



Urmston
Primary School

12.09.25

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm sure if I looked back to our first newsletter of last year, I probably said this then too, but WOW...the children have started this year brilliantly and we couldn't be happier. What's more important is that on the whole, we sense they feel the same way!

Our new starters in Nursery and Reception have begun their time at UPS well (with a few expected hiccups, of course) and we thank all of you parents and carers for preparing them after the long summer.

Thank you again and have a lovely weekend,

From us all at UPS

PE Kits

Although we mentioned this in our letter last week, please ensure that the PE kits that your children are wearing, follow our expectations set out in the letter last week. If we deviate from it, the children will understandably be miffed to see some not following it and some following it. We'll need to look at this closely and appreciate your understanding here. Please also note—ties are to be worn in the juniors as standard school uniform.

Trafford Music Service
The wonderful TMS came in this week to deliver an assembly to encourage our children to participate in learning an instrument. There are particularly places available for piano tuition so please do get in touch if you're interested.

Guide to What Support is on offer in Trafford

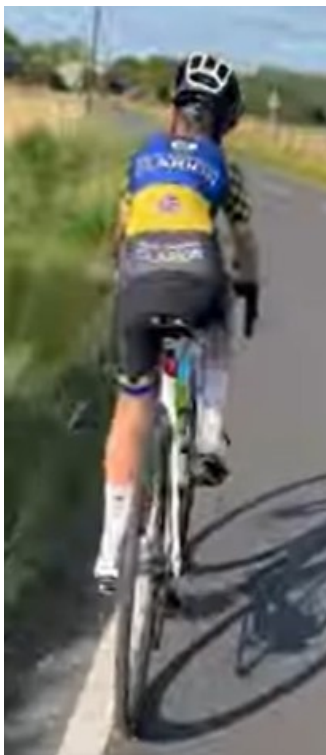
Life is pretty complex at the moment and we all need a bit of help now and again. Take a look at the guide at the link below which offers information on what is out there in Trafford to support you and your children...<https://www.urmstonprimary.com/parents/resources-for-parents>

Healthy Snacks in KS2...break times

It is our duty as a school to try and promote healthy eating. We all know that the term 'healthy snack' is open to misinterpretation, but we ask that you consider the snacks that children bring in to have in the juniors at break times. Of course, we want the children to have an energy boost, but we want to move firmly towards these being healthy, and so please do expect us to speak to your children about this, particularly if we see them with chocolate biscuits, crisps and the like. We know you're aware that we aren't doing this to be awkward, but we feel it is our responsibility to promote positive eating habits. We will be looking to get together a suitable list, to give some ideas and of course, we welcome your thoughts on this as always.

Tablets, smartphones and all things screens...

We have heard through the grapevine that there are new rumblings in the school community about smartphone-free children and reducing screen time. As a school, whilst we have no 'official position', conversations amongst staff (many of whom are parents) point towards a general consensus that less screen time aids opportunities to be creative and actually to be bored, something that many of our children are not very good at! Experience perhaps tells us that once children get past that boredom, all sorts of ideas can grow from it, especially if they have siblings to bounce off, perhaps. We want to keep the conversations going with this, both for reducing it, but also in sharing it's benefits when used well. We'll touch base again and all thoughts are always most welcome!



BEING MORE

A reminder...please do let us know how your children are 'being more' outside of school! It is always lovely to see! This week, we'll start with Lucas (and his brother Grayson—hi Grayson!), who has completed a sponsored walk today in support of Forgotten Women - a charity that is supporting families on the front line in Gaza. He and Grayson have raised nearly £300 together. Thank you, both of you...true 'being more'!

Thank you also to Cass—he raised £700 for prostate cancer by cycling 300 miles in August. Great resilience...and great being more!

Well done to everybody who puts in the effort to be that little more to make the world a better place!



Ashley Thorpe - Spirit Warriors...visiting UPS!

We're excited to announce that Jhalak Prize shortlisted and Branford Boase Award nominated author Ashley Thorpe will be visiting Years 4 - 6 to introduce us to his new book, Spirit Warriors.

Ashley's fantasy adventures for children put a compelling spin on West African and Caribbean mythology and folklore, and Spirit Warriors is an epic story of chaos, myth, adventure and ancient magic, perfect for readers who love titles like Percy Jackson. It combines themes of kinship, overcoming grief and coming of age with humour, fast-paced action and extraordinary figures from history and folklore.

Urmston Books and Board Games is providing copies of Ashley's book at a special discounted event price — and

your child will be able to meet Ashley personally to get their book signed.

If you would like to buy a book for your child, please complete the form and payment. Books are £7.50



<https://www.urmstonbooks.co.uk/ashley-thorpe-school-visit-ups>

CLASSROOM ACTION

This first week back we've been...watching bubbles float as our inspiration for writing; using our prior knowledge to put historical events in chronological order; developing branching databases to create a Guess Who game; retelling the story of Jesus feeding the 5000; reading and comparing a variety of shape poems; practising counting objects; creating balances using points and patches; learning about the colour monster(!)...and much more!





