



17<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is quite unbelievable that I am already writing to say happy half term and that we are now half way through the academic year! There is still lots to cram into the rest of the year, some of which is coming up quite soon.

### **World Book Week**

You will have seen from the letter sent by the English team that our first week back is World Book Week. We will be celebrating the power of reading and all the wonders reading a great book can bring. As usual, we will host our dress up day. This will be on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March** and this year is themed with our top 20 books and authors. Your donations for this day – payable through MCAS – will raise money for school to ensure our class libraries are always stocked with a range of wonderful texts for your children to enjoy. Children will be given a £1 token to spend at our book fair, arriving on 16<sup>th</sup> March.

### **Parent Consultation Day**

We will be holding our usual parent consultation day in school on **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March** (and the afternoon of Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March for Nursery parents) where you will hear about the progress of your child so far this year and discuss the ways in which you can help them to maximise their potential over the second part of the year. Full details will be sent upon our return from the holidays.

### **Strike Days**

There are further planned strike days in the next half term. The next of which is **28<sup>th</sup> February**. As stated in the last letter, the decision to strike is never taken lightly and I will do my best to communicate with you the information that I have in order to reduce the inconvenience to yourselves as much as possible with each upcoming strike day.

**The following classes will be closed to pupils on the 28<sup>th</sup> February.**

Reception Alder

Reception Ash

Year 3 Hawthorn

Year 5 Beech

Year 5 Rowan

I will update you of any changes I become aware of before the day.

### **School Dinners**

We need your help! Please may we ask again that you choose your child's menu choices with them so that they are much more likely to eat the selected meal. Whilst we appreciate there are things on the menu that you would like them to have or hope they would eat, there are a significant number of children who won't eat their selections and tell us they don't get a say in their choice. This leads to them still being hungry and us throwing away a large amount of food – you would be shocked at just how much and is saddens me greatly, particularly given the current climate. It is much better for you to choose with them and select what you know they will eat so that you know they have had a nutritious lunch. We will not force any children to eat what is on their plate, but we do encourage children to at least try things and eat a little more if we feel they have not eaten enough to ensure they are not hungry.

Please also talk to your child about trying new things and try to add a variety of new things to your plates at home so that they are used to this – especially with vegetables! Again, children are often leaving these, particularly if they are unfamiliar. By eating



their portion of veg at school, it ticks off one of those 5 a day, contributes to good health and development and creates healthy habits for life. We have done an assembly with our youngest pupils on the healthy eating plate and how school dinners contribute to their health and nutrition. It is important that they also know that something not being their favourite doesn't mean they shouldn't eat it; it will not make them unwell but it will fill them up and allow them to concentrate on learning in the afternoon. They can then let you know to change their choice.

We will always let you know if there is a menu choice that your child really isn't getting along with so that you can go into your app and change this. Please help us to reduce the food waste; it is disappointing on so many levels to put so much good food in the bin and it could mean that your child isn't eating what you think they are.

### **Headlice**

We seem to have a higher-than-usual number of children whose parents are reporting cases of headlice – sometimes recurring. Please ensure you regularly check your child's hair and treat where necessary. After treatment, please continue to check and retreat where eggs may have been left behind. Advice on how to spot and treat them can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/>

### **#WeAreDowson**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> February, our Choir once again joined 8,500 other pupils at the AO Arena in Manchester to take part in the Young Voices concert. The choir had a wonderful time and were a credit to our school and their parents, behaving impeccably throughout the trip and singing their hearts out with pride, confidence and every ounce of enthusiasm. We sang with Heather Small from M people and even appeared briefly on North West Tonight! I hope all of the parents who joined us as part of the audience enjoyed it as much as we did. We definitely did something that day to make us feel proud!

We celebrated our Great Citizens in this morning's assembly, when each teacher chose a pupil from their class who continually demonstrates all of our PACT values and / or has done something in particular that is special and makes them a wonderful role model to others on what being a great citizen is. Well done to all of our winners; it is a hard choice for staff every term because of how many pupils they have to choose from!

### **Staffing News**

The end of this half term sees the beginning of two maternity leaves from Team Dowson. Mrs Lowe took her leave from last week and Mrs Gregg finishes today to begin her journey into parenthood. We wish them luck and that they have a joyful time with their new additions into their families. Mrs Walkden takes up her position as the class teacher for 1 Birch; she has received a careful transition and handover from Mrs Gregg and I know she'll work with the team and parents to ensure smooth continuation for 1 Birch's teaching and learning.

I wish you all a happy, healthy holiday.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Kathryn Thornburn  
Principal

