things! We have had a wonderful first Focus Week looking at Personal, Social and Emotional Development. This is one of the three Prime Areas of Development as it is the foundation to future learning. Children will not progress and learn unless they first feel secure and confident. PSED encompasses lots of lovely topics that all of the rooms have been looking at such as:

- Families – who lives in our house, extended families, pets.
- Looking at Ourselves – mirrors, portraits, skin and hair colour, facial features, height, weight, measuring, proportions, shoe sizes etc.
- Feelings – exploring our emotions, looking at different expressions and looking at various books about our feelings. Can we guess how someone is feeling by looking at their face?

- Independence and confidence – open-ended craft activities to promote autonomy, working on self-care skills such as putting on shoes, doing buttons, cutting up food.
- Being a good friend – sharing, taking turns, kindness, working together.
- Rules and boundaries – ‘Kind hands, Kind feet, Kind words’
- Caring for others – role play hospitals and doctors, looking after doll babies, vets.
- People who look after us – small world / role play police, hospital, fire station etc
- British Values – democracy and listening to others’ opinions, respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.

Each room did different activities appropriate for the age group, and everyone has had a gorgeous week.



Upcoming events:

Next week = **Spooky Week!** We will be doing lots of spooky activities all week, fancy dress is encouraged on Friday or indeed any day if they are feeling keen!

Friday 13th November = Pyjama Day – as it is getting into winter we thought a nice snuggly pyjama day would be good, we can make cosy corners and read lots of books, maybe some hot (tepid) chocolate and marshmallows at break. Please wear pyjamas but still wear shoes and have coats as we will still be going outside!

16th – 20th November = Our next Focus Week is Expressive Art & Design Week. Always a fun week, and it's usually a good idea to have a spare set of clothes ready as it can get messy...!

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend,

Lots of love Eve, Noreen, Sue, Lydia, and all the staff at Monkton xxx

PS – one last whinge about parking – please please do not park on the yellow lines. A few parents have reported that our neighbour has been taking photos so we are anticipating some kind of formal complaint is on the way....

PPS – some more photos just because they're so gorgeous and will make you smile! 😊

