



# Pear Tree School

*Achieving the Best We Can in Everything We Do*

## Newsletter

### Spring 1 - 2024

#### In this newsletter

- . Introduction
- . Hello and Goodbye
- . Open Mornings
- . Young Voices
- . Creative Curriculum - Diversity
- . Travel Training Preparation for Adulthood
- . Dates for diaries

How quickly have the past 5 weeks flown past! I think it has seemed such a short half term, following the longest half term before Christmas that I have ever experienced in my teaching career.

Despite the dark mornings and cold and wet weather, school has remained a bustling, happy and exciting environment. I have observed some amazing learning experiences during my learning walks around school and have particularly marvelled at so much of the communication I am seeing and hearing.

We are currently focusing on our new cultural values in school. These values underpin our school mission statement of 'achieving the best we can in everything we do' and we are currently working with our whole school community to embed these in our practice. The culture and climate in our school remains very positive but we recognise that we must always work at this to continually improve.

This term, the cultural value we are focusing on is *'Everyone a learner'* and I have been working with the staff and Governing Body to challenge them to always be learning. This may be something such as a new intervention in class, learning about a change in a pupil's Positive Handling Plan or doing some further study. It is really important that we model this thirst for learning to our children and I would encourage each of you to be a continuous learner with us and to share with us your achievements.

With the warmest of wishes

Kate



## Hello and Goodbye

We welcomed a number of new staff to the school in January: Emily (Teacher) and Lauren (TA) in Early Years, Sophie and Carly (TA) in Bay Tree, Caroline (TA) in Maple Tree, Abigail (TA) in Compass Centre, Sharon (HLTA), and Vinnie (Site Manager). We hope they will all be very happy at Pear Tree and enjoy working with our fabulous children.

Unfortunately we do have a few goodbyes to say too. Elaine (Business Support Officer) will be taking early retirement and we will all be very sorry to see her go. Many of you will have got to know Elaine when you speak to the school office and I am sure you will all join me in wishing her a happy retirement.

Dale (Site Manager), Alison (Pine Tree) and Ella (Maple Tree) will also be leaving us to undertake new career paths and we wish them all good luck for the future.

# Open Mornings

We will be hosting two Open Mornings next half term and would welcome you all to participate in this. The Open Mornings help to give a real insight into the classes and the teachers and support staff really relish this opportunity to meet with you alongside your son/daughter to demonstrate the typical learning activities that take place at Pear Tree. Following time in class you are then invited to join us for a brew and chat and a great opportunity to meet other parents and carers.

Our Open Mornings will take place on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February for Elm Tree, Oak Tree and Sixth Form and on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February for Seedlings, Bay Tree, Maple Tree and Pine Tree. Compass Centre parents will be contacted separately to invite you to observe key activities throughout the week that your son/daughter may be participating in.



# Young Voices

A group of pupils participated in the Young Voices concert alongside thousands of other children at the Manchester Arena this week. This was such a fabulous opportunity for them to be involved in and they have all worked incredibly hard to learn all the songs. Thank you to all the staff who have supported this and to Alex Haley for leading it. Whilst some of the children were unable to participate in the arena concert, we are providing them with the chance to showcase their talents in a concert for parents after the half term break. Well done, we are all so proud of you all.







# CREATIVE CURRICULUM

## Diversity

The creative curriculum theme this half term has focused on diversity and we have all thoroughly enjoyed taking part in lots of different activities throughout the school to celebrate our individuality. We were lucky enough to have a visit from a local author who came into school to read some stories from her collection of books, which all focus on seeing the uniqueness in everybody. As part of our inspiration day on the first Friday of the half term, pupils also took part in a talent show where they were able to show case their unique and special talents and share self-portraits that they all made using a range of different methods. Pupils throughout the main school then extended their learning through carrying on this theme throughout all other lessons over the rest of the half term.



Sixth Form students have learnt about a diversity linked with sexual orientation. They learnt about a transgender artist and the work he produces as well as a little about his background. There were some interesting discussions about sexuality with the overriding takeaway from the session being that acceptance of everyone is key. The group then produced their own work about portraits in the style of the artist.



Students in the Compass Centre have learnt about diversity in the range of jobs that people work in as adults and the differences between these. They have then extended this to their Attention Autism sessions and used each other as a focus before extending learning to a different religion each week. It have been fantastic to see the engagement levels increase when learning about our diverse school and our diverse world.



# Travel Training Preparation For Adulthood

Travel training is an important aspect of the work that every class does in preparing our students for the adult world after Pear Tree. Every lesson focuses on empowering our students to make good decisions navigating our busy roads, rail network and complex society in as safe and secure environment as possible. At every stage careful consideration and time is taken to slowly increase the amount of independent decision making with the ultimate ideal leading to fully independent travel. This might not be possible for all, but whatever steps are achieved are always valued and praised.

Whilst in the community Travel training develops aspects of individual classes work around functional numeracy, literacy, ICT and communication. On almost all visits opportunities are built in for students to engage with “safer strangers” in order to develop their confidence and self esteem. All pupils, to varying levels also participate in planning our journeys using travel apps, inputting destinations and times and reading back the results. Class staff have also aided in fostering this culture of independence, by challenging pupils to ask for their wallets and get themselves ready with coats, or packed lunches when going out.

Travel training lessons and visits will always endeavour to realistically and safely direct and encourage every student to aim to reach and even surpass expectations. If every pupil leaves school proud of their achievements and becomes a little more confident to engage in the world, then adulthood should be an exciting and positive prospect.



## DATES FOR DIARIES

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February

School closes for half term

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February

School re-opens

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1.30pm

Young Voices Concert

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 9.30am

Open Morning (Upper School)

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 9.30am

Open Morning (Lower School)

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 9.15am

Bay Tree Class Assembly

25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> March

School Residential

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March**

School closes for Easter



