











# Newsletter 6th October 2023

Every lesson counts - your child must attend school every single day for the best chance of success!

 <p><b>HIGH ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL GETS YOUR CHILD'S LIFE OFF TO A <i>FLYING START!</i></b></p>	 <p><b>INCREASING ATTENDANCE BY JUST 5% CAN <b>DOUBLE</b> THE CHANCES OF GAINING GOOD QUALIFICATIONS</b></p>	 <p><b>MISSING TWO DAYS A MONTH MEANS A CHILD MISSES <b>10%</b> OF THE SCHOOL YEAR</b></p>	<p><b>GOOD ATTENDANCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL</b></p>  <p><b>Improves reading</b></p> <p><i>Writing</i> + <b>MATHS SKILLS</b></p>
 <p><b>THERE ARE <b>175</b> DAYS A YEAR NOT SPENT IN SCHOOL</b></p> <p><b>PLENTY OF TIME FOR SHOPPING, HOLIDAYS AND APPOINTMENTS!</b></p>	 <p><b>100s</b>   <b>1000s</b> OF SUBJECTS   OF CLASSES</p> <p><b>ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES</b></p>	 <p><b>TURNING UP JUST <b>5 MINUTES</b> LATE EVERY DAY ADDS UP TO <b>OVER 3 DAYS</b> LOST IN THE YEAR!</b></p>	<p><b>MORE SCHOOL =</b></p>  <p><b>HIGHER GRADES</b> <b>INCREASED CONFIDENCE</b> <b>MORE FRIENDS</b> <b>BRIGHTER FUTURE</b></p>

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***Our best attending classes this week are:***

*1st Ochre 98.8%*

*2nd Teal 97%*

*3rd Topaz 96.4%*

***National Average attendance this week is 95%. Our top 3 classes have beaten it!***

***Well done to everyone who is meeting this target and more!***

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## Attendance Procedures and Autumn and Winter Illness



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*As we approach Autumn and the weather changes, illnesses such as colds and flu come become more common. The impact of these can be varied and impact the health of a child and consequently their attendance and learning. In school we have regularly and constant cleaning routines through the day, antibacterial gel is available in many spaces around school and pupils are encouraged to wash their hands correctly during social times.*

*To reinforce the importance of regular attendance, avoid illnesses, where possible, and ensure a positive start to each school day. Please look to use the following supportive measures at home:*

- Reinforce hygiene routines daily*

- *Help your child(ren) to develop a night-time routine – a regular bedtime is key to ensuring that students get enough sleep and are rested, healthy and ready for each day of learning.*
- *Limit time on devices – having an agreed ‘switch-off’ time for electronic devices can be key to building positive relationships and supports students in being able to relax at home.*
- *Build a morning routine – ensuring that students have breakfast supports a healthy start to the day and boosts their metabolism which will allow them to be more alert and make more of each learning opportunity.*

*We can often feel worse in the morning and if your child is feeling unwell but can come into school, please make sure that they do.*

*Please call 0121 327 1023 or email [enquiry@manorparkacademy.org](mailto:enquiry@manorparkacademy.org) to inform us if this is the case and we can monitor them throughout the day; **we will always contact you if your child is too unwell to continue at school.***

*We find that this approach often reduces the amount of time lost to avoidable absence (and children usually feel much better as the day goes on!)*

*Thank you for your support*

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## **Headteacher's Message**

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*Dear Families,*

*This October children will learn about the origins of Black History Month and it's significance during the time it was created.*

*At Manor Park, we know black history is especially important for many members of our community - but October is not the only month that we recognise it! Therefore it is woven into the curriculum throughout the year so that your children can learn and celebrate Black History in a broad and balanced way. Here are some examples;*

## ***Literacy, History and Geography***

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- *Children learn about the inspirational black women who provided the intricate mathematics needed for the Apollo 11 Moon Landing*
  - *As part of their World War II studies, children learn about the incredible Black and Asian soldiers who helped Britain to win the war*
  - *Children learn about Windrush and the crucial contribution Caribbean people made to rebuild the British economy after World War II*
  - *In Early Years, children learn about their heritage with a focus on their families and their community*
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## ***PSHE***

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- *Celebrating differences, culture and showing respect and kindness*
  - *Learning that they must not unlawfully discriminate against anyone because of their protected characteristics*
- 

