

# QEHS

## Pastoral Newsletter



### Issue Five: Friday 04 June 2020

During these strange and different times, we in pastoral have decided to set up this weekly newsletter just to highlight a few things and keep you all up to date.

Every week we will try to give you some suggestions of resources and things to be aware of to support your mental health and wellbeing – these are just as important as the academic stuff!

We hope that you are all adapting to the way life is at the moment and managing to find some balance when you are at home. Remember it's new for your parents/carers too so try to be understanding!

Remember you can always contact us: [Pastoral@qehs.net](mailto:Pastoral@qehs.net)

### Weekly Challenge

A little challenge from us to you each week, post your responses on social media with the hashtag #qehsweeklychallenge

### Week Five – 30 Days Wild!

This June, join thousands of people taking part in the Wildlife Trust's annual nature challenge, **30 Days Wild!**



While nature needs us now more than ever, the reverse is also true. We're all part of nature, and it should be a part of our lives. Research over the last 5 years has shown that participants in the challenge feel happier and healthier after taking part, and for months after too!

We want you to do one wild thing a day throughout the whole month: for your health, wellbeing and for the planet, to bring people closer to nature where they live. Taking small actions can collectively have a big impact. From little things such as feeding or providing water for the birds, to giving up single-use plastics for a month or digging a pond in your garden, every Random Act of Wildness counts.

You'll get a free, downloadable pack of goodies to help you plan your wild month, plus lots of ideas to inspire you to stay wild all throughout June (and beyond!). You will also receive a beginner's guide to wildlife photography.

You can check out what others are doing by following #30DaysWild on social media. Remember to upload any pictures of your own actions if you can using our hashtag too – staff are also welcome to take part!

**#qehsweeklychallenge**

To get involved, visit Northumberland Wildlife Trust's website:

<https://www.nwt.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/30-days-wild>

### Online Safety

Keeping you up to date on how to stay safe online

Visit <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/young-people/resources-11-19s> for some really useful resources to help you safely navigate the internet and social media.

## Pastoral Snapshot

### An insight into lock down life from someone in our team

We all have different experiences of lockdown and I'm going to share a week in the life of the "Herbertson" family. Don't worry, only the highlights.

In May my daughter gave birth to a daughter and she is our first grandchild. As with most things Herbertson it wasn't plain sailing but there was a good outcome and Mother, Father and daughter are doing well.

My son who races motorbikes has a fundraiser going on at the moment and we are posting 54 homemade postal packs off this week. We are great at making postal tubes from recycled carpet roll inners. While we were doing this, we noticed a mark on his elbow and he has Lyme's disease so please if you are out walking in woodland know what the symptoms of Lyme disease are. My husband worked in forestry as well as my son and he was quick to diagnose it and my son is now on a 3-week course of powerful antibiotics.

In short, we are very grateful for the NHS in our house and this is in addition to what they are doing for those suffering from Covid 19 at the moment.

Everyone has periods of anxiety and worry but that doesn't mean we have mental health issues. I was concerned/worried about my daughter as I haven't seen her for 12 weeks but I also knew she was in good hands and had help around her should she need it. We have all been told to look after our mental health but I'd like us to appreciate our ability to know and learn from our experiences as they help us grow as people. Random acts of kindness, trusting professionals and respecting others points of view shows we have strength not weakness. Those who know me already may have heard me say "what doesn't kill us makes us stronger" and I'm feeling pretty strong at the moment and very grateful.

Here's hoping we can meet family and friends soon and I'm definitely looking forward to a hug or two from family, new and old.

Libby Herbertson – **Pastoral Mentor**

## Wellbeing

This period of lockdown has never been experienced by any of us before and hopefully we will not have to go through it again but some of the feelings we are experiencing aren't new to us.

We are all thankful for the NHS and they have some very useful information on their website relating to mental health. They cover help with stress and anxiety through to guided self-help. On the [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) website you can find the NHS apps library and they also recommend blogs, forums, videos and audio guidelines. The audio guidelines cover many things such as Anxiety control training, sleep problems, low mood and depression.

As with all websites and information you are made aware of please remember one size does not fit all so try looking at the site and see if you like it and if anything helps you. Some sites I like more than others and some sites deals with things differently.

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress.anxiety-depression/selfhelptherapies](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress.anxiety-depression/selfhelptherapies)

Good reading, searching or listening.

## Positive picture of the week

Email your suggestions to [pastoral@qehs.net](mailto:pastoral@qehs.net)

Hexham General Hospital has had the help of an unusual volunteer during the coronavirus crisis. Yang the cat, who lives near the hospital, has been offering a helping paw by meeting and greeting visitors and regulars. He can be seen most days at the entrance doors ready to offer reassurance and comfort to patients arriving at the hospital and is also well-loved by the staff, including the doctors, nurses and ambulance personnel, who have adopted him as their unofficial mascot!

Yang's owner says that she is very proud of him: "He has taken it upon his little paws to go and be around people that need him."



## Safeguarding

### How to report something about you or someone you know

There are a number of ways you can get help:

- If you need to report an urgent concern, speak to Northumberland's One Call service on 01670 536400 or call the police.
- During the school day you can call the school on 01434 610300
- Email us at [Safeguarding@qehs.net](mailto:Safeguarding@qehs.net)
- Report online incidents using the report button on the social media website or app.

## The world around us...

*Helping you make sense of some of the things happening in the world which we would usually explore in school.*

### Black Lives Matter; Justice for George Floyd

I am sure you are aware of the civil unrest in the USA at the moment, and you may well have seen the shocking video of George Floyd's killing by a police officer in Minnesota which sparked these large-scale protests. The presence of social media means that images of Floyd's death, and the resulting public anger, are spread around the world in an instant, meaning that any of you with a smartphone (and I know that is most of you) will be seeing, hearing and reading a lot about this. These important events would have been discussed in classrooms and assemblies had we been at school together, and I wanted to make sure that we shone a light on them even though we are apart. It feels like we are witnessing a key moment in modern history, hopefully one which has positive implications for future generations, including yours. However, we are never just witness to history unfolding; we all have a role to play in making sure

that we learn, we listen and we do everything we can to make the future better.

For some of you, the events in the USA may seem like a world away from us in the North East of England, for others these events will have enraged you or possibly even have reminded you of personal experiences. As an educator, I ask myself: How can I, as a 'privileged' white man, talk about racism and discrimination in a meaningful way? I know that I have no way of knowing what it would have been like to grow up in another person's skin. However, I do know that, as the grandchild of an immigrant, my experiences would very likely have been different if my grandad had come from Pakistan, Nigeria or the Caribbean, rather than from Poland. Would I be in the fortunate position I am in today, and had the same opportunities, if my skin wasn't white? Would people see me as less 'British'?

We cannot deny that inequality exists in Britain; three years ago the government published a race disparity audit which showed large differences in living standards, housing, work, policing and health. Salary figures show that white British households have average incomes far above that of black British, black Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani households. Race crimes continue and, as I have discussed in previous assemblies, there are people in society who will try and drive a wedge between us based on skin colour and religion; promoting hate and pointing fingers.

Ultimately, it is important that we do something, no matter how small. I suggest that the most important thing for us to do is listen and learn. We should be reading about the experiences of others, do our best to understand the struggles, fears and hopes of those less 'privileged'; whether this is the experiences of black Americans, Syrian refugees or Jewish families in 1930s Europe. Hopefully then, we all live our lives knowing full well the implications of inequality and injustice, and when we get a chance to make a difference, we do.

Take care, I look forward to seeing you soon.

Mr. Zabrocki