



10th February 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

Healthy Lifestyles

The staff have been completing a lot of training on maintaining a healthy approach to our modern lives both for staff who work in schools and for children of school age. This has involved a number of strategies which we will be adopting over the next term which we hope you will support us with. We hope that many of the initiatives sometimes known as 'Mindfulness' will have a positive impact both on our collective physical as well as mental health improvement.

The' Daily Mile' - Some classes have already been trying and enjoying this but we hope to launch it across the school after half-term from 20th February 2017. More details on this can be found at www.dailymile.co.uk . Although the children may find it challenging to begin with, the long-term benefits will be fantastic as well as helping many of our children towards healthier minds.

Reflection Sessions - No more than two per day - teachers will choose specific times for our children to meditate for short periods (no more than 5 minutes) in a bid to be still and de-stress for at least some part of the school day. This will also involve learning how to regulate our breathing.

Internet Safety - This is an on-going challenge that we are constantly aware of at school and we hope that parents continue to be vigilant at home. Many of our children have access to social media now through a whole array of devices including mobile phones, tablets and home computers of one design or another. Without proper supervision, children can be put at risk and exposed to cyberbullying or other safeguarding threats from peer groups, older children and adults either in this country or abroad. At www.saferinternet.org.uk there are short films (which are age appropriate) to share with your children as well as other helpful ideas.

Electronic Devices - There are a whole variety of devices on offer to children which can be used to do many amazing and wonderful things with the correct supervision. Following a risk assessment across the school, we are continuing to uphold our ban on mobile phones being brought into school by pupils, smart watches and any privately owned electronic device that is capable of recording, taking pictures or sending messages within the school building and school grounds. Any pupil found to have such a device on them will have it confiscated and placed in the main school office where it can be collected by an adult with parental responsibility for that child. We have enough 'school owned ' electronic devices to complete any task required by the curriculum.

Use of Social Media by Pupils - Our advice to all of our pupils is not to participate in any forum that is electronic because of the risks they pose to the safety of our children . Children under the age of 13 should not have a Facebook account anyway and we would see this as good practice to be applied to all social media sites for primary school aged children. The staff have been asked to deal with a number of issues resulting from activity on social media even though it is against our clear advice to participate in the first place. We are very reluctant to do this as we are very limited in what we can do without the direct support of all the parents involved.

Social Media by Parents and Carers.

If we are wanting to maintain healthy lifestyles then we need to have respect for each other and not use social media to cause mental anguish to others whether they are adults or children. One of the ways we have been doing this is to promote our shared school values through assemblies and lessons.

It is very sad that social media (which can be a source of so much joy and happiness) has been used to attack threaten and bully both adults and children alike. This 'trial by social media' is a particularly unsavoury aspect of modern lifestyles and can be a major barrier to sustained happiness.

We would respectfully ask all parents who have an issue, to deal with it using our tried and tested procedures which are outlined in every pupil's planner and appear in detail on our website. It is unfair to attack members of staff through social media in one sided onslaughts which give no right of reply and is particularly serious when accusations are being made which could threaten someone's career.

Recently a number of parents have reported that their children have been named on social media about playground disputes and minor differences of opinion which should never really escalate beyond the school gate, but such issues are being aired on social media with people who are barely connected to our school. If a parent needs to be made aware of an incident involving their child, then the class teacher will personally and privately speak with them.

The number of incidents are on the increase and there is nothing staff can do to resolve the 'fallouts' that result from social media activity except to issue the following cautionary advice: If any adult uses a social media site to abuse, threaten or name another child or another adult in an offensive manner then they are leaving themselves exposed to either private prosecution or prosecution from the police. If a member of staff is named in any social media outlet in a negative or critical manner then, school will seek legal advice about what action can be taken and governors will be informed.

And finally ...

I want to end on a positive note because I know that the vast majority of our children and parents are brilliant and I feel very privileged to be head teacher of a school which is outstanding in so many ways. I want to assure you that the only reason I mention some of these 'less than tasteful' issues is to underline once again that we have a very dedicated staff who love working with your children and they will not be complacent when it comes to ensuring their happiness at school, so when we see unpleasant trends developing then we will challenge them. As the weather continues to improve, we will be using our vast grounds to seize every opportunity to embrace a healthy lifestyle approach by using our track for the 'daily mile' and for encouraging our children to cycle in a safe environment as well as all the other outdoor activities we promote.

Thank you for the donated bikes so far and for your continued support. Have a restful and happy half-term and we will see you back on the 20th February for the official launch of our 'daily mile'.

From ,

Mr McDowell and all the staff at Davyhulme Primary School.