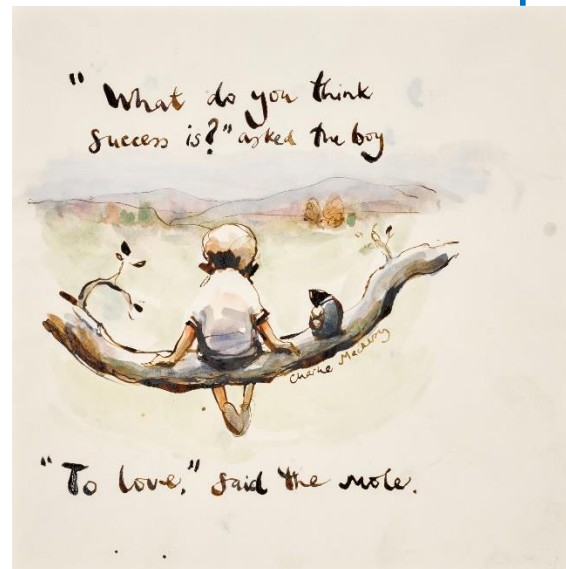




Care – Learn – Respect



We have settled into 2023 and already overcome a lot of rain and a little bit of snow. This week there was much excitement when the children had the opportunity to explore the frost covered playgrounds. The frost was thick enough to allow the children to enjoy crunching in it and even make small mounds of frost which they did think was snow. Some of the children told me it was the most snow they had ever seen. Having lived in Devon for 20 years, where you see very little snow, I had not appreciated that this far North snow is also not very frequent.

Thank you to parents who send their children in to school with appropriate coats, hats and gloves. Whenever we can, we like to ensure that the children have time outdoors.

Class temperatures as part of well-being post Covid

We have had some queries about the temperature in classes. Each class base has an electronic temperature gauge which staff use as a monitor. We work to keep the temperature around 18 degrees. Each class base has different natural temperatures. Year 2 and 6 are especially warm. Reception class does have the door open most consistently so that children can have access to the outside space and class temperatures are maintained by not having any other doors or windows open.

Last half term when the heating was first turned on the classes were too warm and it was necessary to open windows and sometimes doors to keep the classes at around 18 degrees.

This half term we have had some very cold days so it has not been necessary to open the windows but when temperatures have returned to more typical 8 and 10 degrees staff have opened windows, particularly during the afternoons.

30 little people in a single space can generate a lot of warmth and we are very mindful to reduce the passing of the many germs around at this time.

We continue to organise for hand washing and each day surfaces are cleaned with a disinfectant solution. Time outside for active play is another important strand in the work to support well-being.

We are all asked to contribute to this by monitoring for illness and raised temperatures in our children and being vigilant and proactive. We are very grateful for all families who follow this guidance.

At a time when electricity and gas are rocketing in price it is unfortunate that we do not have a state of the art heating system to allow us to better regulate the heating over the day and so allow us to reduce wastage. I have commissioned a review of the heating and electric systems to see if there are some ways of building in some efficiencies going forwards.

If you do have any questions or concerns about this please do not hesitate to email or speak directly to me.

Care – Learn – Respect

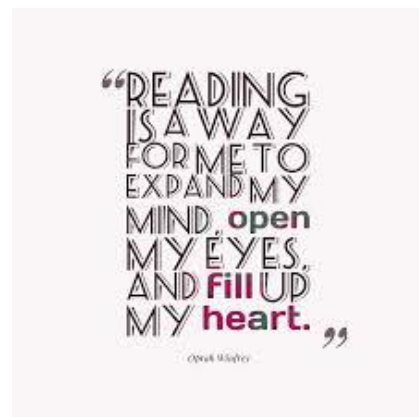
Before Christmas as part of our growing pupil voice work we purchased additional playground equipment. This has added positivity to play times. It also gives the children the opportunity to take responsibility for the equipment to ensure that it is well looked after. This term we have continued to develop children's understanding of our values and how we live in just and loving ways. There has been much work across the school to develop children's understanding of words such as democracy, rights and justice. We have school councillors, buddies for reception class, play leaders and librarians. Year 6 children have been asked to volunteer to become school chaplains to continue to develop fun and active ways to pray, and restorative justice ambassadors. The application is through written application and those selected will access training for these important new roles in our school. On Friday 27th January a group of Year 6 pupils will attend a one day workshop run by Blackpool Football Club on the theme of racism. This may seem an issue remote from the lives of primary age children but the club have run the workshops in previous years and have excellent feedback. The group will take notes through the day and present their learning when they return to school.

