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Friday 3rd November 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

After a great start to our school year last half term, we look forward to building on this over the next few months with many exciting and eventful activities taking place across the school.



Diary dates and events for this half term:

- **Month of November** - Neurodiversity November
- **Monday 6th November** - Parent/ Carer consultation evening (1)
- **Wednesday 8th November** - Parent/ Carer consultation evening (2)
- **Sunday 12th November**  - Remembrance Sunday
(This will be observed in school on Friday 10th November)
- **Monday 13th November** - Anti-bullying week and Maths week
- **Friday 17th November** - Children in Need
- **Friday 8th December** - Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Dinner 
- **Friday 8th December** - PTA Father Christmas Event after school 
- **Friday 8th December** - Jack & the Beanstalk show for Early Years children
- **Tuesday 12th December** - Beauty & the Beast show for Year 1 to Year 6
(Letter with more information to follow)
- **Thursday 14th December** - Christmas Party Day
- **Friday 15th December** - School closes at the end of the day for Christmas
- **Tuesday 2nd January** - INSET day (school closed for staff training)
- **Wednesday 3rd January** - **Children return to school**

Year group specific information will be sent through your child's year group newsletter. These and our whole school dates and events are also available on the [school website](#) and app. Please continue to regularly check these for updates.

EAL Academy Quality Mark Accreditation

On Tuesday 17th October, Graham Smith, the director of the EAL Academy visited our school. The visit was an accreditation visit to gain the EAL Quality Mark. The EAL Quality Mark is an award given to schools on their achievements in meeting the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. There are three levels for this award: bronze, silver and gold. We were evaluated on our ability to give all learners the opportunity for rapid and sustained improvement and to deliver an inclusive curriculum which promotes



language development alongside learning. We are thrilled to inform our community that we surpassed bronze and achieved the silver accreditation award on this initial visit.

Junior School Parking Protest



At the Junior School, across the final week of the last half-term, children from Year 4 to Year 6 came together to raise awareness of safe parking at drop off and collection times. Through a series of planned protests staged across the week, the children successfully conveyed their strong feelings around safe and legal parking in and around the school site. They too were joined by Cllr Linda Foley who supported the school's action by joining them on the picket line. It was great to see nearly all parents and carers supporting this movement by opting to walk to school or making use of the 'Park & Stride' scheme; which has long

been established at the Junior School and is run in conjunction with the Didsbury Pub. From day one of the protest, there was a noticeable difference to the school's own carpark, the traffic on Wilmslow Road and to the carpark belonging to the Medical Centre.

As we move into a new term, particularly one where the nights draw in much quicker, we hope to keep this momentum up and **continue to urge parents and carers to park responsibly, legally and to not abuse the school's morning drop off system.** On behalf of all children, staff and the local community, we thank those parents and carers who made a concerted effort and changed their morning routine to help us to keep your children and the streets of Didsbury safe for everybody. This includes those children and their families who got to school ahead of school opening to be ready for the morning drop off.

Anti-Bullying Week



This year's **Anti-Bullying Week** has the tagline, *'Make a noise about bullying'* and takes place from **Monday 13th-17th November.** On Monday, everybody is invited to rip up the rules of 'sock etiquette' and wear odd socks. This simple and fun gesture generates solidarity around the idea of us all being different and unique. *'All humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights.'*

We will revisit the definition of bullying and use the acronym 'STOP' – Several Times On Purpose as a starting point for discussion around the four elements of bullying – intentional, hurtful, repetitive, and involving a power imbalance. Through class discussion, we will explore, 'It's not banter if...' and look at how language and behaviour can have different meanings.

We will also consider the action we can take against bullying and the role of our duty bearers and our **'five trusted adults'**. Children and young people have the extraordinary ability to 'see' and articulate the deeper issues, and in 'making noise' we will share daily reflections on wider philosophical questions that really help us develop our emotional literacy.

My 5 Trusted Adults



Maths Week

In addition to anti-bullying week, we will also be celebrating **Maths Week England** the week starting **13th November**. This is a fantastic numerical week to celebrate the importance and wonder of Maths.



Throughout the week, children will be learning about and celebrating a range of female mathematicians. Each year group will also take part in an Active Maths session. This could be outdoor number or shape hunts, time table grand slams in the hall or P.E Maths challenges, like arranging themselves into groups or shapes. Children will also have a range of Maths problems and challenges around their environments and corridors, which they can work on with their friends to solve.

At home, you can support your child's learning with some maths games of your own, encouraging the use of Times Table Rockstars or Mangahigh.

We would love to see any pictures of Maths home learning on your child's Seesaw page!

Children in Need



As we support **Children in Need** on **Friday 17th November**, we invite the children to attend school in spotty outfits or pyjamas and to give a donation towards this great charity. With times being so tough for many children, especially with anxiety on the rise and the rising cost of living, we encourage everyone to join in with this year's 'The Great SPOTacular!'

Class Christmas Parties

All children are invited to attend school in their party clothes on **Thursday 14th December**. The teaching team will provide party food in the afternoon for the children. However, we are asking for a £2 donation towards this, which can be paid on School Spider by **Friday 8th December**.

Mental Health and Wellbeing



Monday 13th November is World Kindness Day.

Research shows that helping others can be good for our mental health. It reduces stress, improves our emotional well-being and even benefits our physical health. In short, doing good does you good. It is essential to look out for each other. This is how we protect and maintain good mental health for all. Doing something nice for someone doesn't cost a lot of time or money. It's the small things in life that can make a big difference.

Here are [50 random acts of kindness](#) you can do today, but particularly on World Kindness Day.

eSafety



Don't know where to start when it comes to talking about online safety with your child? Check out this useful #WakeUpWednesday guide produced by NOS (National Online Safety) that focuses on a series of 7 questions that will help you think about a range of potential risks such as personal information, gaming addiction and online relationship. It is available [here](#) at the bottom of the school's E-safety page.

Autumn Term 1 House Winners

First School Winner...



Mrs Byrne
HEAD OF HOUSE

QUALITY: **Creativity**
GOAL: 10  ARTICLE: 

Junior School Winner...



Mrs Mour
HEAD OF HOUSE

QUALITY: **Resilience**
GOAL: 7  ARTICLE: 

These are the winning houses for the last half term. Children in these houses earned the most attendance shields and house points. On **Friday 15th December**, children in House Pegasus at First School and Phoenix at Juniors are invited to wear their house colours in celebration of this achievement. The house flags will also be flying high over the respective schools for the duration of this term.

Best wishes,

Ruth Byrne and Michael Davenport
Heads of School



Article 31 (leisure, play and culture)

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.