



Dear Parents and Carers,

Anti-Bullying Week happens in schools across England each November. This year's Anti-Bullying Week has the theme 'Change Starts With Us' and is happening from Monday 11th November - Friday 15th November. At Dowson, we will be covering so many aspects of the theme, and other related aspects of the Citizenship curriculum that children should know and understand in order to live together respectfully and with kindness and compassion for others, that one week just won't be enough! Therefore, we will continue for a second week, beginning 18th November.

The anti-bullying week website says:

'The theme: 'Change Starts With Us'

Whether it is verbal, physical, online or in-person, bullying has a significant impact on a child's life well in to adulthood. By making small, simple changes, we can break this cycle and create a safe environment for everyone. Because together, we can challenge bullying. Change starts with a conversation. It starts with checking in. It starts with work together.

*Small change. Big difference.
Change starts here.
Change starts now.
Change starts with us.*

This year the goal is to inform schools, children and young people, parents and carers to know that it takes a collective responsibility to stop bullying. We are excited for this campaign as we want to create empowering, positive messages addressing the fact that when it comes to bullying CHANGE STARTS WITH US!

I wanted to make you aware of some of the main things we will be covering in order that you can prepare for a couple of special days and be ready to discuss and enforce some of the key messages at home to support our teaching and encourage children's learning in this area.

Particular dates to note are:

Tuesday 12th November, when we will be having an 'Odd Socks Day'. Odd Socks Day is designed to be fun! It's an opportunity to encourage people to express themselves and celebrate their individuality and what makes us all unique! There is no pressure to wear the latest fashion or for parents to buy expensive costumes. All you have to do to take part is wear odd socks to your school, it couldn't be simpler! Your odd socks can be as wild, wacky and colourful as you want. Children should still be in school uniform other than their odd socks.

Friday 22nd November will culminate the fortnight with a 'Rainbow - be you, be kind' day. This is a day where children can wear brightly coloured clothes, clothes that make them happy, clothes that show off who they are, or clothes with positive slogans on. This idea was put forward by our School Council who thought that this would be a great way to finish the anti-bullying focus weeks in a way that shows off all the work we will be doing on diversity, acceptance, respect and being our unique selves.





We will also be setting a kindness challenge, which challenges the children to do something kind for someone every day. You might like to look out for this at home too and if you're the recipient or you spot them being kind, let us know through class dojo so we can celebrate!

The list below gives you an idea of some of the other things we will revisit and cover over the course of the focus weeks. It is not exhaustive and I must stress that everything will be covered at age-appropriate levels depending on year groups.

- How am I the same / different to others? What makes me unique?
- Diversity and difference, including families.
- Disability and special needs awareness.
- British Values
- Racism and Homophobia
- Dowson's 3 B's of Behaviour – including the launch of our new child-led anti-bullying policy
- Online safety and acceptable online behaviour
- Hurtful words
- It's not 'Just a Joke'

If you have any questions regarding these weeks, or have any other aspects of the theme that you would like to suggest we cover, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our Pastoral team or discuss with your child's class teacher.

We hope the children tell you all about the work they do during these weeks and you feel proud of the messages they are being given – we know we are!

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Kathryn Thornburn

