

The Stretham Scoop



Friday 15th November 2024

A bi-weekly round up of what's happening in our school!

Mr Sweeney's shout out:



Dear Parents/Carers,

What a crazy week! As I arrived in school on Monday to celebrate my birthday, I joked that it would be typical if we received a phone call notifying us of an Ofsted inspection. Low and behold, it seems that I predicted it, as that phone call came on Monday morning with our phone lines down and unable to accept calls! Luckily, we managed to speak with our lead inspector and, as I'm sure you are all aware, were visited on Tuesday and Wednesday. We are currently unable to share anything further regarding the inspection but as soon as we have received our report, we will share this with you. As a staff, we are incredibly grateful for all of the feedback given on parent view, your kind words, wishes and offers of support. The children were absolutely wonderful, polite and respectful and gave their honest views about our school. The inspection team were very complimentary about our children and this means the world to us all.

Alongside this, it has been our kindness week, this week. The focus has been about showing respect and the classrooms have been full of purposeful discussion and developing empathy. From creating respect posters, to looking at our networks of support and how we can show gratitude, the school has been full of debate about how we can demonstrate kindness, even when we're not feeling at our best. With today being Children in Need day, it's been wonderful seeing our children in spots and stripes! We will let you know how much we've raised when we have totaled it all but thank you for your generosity.

In assemblies over the last two weeks we have explored the theme of courage and being brave, particularly linking to Armistice Day. Last week, we shared the text 'Lest We Forget' which focusses on the theme of 'having a bad day' and how this compares to those who sacrificed their time, their relationships and their lives to fight for our country. In addition to this, we have really drilled down into how our words can have serious impact on those around us, looking at how we may look okay on the outside but inside may be feeling bruised and hurt by unkind comments. As a staff, we are encouraging children to own their behaviour and recognise this. We also said goodbye to Mrs Jones who has been a key part of our catering team since 2017; we are going to miss her greatly.

We held an impeccable reflection on Monday remembering those who sacrificed their lives. It was incredibly poignant seeing every child reflect so maturely. Ladybirds demonstrated their understanding throughout the week, but my personal highlight was the yummy biscuits they made in a poppy design! Year 1 also paid their respects by visiting the war memorial on a village walk and discussing the number of poppies around the village. On Tuesday, it was Michael Rosen day - the children had chocolate cake for pudding and Year 2 wrote their own versions of the text 'I am happy.' It was wonderful reading a wide range of them. This week, Year 3 have been working hard on their understanding of money and have linked this to Children In Need; some very complex thinking has taken place! Robin class have written beautiful poems about how to spread kindness and how this makes others feel - I welled up at a few of them! Year 5 have been working hard on using resources to build, draw and construct difficult mathematical concepts. Year 6 have been continuing to read the novel 'Wonder' and their developing inference skills and empathy are really quite phenomenal. I know that they blew one of our visitors away with their empathetic and considerate viewpoints.

On a final note, today is Mrs Marsh's last day at Stretham, she really has been an asset to us as a school. Her tireless work in maintaining the school, being tenacious in ensuring we get the right support from the local authority for building concerns, her knowledge of the building and of course her wonderful school meals are all going to be missed. Mrs Marsh, please do not be a stranger, you are a huge part of Stretham life and are going to be sorely missed. You are welcome back whenever you want to visit! THANK YOU.

Mr Sweeney and the Stretham team.

Superb Stretham Snippets:

- Last week, the NSPCC visited Years 2,5 and 6 to discuss how to keep ourselves safe. The visitors spoke of our children's wonderful manners, engagement and respect.
- With our visitors in school this week, a lot of time was spent talking to the children - it was noted, again, how respectful, polite and conscientious our pupils are towards visitors. We could not be prouder of them.
- Our choir had their first rehearsal this week and they sounded beautiful - we cannot wait to share their singing with you soon!

'Achieving Potential Together As a School Family.'

- Compassionate - Curious - Courageous - Resilient - Inclusive



Safeguarding @ Stretham:

With it being kindness and anti-bullying week, this week, our safeguarding update relates to being respectful, whether being in person or in line and how as parents and professionals we can support children with this. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak to one of us.

