

# Soar to Success—Self-Sufficient, Original, Attitude, Resilient



Manor Park  
Primary  
School

Newsletter  
11th February  
2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well and that the children have continued to enjoy the snow, as I know this is always a firm favourite with children and staff.

Despite the practical difficulties we have all had to deal with over this half term, it has been a very successful period for the school. I am extremely grateful to the staff for working so hard to rapidly develop their skills in delivering live lessons to our children who are working from home. We have had fantastic feedback from children and parents about the support that this is giving them. The quality and quantity of work that children are producing across school is of an extremely high standard, which is in line with the work that children are producing in school. Staff will be continuing with live teaching daily after the holiday. Please encourage your child to join the afternoon sessions as well as the full morning curriculum offer.

Following feedback from parents and children, we are adjusting the organisation of live teaching in the afternoons in all year groups from Reception to Year 6. All staff will deliver a live teaching session at the beginning of every afternoon except Wednesday, which is our Manor Park University afternoon. As part of the daily live session, staff will set work and tasks for children for the whole afternoon. They are then inviting children back for a catch up and live story reading session at 3pm which we would like children to join if they possibly can. All staff are now confidently offering a blended learning model of teaching and learning, which will ensure that any children who must isolate from school for any reason going forward can maintain daily contact with their teacher and peers in school.

School will close to all children tonight for the half term holiday as Friday 12th is our staff training day. There will be no remote learning during the holiday. School re-opens on Monday 22nd February for vulnerable children and those of key workers who have been attending school during this lockdown. Remote learning will resume on this day for all other pupils. We have had a very productive half term developing the environment and planning exciting creative curriculum lessons and activities. We cannot wait to return to a full re-opening of school in the not-too-distant-future.

As at the start of previous holidays, staff are being asked to be on call for a set time during the first part of the holiday for contact tracing purposes. This will be where a pupil or member of staff develop symptoms within 48 hours from their last attendance at school. If you or any member of your household develop symptoms, then you should book a test immediately and not leave the house until the results are received. If the result is positive then the result will need to be reported to school on the school Covid email, so that a rapid risk assessment can be carried out and parents/staff notified of any requirements to self-isolate if required, as the individual may have been infectious whilst at school. Can we ask parents of children who are attending school to continue using the school Covid email throughout the whole holiday period please, as SLT will need to look at any cases prior to children returning and report these to the local authority.

May I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all parents for your overwhelming support over what has been an incredibly challenging half term. It has been greatly appreciated by us all.

Please remember, if you have any concerns about helping your child learn, or you need any other support from school, please do get in touch by emailing the school.

Have a relaxing and enjoyable holiday spent with your children and families.  
Best wishes to everyone.

Jill O'Connor—Headteacher

# Spotlight on learning in school this week...

## Nursery



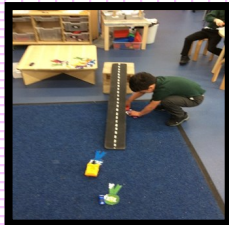
This week in Nursery, the children have had so much fun learning all about the Chinese New Year. They made Chinese fans and a picture of the ox character. They even wrote 'ox' using Chinese calligraphy too! The children also made a love heart to celebrate Valentine's Day. Fabulous work!

## EYEP

This week in EYEP we have been learning about Chinese New Year. We have been exploring the colour red and using a range of tools and materials to paint with.



## Year R



This week in Reception, the children have been engaged in exciting learning at home and in school. During maths, the children have learnt about ordinal numbers. They enjoyed setting up races, using the Chinese New Year story as a stimulus. They used ordinal numbers to show the correct finishing positions of each character from the story. The children have also been investigating how toy vehicles move on a variety of surfaces during their creative curriculum work.

## Year 1

After learning about a variety of animals this half term, Year 1 children have been sculpting some brilliant clay models. They have used a range of tools to create different shapes and details. Well done!



## Year 2



Year 2 have had a great time in science making their very own ice cream! We only needed milk, sugar, vanilla, salt and ice cubes. After a lot of shaking, our ice cream mixture froze and we were able to eat it. It was delicious!

## Year 3

This week, Year 3 held a live cook-a-long with their teachers and classmates. The children made dough, chose their own toppings and cooked pizzas. We had a fantastic afternoon with plenty of full tummies at the end!

