



Meadowbrook Family Comms

Autumn Term

Issue 3

24/9/2021

Now that we have settled into our routine at school, class teachers are bringing wider elements of their curriculum to the fore, challenging children to think more deeply about certain things and from more than their own perspective. In this newsletter, there is a lot of information for parents regarding some less obvious elements of our goals and aims, so apologies to our children this week if it feels more like a 'Parent Comms' than a 'Family Comms'.

At Meadowbrook, we pride ourselves in the attention and time that is dedicated to the personal, emotional and social aspects of each child's development and our assembly rota is carefully designed to reflect this. Children explore and learn more about all manner of topics, from consent and individual liberty all the way through to the opposite, yet parallel, aspect of duty and responsibility to others. Helping children think more about when individual choice supercedes duty to the community, and vice-versa, is always extremely interesting, and usually promotes a fascinating insight into the mind of the child. This has been more relevant to this generation of children than most, as they have experienced first-hand enforced civil duty during the pandemic in a way that their parents and grandparents are unlikely to have done.

Provoking debate leads to a variety of opinions and questions being offered, so class teachers

often find themselves in the privileged position of guiding a child through their personal thinking process and broadening their own ideas in the natural course of our day.

One such example occurred in assembly this week, when we revisited British Values, an aspect of our curriculum that inherently features in many of our lessons and conversations. When taught well, the idea of British Values does not promote that concept that British Values are 'better'; rather it reinforces what it means to live in Britain and/or to be British. It reinforces the rights children growing up in Britain have, what they can expect from their life experiences and how the adults and the community around them have a duty to meet their needs. Children talk about the rights they have to be well-fed, to sleep safely at night, to be loved and supported, to have access to education and medication, to be treated equally and fairly and to grow up in a nurturing, accepting environment where expression and free choice form part of their every day life. Teachers are mindful to stress that these rights are not exclusive to British citizens; if they do not understand already, children grow to understand that other cultures value these rights too, and, conversely, that some children living and growing up in Britain do not always have their needs and rights met, despite the 'rules' to say they should.

Naturally these conversations happen at very different levels

between Lower Primary and Upper Primary and, after a whole school assembly on such a topic, class teachers follow up these ideas within their own classes. Each teacher guides her class conversations carefully, and will consider her cohort, the questions that are asked of her and her own experience with the topic as she leads debate among her class.

Being able to guide such influential and powerful conversations without promoting bias or judgement is an essential skill for any teacher and is something we do particularly well at Meadowbrook. Some (in fact lots!) of the conversations we find ourselves engaged in have to be managed sensitively, professionally and wisely, so that children leave the lesson or conversation feeling that they are accepted, they belong and that their voice counts, regardless of their ideas and beliefs.

While we encourage children to feel bold enough and confident enough to ask us any question they wish, we carefully answer questions they ask without diving into detail they do not require. A very common example of this is 'Where do babies come from'? The answer is simply 'the mother' or 'the mother's tummy'. Some young children will leave the question here, satisfied that their question has been answered. Other children may have a greater sense of curiosity and will require more; they will immediately ask the inevitable 'How do they get there?' or 'How do they come



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out'? Either way, a whole new conversation is essential! A copy of our autumn assembly rota can be found on the Lower Primary notice board so you can see the things we have talked about each week. Encourage your child to share these topics with you each week and encourage them to ask you about your opinion and knowledge on the matter.

Please be mindful that a child may share something with you that they have misheard or misunderstood, so if they talk about things that seem alien to our ethos, philosophy and practise, do share this with your class teacher. It may be that a conversation needs to be revisited, or that a child's thinking needs re-direction.

Soon, we will be talking more to parents about our Relationships curriculum, which covers many learning objectives in personal, emotional and social development. For primary-aged children, 'Sex and Relationship Education' has been replaced with 'Relationship Education', with the aim of promoting healthy mental and emotional relationships (including the one you have with yourself) before the concept of a physical relationship is explored. Ideas of birth, growth and change will still be covered in our Science curriculum but we will share more of this with you in time.

COVID-Safety

Although national restrictions have been removed, this is a

polite reminder that we must all remain vigilant and take measures to ensure the safety of ourself and others.

Anyone displaying symptoms of COVID MUST isolate and they MUST have a PCR test. Adults and children receiving a negative PCR may stop isolating and return to school to work or immediately. Families not wanting to undertake a PCR test MUST isolate for 10 days. PCR tests can be booked at www.gov.uk

Close contacts and members of a household do not have to isolate if:

- they are double-vaccinated
- they are under 18yrs, 6 mths.
- they are not displaying symptoms of COVID.

We are already aware of local schools that have implemented stricter control measures under the guidance of Public Health England (PHE) due to rapidly-rising positive COVID cases and wish to avoid this being the case at Meadowbrook. We recognise the impact that isolating has on our families and children and remain determined to minimise impact to you all. We must continue to ask you:
-to keep your sick child at home.
-to book a test immediately if they have any symptoms.

Macmillan Coffee Afternoon

A very big thank you to Adrian, Zoe, Jen, John E, Rupini and all the other helpers during the bake sale, and to all the families that donated their cakes and their pennies! We raised over £200.

Jeans for Genes

Our charity fundraising doesn't stop at the Macmillan coffee afternoon.....we also raised over £87 pounds for Jeans for Genes. Thank you all!

Diary Dates

School Calendar Photos

Monday 27th September
Smart uniform and formal school shoes please!

Secondary School Evening

Upper Primary only
Wednesday 29th September
7.00-8.30pm

Harvest Festival

Monday 4th October
Details will follow when confirmed with church.

Lower Primary Lookout Trip

Wednesday, 6th October
LP parents, please see your parent mail letter.

Upper Primary Twilight Delight

Friday, 8th October

Positive Discipline Parent Courses

Thursday 14th October
7pm-9pm
(to be confirmed)

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