Stop and Tell Assertive Skills

We are developing work to support pupil's resilience through a programme called Stop and Tell. This is a long term project that encourages and promotes assertive behaviours for all. We teach the children about their rights and how to seek support for any challenges they may face in life.

In the main this will be lived through the everyday learning issues of children; how to share, how to make decisions when playing but it is also a sad truth that post Covid more young people than ever are facing challenge and we need all children to be confident to know how to solve problems and when to seek support with this. This is a very positive programme and will be part of our whole school journey. We will be working with children to name grown-ups in school and at home who they can tell all that is great and anything that is a worry.

Reading and vocabulary at the heart of the curriculum



Research continues to show that children who develop a love of reading will have a rich vocabulary and reading skills which will give them a huge advantage over those that do not access reading. This advantage will remain through each child's school life and beyond.

At Our Lady's we make reading and reading skills a priority. We are very grateful to all who give the time to supporting children's reading and interest in books. If you can make time then invest in reading with and to your child, visit the library, talk about books, talk together. This is true when your child is small and as they are developing through primary and secondary school.

Next half term Reception Class and Year 1 parents and carers will be invited to attend workshops to support your understanding of the reading process. We will also be marking World Book Day next half term. The children tell me that they enjoy dressing up in their favourite book characters so will ensure that this is part of the day.

Please give your child a head start by continuing to make reading a priority. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's reading please let their teacher know.

Music, Dance and Theatre Opportunities

On the 10th February both Choir and Dance Club are excited to be taking part in 'Schools Alive' at the Winter Gardens alongside 38 schools from across Blackpool. The children have been working hard to create a performance that is based on resilience in the face of adversity and centres on the journey of self-discovery of a girl called Bessy as she finds her place in the world. The story is

set in the world of the circus and features the children showcasing their unique talents and culminates with an all singing and dancing group extravaganza! So please purchase a ticket from the box office and support our performers.

Follow this link for The Winter Gardens details of the event <https://www.wintergardensblackpool.co.uk/events/schools-alive-2023/>

The creativity does not stop there!

Shakespeare Club will be performing at the Grand Theatre on the 6th March in 'Sandgrown Shakespeare' and will perform an original work, written by the children, interwoven with words from the Tempest. They will be joined by the other 18 schools that make up the Blackpool and Wyre Associate School programme for an evening of original drama. The club had its first session yesterday after school so we look forward to sharing more about the Grand Theatre event closer to the date.

Community Matters

Uniform – Pre loved items

We are aware that everything is costing more at the moment. We have put together a selection of high quality pre loved uniform items that we would encourage all families to consider. Whilst the weather is bad we will make the items available every Thursday and Friday in the corridor by the key stage 2 entrance. At any other time you can drop into the school office to access the items. Voluntary contributions will be collected for Cafod. Once the weather improves we will make them available more frequently in the KS1 playground at pick up time.

If you would like to drop off any quality items to add to the uniforms please drop these off at the school office.

GET HELP THIS WINTER!



The Volunteer Centre, in partnership with Blackpool Council are providing support around those struggling this winter.

Phone us or visit us to find support with

- Food and Essentials
- Utility Bills
- Community Centre Activities
- Housing (if you're struggling with accomodation costs)
- Contacts for emotional or practical help

Call or email Emma for any advice or information:



07554 454574



support@blackpoolvolunteers.org.uk



Scan here for our socials



0808 175 3379 (freephone)