Join us for a fun-filled family day of games, activities and delicious treats. All monies raised donated to the Toy House charity.



Dev's Delicious
Ice Cream



Little Groovers'
Music sessions



Fire engine
10am-1pm

FREE ENTRY

email@thetoyhouse.org
Charity No: 1168925



in partnership with



Together Orchestra

**A new inclusive music-making group
for children aged 7-18 with additional needs.**

All are welcome - those who are new to music or who have experience playing an instrument, this group offers a supportive and enjoyable environment to make music with others.

Wednesday evenings

6:00-6:35pm – Musical games, singing & creative activities

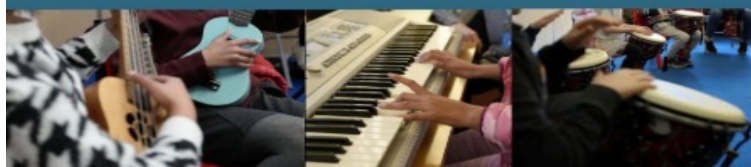
6:35-6:45pm – Break

6:45-7:25pm – Together Orchestra rehearsal (accessible for all)

Led by experienced SEND music specialists at Trafford Music Service.

Together Orchestra is about learning, belonging, and enjoying music – together.

[Book on our website](#) to attend a free trial session in September.



Contact us for more information:

Email: music.service@trafford.gov.uk

Phone: 0161 911 8659

Top Tips for... MANAGING SCREEN TIME

According to the latest stats, people aged between 8 and 17 spend four hours on digital devices during an average day. Obviously, a new year is ideal for fresh starts and renewed efforts – so lots of families are trying to cut down their combined screen time right now, creating more moments to connect with each other and relying less on gadgets to have fun. Our top tips on reducing screen time are for everyone, so you can get your whole family involved in turning over a new leaf this year!

Buy Milk

GET OUT AND ABOUT

If the weather's decent, spend some time in the garden or go for a walk. Even a stroll to the local shop would do: the main thing is getting some fresh air and a break from your screen.

TRY A TIMED TRIAL

When you're taking a screen break to do a different activity or a chore, turn it into a game by setting yourself a timer. Can you complete your task before the alarm goes off?

GO DIGITAL DETOX

Challenge yourself and your family to take time off from screens, finding other things to do. You could start off with half a day, then build up to a full day or even an entire weekend.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let your family see you successfully managing your own screen time. You'll be showing them the way, and it might stop some of those grumbles when you do want to go online.

AGREE TECH-FREE ZONES

Nominate some spots at home where devices aren't allowed. Anywhere your family gathers together, like at the table or in the living room, could become a 'no phone zone'.

HOLD A SCREEN TIME AMNESTY

As a family, agree specific windows when it's OK to use devices. This should help everyone to balance time on phones or gaming with enjoying quality moments together.

BE MINDFUL OF TIME

Stay aware of how long you've been on your device for. Controlling how much time you spend in potentially stressful areas of the internet – like social media platforms – can also boost your wellbeing.

'PARK' PHONES OVERNIGHT

Set up an overnight charging station for everyone's devices – preferably away from bedrooms. That means less temptation for late-night scrolling.

SWITCH ON DND

Research shows that micro-distractions like message alerts and push notifications can chip away at our concentration levels. Put devices on 'do not disturb' until you're less busy.

TAKE A FAMILY TECH BREAK

Set aside certain times when the whole family puts their gadgets away and enjoys an activity together: playing a board game, going for a walk or just having a chat.

SOCIALISE WITHOUT SCREENS

When you're with friends, try not to automatically involve phones, TVs or other tech. Having company can be loads more fun if your attention isn't being split.

WIND DOWN PROPERLY

Try staying off phones, consoles, tablets and so on just before you go to sleep. Reading or just getting comfy in bed for a while can give you a much more restful night.

Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. They also provide training and support to education organisations and local authorities – empowering school leaders and staff with the knowledge and tools to shape their settings into inclusive communities where the mental health of pupils and personnel is prioritised.



DEVICE BOX

The National College



National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

NEURODIVERSITY FRIENDLY YOUTH ACTIVITIES

- For neurodivergent young people
- A relaxed, no pressure space
- Let your imagination flow
- Support for your hobbies
- Encouraging self-expression
- A place to be yourself
- Building a friendly community



Scan the QR Code or
-> [Click here](#) <-
to find out more



For ages 10-13, 14-17 & 18-25, online and in-person.