## ***Music***

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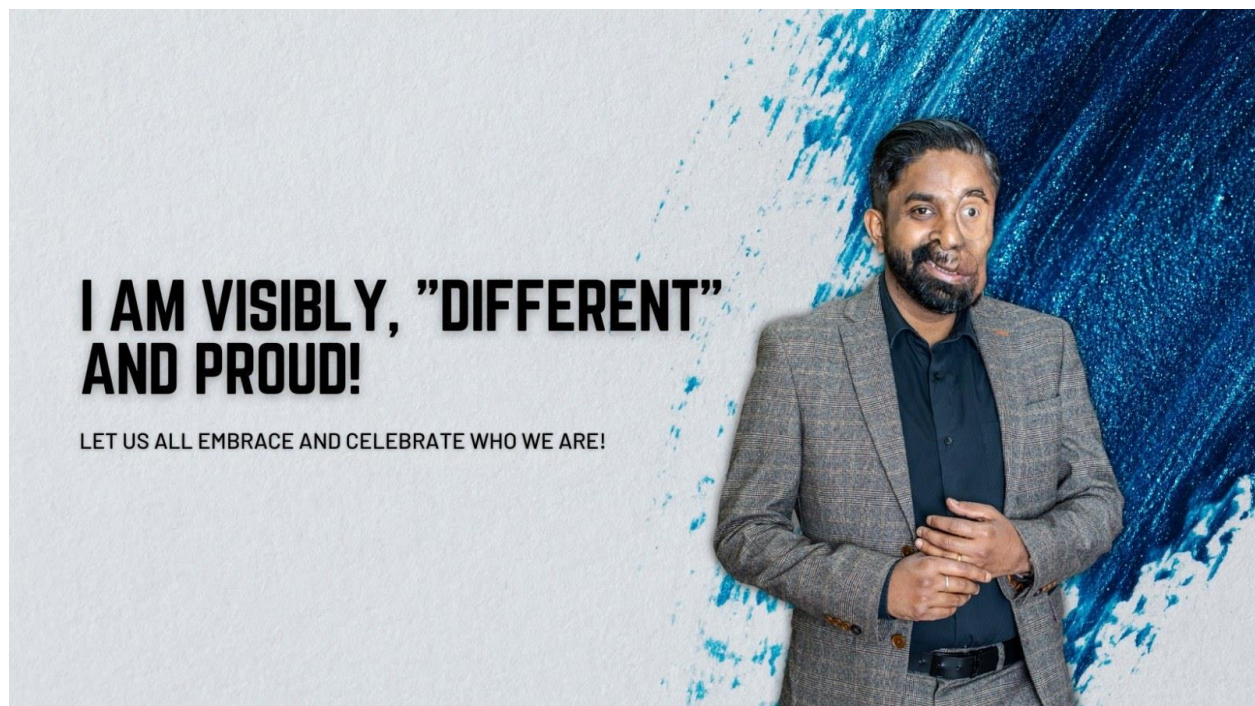
- *Through Charanga, children explore and play Hip Hop, Motown and Rap from artists such as Pharell Williams, Will Smith, Bob Marley, Martha Reeves, Bill Withers, Afrobeats and ESKA Mtungwazi*
- 

*We will of course have our annual Caribbean Food Day at school, and children will use some of their PSHE lessons to look at why Black History month as created, and how other cultures (such as North and South Asians) also celebrate their heritage. They will also learn about inspirational black women who made changes to our world.*

*Our community is an incredible mix of many cultures and backgrounds. Our diversity provides a richness of experiences and learning for the children (and adults) who are part of it. In the Spring Term we will be organising a Community Fayre to bring everyone together. If you have any ideas for this, please do pop along to our next coffee morning to share!*

*In other news, Year 6 took part in 'Get Confidence' Workshops this week, led by Amit Ghose and designed to "utilise my own personal life experiences, with the aim to assist children in understanding the importance of embracing their unique personalities and celebrating the differences among them."*

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*Many thanks to all of the parents and carers who have been in touch to let us know their up-to-date email addresses. Communication with our families is hugely important to us as a community, as a way to share important information and to celebrate the amazing events in school! If you have not received recent emails about our RHSE and PSHE curriculum and an overview of Trips and Workshops, please get in touch to let us know your current email address by emailing [enquiry@manorparkacademy.org](mailto:enquiry@manorparkacademy.org).*