Attendance update:

Well done to the following classes with the highest attendance figures this week

Hedgehogs: 98.3%

Rabbits: 99.6%

Kite 96.7%

Letters sent home:

Tombola Non Uniform Day Friday 22 November 2024

School Office telephone line out of order

Children in Need 2024 - Raffle ticket sales

Tempest Photography online order deadline - 24th November

PSA Arts and Crafts afternoon - 16 November 2024



At the National College, our **WakeUpWednesday** guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO CHOOSE RESPECT

Sometimes, differences between children can escalate into bullying, potentially impacting their mental health in a way that can persist into adulthood. While it's natural to disagree sometimes, teaching children the importance of respect is essential – especially in difficult situations. This guide provides strategies for encouraging considerate behaviour, even during a dispute, to foster a kinder, more inclusive environment for everyone.

- 1 LEAD BY EXAMPLE**
As adults, we play a crucial role in modelling respectful behaviour for children: they observe and learn from our actions every day. Be mindful of the way you interact with others in front of children. Keep in mind that you should always approach others with an attitude of mutual respect, even if you disagree with them. Demonstrating this behaviour can influence young people and help them to handle their own conflicts in a healthy way.
- 2 AGREE TO DISAGREE**
Make sure children know that it's fine to have differing opinions – and that disagreeing with someone doesn't mean you can't get along or respect each other's point of view. Help them understand that sometimes we can 'agree to disagree'. Using active listening skills when doing this can also help to build empathy and understanding of others.
- 3 PROMOTE ACTIVE LISTENING**
Teach children about the importance of active listening: that is, making a genuine effort to listen to the other person's perspective without interrupting, before responding in a way that shows you understand their viewpoint, even (or perhaps especially) if you disagree with it. This makes people feel respected and allows for a better comprehension of their point of view, which in turn can make it easier for you to communicate your own opinions to them.
- 4 ENCOURAGE THE USE OF "I" STATEMENTS**
If a child finds themselves in a disagreement with someone, it can be useful to encourage them to use "I" statements during the discussion. Framing their thoughts and feelings using statements like "I feel..." or "I think..." can help them avoid an accusatory tone and encourages them to take responsibility for their own emotions.
- 5 FOCUS ON BEHAVIOUR, NOT CHARACTER**
When disagreements happen, encourage children to focus on criticising and addressing the specific actions or behaviours that caused this upset, rather than attacking the person's character. For example, "I didn't like how you interrupted me" is better than "you're so rude". This can help children avoid hurting someone's feelings, which is likely to inflame the situation.
- 6 STAY CALM AND TAKE BREAKS**
It's perfectly normal to feel upset during a disagreement – especially if it's getting heated. Remind children that if they feel overwhelmed, they should try to take deep breaths or even go for a short break to help them stay composed. If a conversation becomes too intense, remind them it's OK to suggest continuing it later or in a different setting. This can prevent things getting out of hand, allowing cooler heads to prevail.
- 7 START CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RESPECT**
Talk openly to children about what respect means – to you and to them. Discuss how they might show respect to each other, to friends, to strangers and even to people we might disagree with. You could use examples of considerate or inconsiderate behaviour in books, films or TV to open discussions about the importance of giving others due regard.
- 8 SEEK COMMON GROUND**
When a disagreement has occurred between children, they may find it hard to move past it. You can support them in finding a more positive way forward by helping identify areas of agreement or common ground with the other party. This can help to build bridges between differing opinions and foster a more cooperative atmosphere, as well as preventing those involved from demonising each other.
- 9 AVOID MAKING THINGS PERSONAL**
It's important that we make it clear to children they must avoid name-calling, swearing or derogatory remarks in a disagreement with others. Respectful language sets a positive tone and helps keep the conversation productive. Reminding children to stay calm and take breaks – as mentioned previously – can help them avoid getting too emotional and saying or doing something hurtful.
- 10 REFLECT AND LEARN**
After a child has had a disagreement, encourage them to reflect on the experience and think about what they can learn from it. What did they handle well? How might they improve their communication skills to handle conflicts more effectively in the future? You could use role play, writing and drawing pictures, or hypothetical examples to further develop their skills in showing respect during a disagreement.

Meet Our Expert
The Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA) co-ordinate Anti-Bullying Week each year. ABA is a unique coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to achieve their vision to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn. They welcome membership from any organisation or individual that supports this vision and support a free network of thousands of schools and colleges.

Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/choose-respect>

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Key Diary Dates:

- 16 November 2024 - PSA Christmas Craft afternoon
- 26 November 2024 - Stretham CP Christmas craft afternoon
- 24th November 2024, Tempest Photography deadline
- 28 November 2024 - 03 December 2024 - Book Fair
- 30 November - Christmas Fair



A very happy birthday to...

Laila P, Evelyn S, Zac C, Ollie T, Darren L, Courtne M-F, Hollie H



We hope you have a wonderful day!

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