

Thursday 19th October 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you regarding our school response to the current and ongoing events in Israel and Gaza. We know many of our staff, children and families will be both directly and indirectly affected by the escalation and violence, and ongoing uncertainty.

Our shared priority is children's wellbeing. At times of conflict, we are aware that some children may experience feelings of worry, sadness and fear as they try to make sense of the news. We are aware that there is a significant amount of highly distressing content across online platforms that would be inappropriate for primary-aged children to access. To support children, we encourage you to be highly vigilant regarding your child's access to information online and in print media. **Please ensure all screen-time is supervised and that your child does not access social media or news sources unattended.**

After the half-term break, we will share some key messages in Key Stage 2 assemblies relating to knowledge, empathy and hope.

1. **Knowledge:** we will share a small amount of vocabulary and knowledge to help children navigate information they may hear or be exposed to. Terms such as *conflict, peace, territory, civilians, aid, fatalities* will be defined factually. We will review learning in our curriculum related to navigating reliable and age-appropriate sources of information (e.g. Newsround and First News).
2. **Empathy:** we will share that empathy is a valid response to any human suffering and loss of life.
3. **Hope:** although the situation is complex, it is important that children do not feel despair. We will share our hope as a community that human and children's rights will be respected and that peace will be restored.

We are a proudly Gold Level UNICEF Rights Respecting School. At times of conflict, we reflect on the rights of all human beings under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We understand that this may be a time of anxiety, sadness and fear not only for children but for families and staff members in our community. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss a channel for individual support for yourself or your child in relation to recent events. We work closely with Dr Natalie Bailey and will draw on her expertise in helping explore a response to your needs.

In such distressing times, I hope we can find strength in our supportive and respectful community, with our uniting commitment to human and children's rights.

Best wishes,

Anna Case