95 Abingdon Street, Blackpool

FY1 1PP



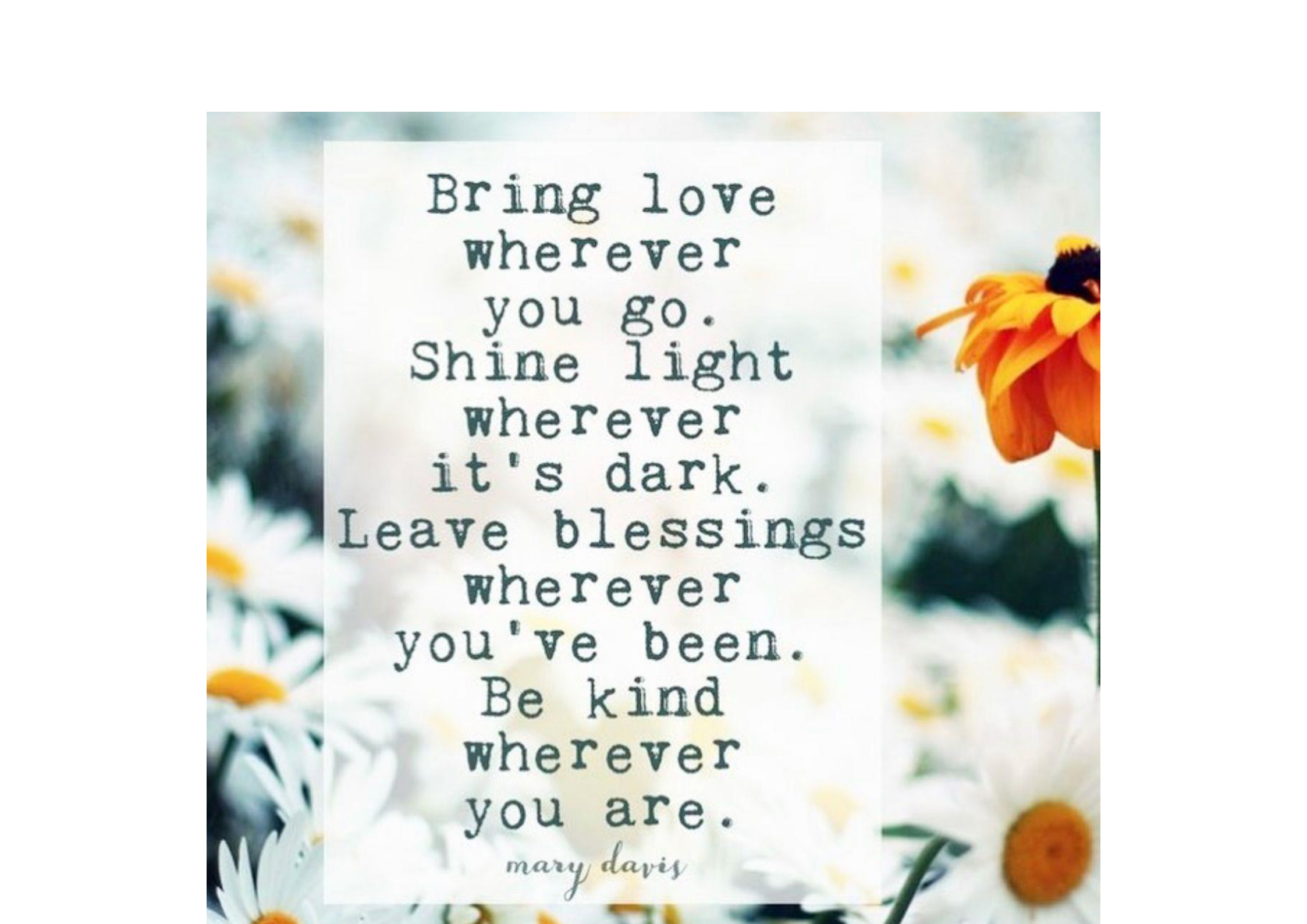
We are all affected by the heating and lighting struggle along with rising food and petrol prices, If you are challenged then know that you can access support.

Emma Wood, a Cost of Living Support Coordinator, based at the Volunteer Centre has been in touch with us. Blackpool Council has issued funding until the end of March to enable the centre to support as many Blackpool based residents with the cost of living crisis. Emma wants as many people as possible to know about this support.

Emma says;

There are a lot of people struggling within the current climate and there is lots of support available, **no matter what your circumstances.**

The type of support available is financial, mainly supporting the increase in energy prices but also, those who may need financial support to access household goods which they are struggling to afford. Furthermore, there is emotional and wellbeing support, housing, warm hubs, community centre activities and food.



Bring love
wherever
you go.
Shine light
wherever
it's dark.
Leave blessings
wherever
you've been.
Be kind
wherever
you are.

mary davis