Registered Charity No. 1182361 | hello@starling.org.uk | [@starlingcio](https://www.starlingcio.org) | [starlingcio.org](https://www.starlingcio.org)

ND Navigator Signposting Appointments



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL



A signposting service for parent/carers whose young people are on the Trafford ND Pathways (TCAS and TASC) pre and post diagnosis. These appointments are 15 minutes long. Parent carers will be provided with bespoke signposting directing them to relevant services, support groups and activities from the Trafford local offer. Follow the link below or scan the QR code for appointments May-July.

All appointments on the local offer.





THE TRAFFORD GM FAMILY HUB APP



A one-stop shop of health information from pregnancy to teenage years for you and your family

- 75 languages
- Tailored information for YOUR family
- Details of support services local to you

Download the app by scanning the QR codes below and start using it today!

Download
the app by
**SCANNING
THE QR CODE**



APPLE



ANDROID



**Free, safe and anonymous
mental health support
whenever you need it.**



Chat with our team of
friendly practitioners



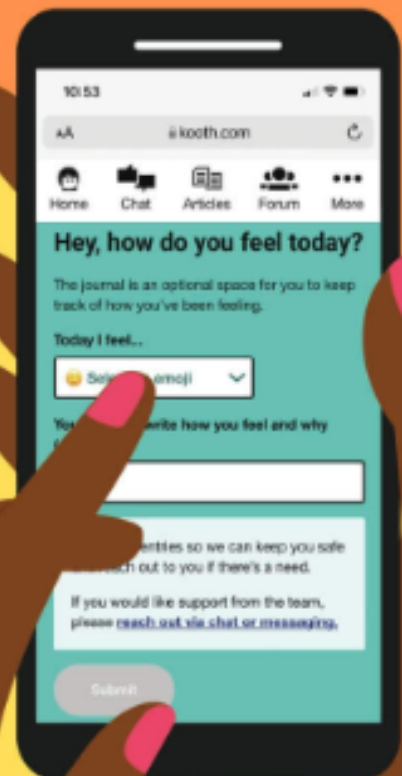
Helpful articles



Self-help tools
and activities



Support from the
Kooth community



Visit **kooth.com** to find out more





FRAGILE MINDS: RETHINKING SMARTPHONES AND THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

While watching my children play in the snow last week, I saw my son trying to force a carrot into the frozen head of his snowman, and it struck me, our brains are a lot like that. Have you tried learning a new skill as an adult? It's slow and frustrating, like forcing a vegetable into ice. But children learn with such ease because their brains are like soft, fresh snow. Malleable and ready to form new pathways.

The beauty of the snow gave us all a reason to be present-to sledge, build, and simply appreciate. It was a pull to get outside, to connect with the world around us. Sadly, though, the virtual world is increasingly becoming a stronger temptation than real, active play. When we allow children unrestricted access to the internet, social media, or inappropriate games, we risk shaping their neural pathways in ways that can become fixed. The instant gratification of scrolling through endless videos conditions their brains to prioritise quick rewards over deeper engagement. Modern childhood is losing the time and space for imagination and exploration, replaced by screens that steal their focus and limit their potential. By setting boundaries now, we allow their minds to grow in ways that foster creativity, resilience, and meaningful connections. Just as snowflakes are unique, so too are our children's developing minds. We aren't powerless in this journey. By making thoughtful choices and sticking together, we can help shape a future where our children thrive.

Meg x

Roots and Wings Play Therapy



**Smart phone free
childhood parent
pact**

<https://parentpact.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>

**Join the growing
movement of parents
across Britain who
believe that childhood
is too short to be
spent on a
smartphone**

**It takes 30 seconds to
sign the Parent Pact.
And the more of us
who do, the quicker
we'll change the
social norm - and
protect childhood for
our children and
future generations.**



Online relationship support for parents



Parents in this area can now access **THREE ONLINE COURSES** from the relationship experts at OnePlusOne. Learn to cope with stress and communicate better, wherever you are in your parenting journey.



FOR
ALL
PARENTS

Arguing better

Disagreements are a normal part of life. How you approach them can make all the difference to you, your partner, and your children. You will learn:

- How to recognise stress and how it can affect you.
- How to support each other through difficult times.
- What causes arguments and how to stop them.



FOR
NEW
PARENTS

Me, You and Baby Too

Learn how to navigate the changes that happen in a relationship when a baby arrives, including:

- How you and your partner can support each other.
- How to talk to bring up difficult topics.
- How arguments start, and how to stop them.



FOR
SEPARATING
PARENTS

Getting it right for children

When parents are separating or separated, children can often get caught in the middle. Learn how to manage conflict to minimise the impact it has on your children, as well as:

- How to stop a discussion from turning into an argument.
- How to stay calm and listen as well as talk.
- Skills for finding solutions and making compromises.

To access the courses, you will need a smartphone, tablet, or computer, and a good internet connection. They are all **FREE** to use, so you'll just need to select your local authority area and create an account with a username and password.

You can get started by scanning the QR code or visiting:
www.oneplusone.org.uk/parents

