



## Message from the Head Teacher

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is sad to hear that Nelson Mandela passed away on Thursday. His life was filled with hardship as well as enormous influence as he led the world to re-evaluate how we deal with one another on this small planet we share. Mrs Bana grew up in apartheid regime and remembers fondly helping in the first election which allowed all members of the South African community to vote and contribute fully to society. We led a collective worship talking about his life and what his message meant to the hundreds of thousands and millions of people who were affected by this message: we are equal and deserve respect.

We also welcomed Survinder Singh to our school on Wednesday to talk about Guru Nanak and his message: we are all equal and deserve respect. When I think of our own faith tradition I remember Sri Chaitanya who also repeated the message of equality and diversity and inclusion. I hope that our school community, parents, children and staff live the values that we all say are important and reflect ourselves how far we model equality, diversity and inclusion.

With kind wishes James Biddulph, Head Teacher, 6-12-13

### **A Re-focus...**

**This is a respectful request for all parents. Our staff are working very hard to provide the irresistible learning opportunities for your children but increasingly they are being stopped from doing this because parents want to talk extensively about different matters. This happens mostly in the morning and sometimes after school. Please be aware that most teachers start at 7.15am and leave at 6pm so the day does not end for them at 3.10 and they have other duties to prepare for your children. Please make an appointment to see the class teacher if you need to talk for longer than a few minutes.**

### **Children's belongings:**

**Please teach your child to look after their belongings like gloves, hats and scarves. This is part of our self-discipline value. Please also make sure EVERY item is labeled with your child's name – finding a blue jumper in a sea of blue jumpers is impossible. Any items lost by your children will be put in the lost property box. Teachers cannot be responsible for every item of clothing in their class of up to 30 children. This is an unrealistic expectation and we ask for your support in training your child to be responsible – even from reception.**



Year 1 doing outdoor maths – a human bar graph.

# Safeguarding

What can we say? We have asked parents to stop driving down Carlton Drive but for some reason many choose to think of themselves and not the wider community. Our ethos says that we always talk with kindness and for the benefit of all. This is an example of the time-wasting incidences caused by some members of the parent community resulting in staff spending time dealing with 'policing' issues when we should be helping your children learn. Please act responsibly.

Email Message from a worried parent:

When I came to pick up my children from school yesterday, my child and I nearly got run over by a grandparent of a reception child whilst she was reversing and missed us by inches! She wasn't aware we were there and even as she pulled away to drive off she didn't check if other children were crossing. It made me really upset so I stopped her and told her that she nearly run me and my daughter over and instead of apologising she said I should look after the children properly! I was gobsmacked how rude she was. It's very worrying as this is the 2nd time this has happened to us since October. I really don't feel its safe for the reception children. Please can you stop cars coming so close to the reception gate, I don't want a child getting injured, we need to stop it before its too late.

**RESULTS OF SURVEY:** Recently a survey was carried-out (attached) to gauge opinion, ideas, format & regularity of the weekly Avanti School newsletter and to seek ways to improve communications. Approximately 80 survey's were completed & returned to the School by parents. Some of the key findings are listed below:

- Almost all read the newsletter on a weekly basis & looked forward to it
- Majority would prefer it continued to be published weekly with a very small number preferring monthly or fortnightly.
- Majority are happy to extremely happy with the content
- Majority preferred an electronic copy in addition to paper copy with a very small number stating that they only wanted a hard-copy
- Majority of parents were aware that the newsletters are uploaded to the website for viewing PDF copy, however some parents pointed out this this wasn't always the case
- Most parents visited the website on a regular basis

**Some additional comments, suggestions made by parent's:**

- Although I love the newsletter and look forward to it every week, I think there are to many colours and format is too child friendly - prefer a formal layout using bullet points and possibly black & white
- Prefer copy to be emailed - this way it can be read at any time
- Events & Diary section very useful - Highlight this area
- More focus on Curriculum - i.e. what new things children have been doing at School
- Website isn't updated regularly - I used to visit every week but hardly now.
- Newsletter it to cramped and has to much information - best to stick to the important stuff.
- I love the religious quotes and the information on the Hindu meanings and rituals
- Important dated need to be highlighted on newsletter & website. Especially the website as this is the latest information
- Avanti does more than most local schools to communicate and it's much appreciated thanks Chet Patel (Parent Governor)

**THE WORD 'BULLYING'** - There is no legal definition of bullying. However, it's usually defined as behaviour that is: **repeated**, intended to hurt someone either physically or emotionally often aimed at certain groups, eg because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Children sometimes say they were bullied in the playground when what they mean is they were pushed over by a child in a one off incident. One example we dealt with this week which illustrates how the word is used incorrectly is: two friends playing football at lunchtime, one child fell over while trying to get the ball, the other child kicked the ball and this kick hurt the first child's shoulder and back, trying to tackle for the ball. The second child told their parent that they had been 'kicked in the head and were bullied'. The parent was rightly concerned and complained – but this is not bullying. **WE TAKE BULLYING VERY SERIOUSLY AND WILL DEAL WITH SUCH SITUATIONS SWIFTLY AND SENSITIVELY.**

Quote of the week: 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world'- Nelson Mandela