



**Urmston**  
Primary School

19.03.21

Dear Parents and Carers,

Another great week we've had here at UPS and your children have, as expected, continued to be magnificent. Thankyou for all of your ongoing support. We will be looking to have a Parents Evening on the third or fourth week back after the Easter break so that we've had a proper chance to see where they are socially, emotionally and academically. We'll be giving you plenty of info on what we are working on with your children in supporting (and challenging!) them with their learning and what we'll need to do to keep on growing! Of course, if you have any questions in the meantime, just ask.

Can we please just remind everyone that we are still adhering to social distancing measures—staff will still be wearing face coverings and we ask that you do the same when dropping off and collecting your children. Can we also remind you that as per our risk assessment, just one adult should be collecting your children under these regulations. Many thanks for your understanding.

Have a super weekend from us all at UPS.

### Art Work and Red Nose Day

Thank you so much for all of your donations for our art photos so far. The children (and the staff...and some of you!) have done a super job and we hope to raise plenty of money for those who are far less fortunate than ourselves.

It is the case that Red Nose Day is often a reminder to us all of how unfair and unequal life seems. Developing countries in particular already struggle with tremendous hardships, and when we add to that the coronavirus and the fact that they have had no access to any vaccines yet, times are even harder. The money that we can raise might make a small difference to help those who really need it. You can make your donations via ParentPay should you so wish, but regardless, photos will be with you no later than Monday. PTO for a peek of what they look like.

Thanks for your support.

### Belonging

We'd again like to thank everyone who joined us for our 'Belonging Forum' on Tuesday evening. It was wonderful to listen staff's, governors' and parents' views about how they feel they belong at UPS. Mr Doherty and Ms Ahle led discussions on what it means to belong and how far we have to go as a school, community, and society in general before we can say that we really do ALL feel like we belong, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability and all manner of characteristics. The theme of 'Belonging' stems from work that we are undertaking to be a truly anti-racist school and it reminded us how important it is for all of us to belong, not only if we have different skin colour, but many other distinctions too, which make us all brilliantly unique.

This is so, so important and we hope that you'll join us in the future in delving deeper into such important issues!

*You take a look at the minutes later on in this newsletter!*

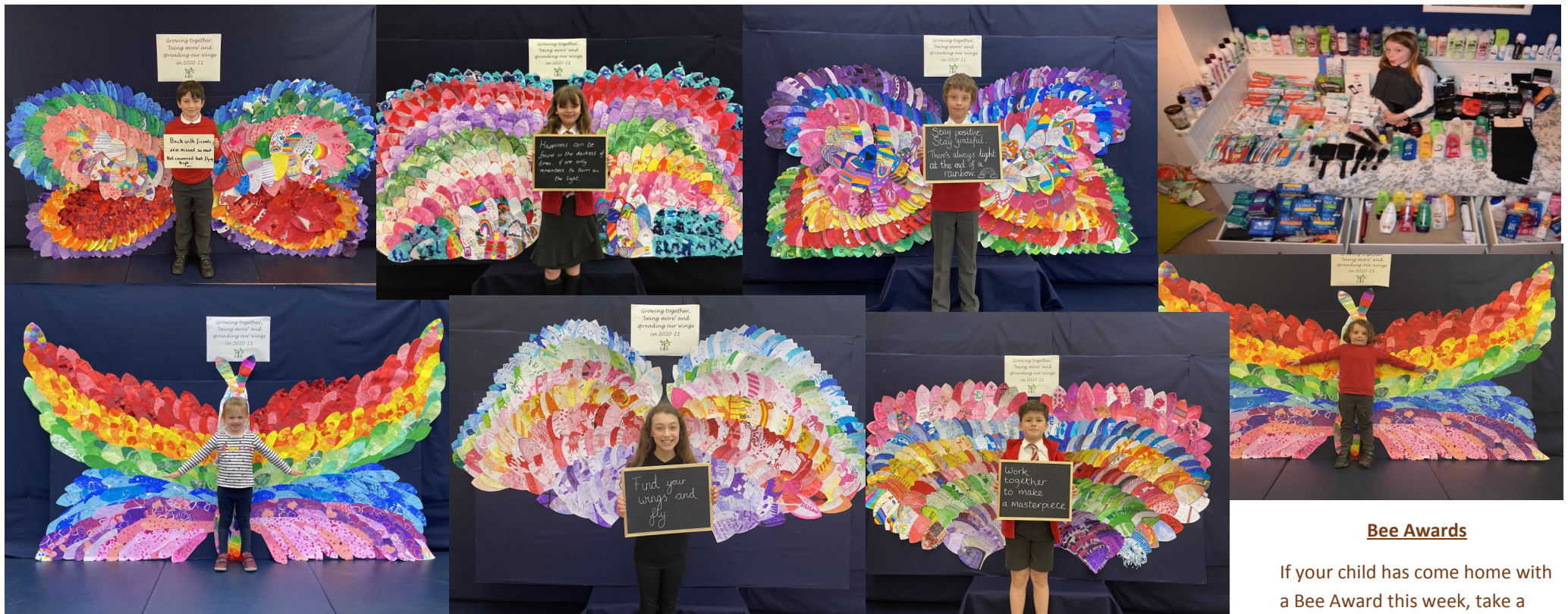


### Relationships, Sex and Health Education

We've sent out information on this today so please read away and engage in conversation with us should you feel you need to!

