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Head of School Mrs S Sullivan

Dear Parents/Carers,

Friday 05 June 2020

It has been a deeply upsetting few days seeing the shocking scenes unfold in the USA following the tragic murder of George Floyd and the subsequent 'Black Lives Matter' protests. There are clearly many factors in place in the USA that have led to the ferocity of these protests.

It is all too easy to look at the situation in America and dismiss the issues because our police officers do not carry guns. Whilst the right to 'bear arms' clearly adds to the problems in the USA, it is not the root cause of the issue.

As a school, in a predominantly white area, we have a huge responsibility to ensure that children of all races, backgrounds and beliefs are part of our everyday discussions. The curriculum we deliver and class discussions we have, carefully attempt to do this at an age appropriate level. We are constantly evolving our curriculum as we better understand how to celebrate diversity and we are adding to our collection of story books to widen our understanding. We aim to educate children so that they are able to make the small adjustments to their own actions, which will make our community a more harmonious place.

However, we cannot do this alone.

All teachers know that before you can support a child to understand something you must first ensure you understand it yourself. We need parents and carers to talk about diversity with their children. Below are a series of links, ideas and book suggestions, these will be added to the school website and be updated regularly. They are an excellent starting point to recognise the unidentified biases we all have. During this unusual time, the majority of you will have more opportunity than ever to talk to your children. The terrible situation in the USA can be turned into a positive if it becomes the catalyst for an honest and open conversation with your children. It may be uncomfortable and they will have questions. You don't need to have all the answers, but opening the dialogue is something we can all do.

It is not ok to just say you 'don't see colour', it is not ok to aim to 'just not be racist'. You must be, and our children must be, anti-racist.

Quoting the bible; Paul (an early leader of the Church) wrote to the people of Galatia:
"There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
Galatians 3:28 (NIV)

I know that this is something all of you will support and with our school values of compassion, friendship, trust and thankfulness, we can keep moving forward in making our world a better place for everyone.

Warm Wishes,
The School Leadership Team and Governors

www.parents.com/parenting/better-parenting/advice/how-to-teach-your-kids-to-fight-hate-an-age-by-age-guide/

www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/52902537

<https://bookriot.com/2018/09/19/childrens-books-about-diversity/>