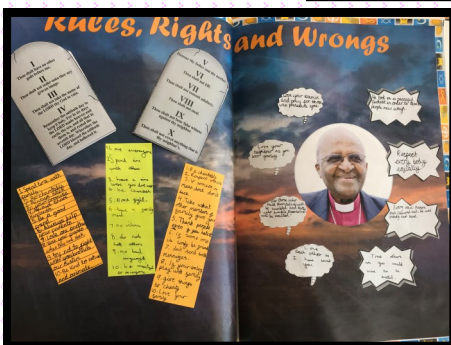


## Year 5

Year 5 have been learning about the artist Brianna McCarthy and created their own self-portrait using different colours and materials to represent themselves.



## Year 4



For our RE afternoon 'Rules, Rights and Wrongs', Year 4 wrote their own 10 commandments and looked at how religious teachings can affect somebody's actions.

## Year 6

During RE day, Year 6 were learning about Humanism. We learnt about the fundamental principles of the philosophy and thought about our own core values. We created symbols based on these and learnt about the beliefs of influential Humanist thinkers. Fantastic work, Year 6!





# Free to a Good Home

We have been sorting our classroom furniture and we have a number of items which we no longer need but which still have a lot of life in them. We are happy to give these to parents free of charge on a first come first served basis, if this will help any families during these challenging times. We will leave these items in the staff car park each day from 9 am to 3pm next week. Please take anything that you would like, whilst safely socially distancing on site. I hope some of our families can make good use of these pieces of furniture. Photographs of the items are below.





# TOP PARENTING TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

1

## **Reassure your children that your family is your top priority.**

Say something like "I'm your parent, it's my job to keep you safe and we are doing everything we can."

2

## **Maintain everyday family routines.**

Keep to usual rising times, mealtimes, and bedtimes. Every family is different. Involve children in working out any new routine (e.g., have a daily plan of activities for school-aged children who are at home).

3

## **Have plenty of interesting things to do at home.**

Busy children are less likely to be bored and misbehave. With your child, help create a list of 20 activities that will keep them busy (not just screen time).

4

## **Take notice of behaviour you like.**

Think about the values, skills and behaviours you wish to encourage in your children at this very difficult time. There are many opportunities to teach your children important life skills (e.g., being caring, helpful, cooperative, getting on well with siblings, taking turns). Use plenty of praise and positive attention to encourage behaviour you like. Give them positive attention letting them know you are pleased by telling them what they have just done ("That's a lovely card you have written to your grandmother. That's so kind. She will really appreciate that.")

5

## **Make sure your child knows you are ready to talk.**

Children need to be able to talk to parents about their concerns and have their questions answered. When a child wants to talk about their feelings, stop what you are doing and listen carefully. Avoid telling your child how they should feel ("That's silly. You shouldn't be scared about that.") Let children know it is OK to be worried. Talking or drawing can help children get in touch with their feelings and figure out what they are anxious about.

# TOP PARENTING TIPS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

6

## **Be truthful in answering children's questions.**

Find out what they know about the issue before answering. Keep answers simple. Get information from trusted sources (e.g., official government websites) rather than social media.

7

## **Have a family plan of action.**

Involve children in preparing the plan. As situations can change quickly (e.g., new travel restrictions, school closures), update the plan as needed.

8

## **Help children learn to tolerate more uncertainty.**

The COVID-19 crisis creates uncertainty for everyone. Parents need to find a way to accept uncertainty and, through your actions and words show this acceptance to your children. It's OK to say, "I don't know; let's find out what we can." Big changes to children's lives can be hard and are often scary. They can also create opportunities for learning new skills.

9

## **Take care of yourself the best you can.**

Deal with your own distress by taking actions that give you a better sense of personal control. Stress management skills such as mindfulness and/or deep breathing can help reduce stress. Keep healthy and safe (good personal hygiene, exercise daily, eat well, get enough sleep, avoid using alcohol or drugs to lessen stress). Avoid behaviour that might increase your stress. For example, while it is helpful to keep informed about COVID-19, constant checking on your screens can increase stress.

10

## **Reach out and connect with loved ones.**

Make greater use of phones, online communication tools (video conferencing) and social media to keep in touch with family, friends, and neighbours. Help others in need who are going through a tough time and are more vulnerable (e.g., parents/caregivers with disabilities, older people).

Written by Matthew R Sanders and Vanessa E Cobham  
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