## Amelie 'being more'!

Each small part of the wings in our art work is a way of us illustrating the good that has come from lockdown—the kindness, love and respect that people have shown and the resilience that people have needed to get through it. Amelie (and her family) are just one example of this and we thought we'd share the fact that during lockdown Amelie not only raised money through various means at home, but baked for three streets, in exchange for donations for MASH (supporting women on the streets of Manchester). She also collected many, many goods that have been donated, including soaps, tights, leggings, deodorant, shampoos, conditioners, hairbrushes, toothpaste, tampons, sanitary towels, shower gels and face wipes. Incredible kindness and inspiring us all to be more. Well done Amelie and Co! (Pic of swag below...)



### Bee Awards

If your child has come home with a Bee Award this week, take a look at the assembly link:

<https://zoom.us/rec/share/MKEENc5xWRomAf-GOWYdrqVNqdezq3N6DWDjIU3TxPEOIjR65Ns9DSKB0WwRQPtmE.DG3VQC PFHDBdSyt-?startTime=1616156827000>

### A little note about spelling records

Can we ask that any books read on our online Big Club website are still recorded in the reading record as this ensures that TAs do not give out books to children that they may have already read.

Obviously we still want our children to use Bug Club as it gives them access to more than one book per week and is a great resource. This will help with a smoother transition to being back in school fulltime.

Thank you



## UPS BELONGING FORUM: Minutes of 16.03.21 meeting

Mr Doherty began by welcoming the 40+ participants and thanking them for their attendance before giving some context, sharing the presentation (attached), and discussing why we were here.

Ms Ahle then added what the intentions are and shared her thoughts on what 'belonging' means and how important this is – that our children should have a real sense of belonging and can be their ultimate selves. She said that as an Arabic, Mancunian Muslim who has grown up in the area, there are times when she doesn't always feel like she belongs it is important that we work hard to ensure that no one feels this way.

Mr Doherty then commented on what it means to 'belong' and shared some statistics that illustrate that much work needs to be done nationally for people, often from minority groups, to feel like they belong.

It was then over to everyone to go into break-out rooms and discuss their own experiences of belonging within our school community and in their lives in general, before returning and sharing some views as a whole group.

A governor shared a discussion from one of the rooms. He said that as a white person he hasn't had experience of not belonging necessarily. He went on to mention the importance of belonging and commented that the group that he was in discussed how this applied not only to race but also religion in particular.

Ms Ahle discussed her group's conversation. She said that the group discussed the importance of making sure that children from a variety of racial backgrounds take up lead roles in performances etc. The group also discussed the importance of positive messages from BAME backgrounds rather than only referring to oppression and slavery and the hardship that black and brown people have faced historically.

Another participant added that more positive representation is important – not just overcoming diversity but portraying differences as positive. She emphasised the necessity to discuss differences and the importance of celebrating them regardless of what that are, be it religion, race, hair or size – acceptance of everyone is what is so imperative. It isn't okay to be mean to anybody.

A parent mentioned how important it is to ensure representation in books that children see, read and hear so they can see people who look like them – this may be race to disability to complex medical needs - all should feel represented, therefore valued, and can feel safe and that they belong. A staff member commented on a staff meeting that staff had yesterday regarding this and that this is going to be a priority, with class teachers given a budget for books with an emphasis on diversity as main characters and culturally varied in their narrative and focus.

Another parent stated the importance of the language and wording of equality and diversity and how parents and families might need support here. It was added that strong role models were so important with black scientists being used as an example.

A governor said that two parents talked clearly about their experiences of gender and race issues. We must think about preparing children not just for our school community but others. A parent added that the challenge was to prepare our young people for a diverse community and that we must remain in tune to what else is going on in Manchester, a city of rich diversity. It is important that we don't become too cocooned in our community but educate our children in such diverse cultures.

Valuing all differences was a theme that was emerging and this started to come out extremely strongly.

Gender, transgender and gender fluidity was also mentioned by a parent and how this must also be included in any conversations on belonging.

A staff member spoke of his experiences quite some time ago when his mother came to school and discussed her experiences and this aided his sense of belonging. He added that we need to help parents at home with the language at home and also that Religious Education and diversity of what the children are being taught and are exposed to here is important. He commented that it is important that learning and awareness raised in assemblies should lead into common practice in school and become part of our school culture and fully embedded where possible. Another parent mentioned how important this is, especially regarding religion, celebrating religion but also non-religious belief.

A parent then shared their child's thoughts and mentioned that easier access to the quiet room for children with disability is needed and how important it is that school can include children with disabilities in sports days, etc.

Mr Doherty acknowledged the importance of the children's voices and listening to their feelings.

Another parent mentioned how important it is for staff diversity to reflect and represent pupils and was encouraged to see this beginning.

A parent asked about the Rooney rule and whether we follow this. Mr Doherty said that as yet we do not but that we will be looking at recruitment as part of the Anti-Racist Award, along with other areas of focus and development.

A parent asked what was coming next and Mr Doherty said that we hoped to create a working party and further gauge views from our school community as well as enhance pupil voice.

The meeting closed with thanks.