*For next week only, usual PE days in Years 3 and 4 will change slightly due to Wheelchair Basketball lessons taking place. Year 4 need to wear PE kit on Wednesday only and Year 3 need to wear PE kit on Friday only.*

*Thank you and have a great weekend!*

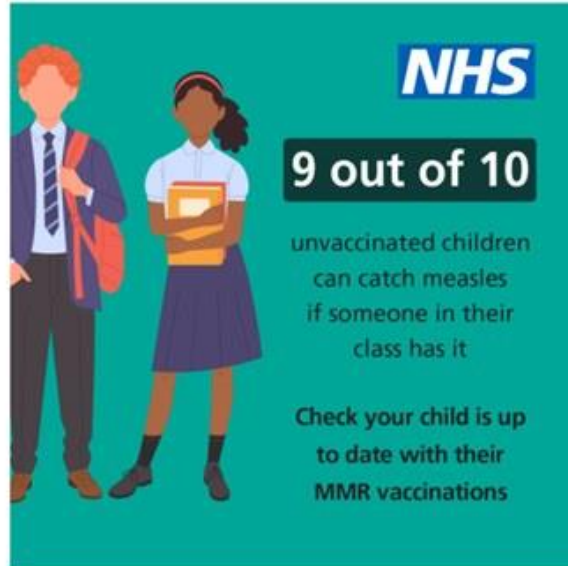
## Important Information about Measles and the MMR Vaccine

# NHS

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*Over 102,000 children starting primary school in England are at risk of catching measles. With millions of children across the country going back to school this week, NHS England is urging parents to check that their children are up to date with their MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccinations in the wake of measles cases rising across the country. Childhood vaccination rates have fallen over the past ten years and this week statistics show that over 102,000 children aged four and five years old starting in reception are not protected against catching measles, mumps and rubella. Measles is highly infectious and if left unvaccinated nine out of ten children in a classroom can catch the disease if just one child is infectious. If you are unsure if you or your child are up to date, check your child's red book or GP records and make an appointment to catch up any missed doses. For more information on the NHS vaccination schedule, please visit*

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*'Measles is highly infectious and can be passed on even before the rash appears.'*

*'Make sure your child is protected from becoming seriously unwell.'*

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AMONG US

A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 60 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.

**AGE RESTRICTION**  
**7**  
PEGI

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

**SENSITIVE PREMISE**

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as *The Traitors*, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

**GOING OFF PLATFORM**

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

**VIRTUAL VIOLENCE**

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

**IN-GAME PURCHASES**

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

**CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS**

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

**CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES**

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

**CHAT ABOUT CHATTING**

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

**DISCUSS DISCORD**

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.



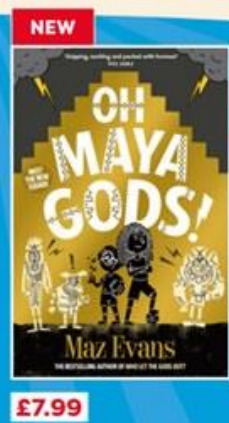
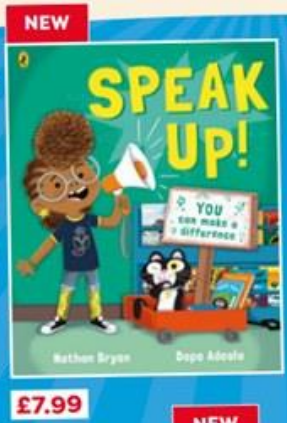


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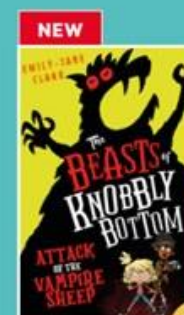
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Illustration from When Cookie Crumbled © Tom Knight, 2023

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Illustrations from Wings of Fire © Joy Ang, 2023

### Payment at our Book Fair

Please check with your school for the best way to pay for your books

- You can pay online at the Fair via card reader machines if your school has one or by using the online payment link at [www.bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/pay](http://www.bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/pay) and simply selecting your school from the drop down menu.
- Pre-paid gift vouchers are available in £5, £10, £15, £20 and £25. Go to [www.bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/gift-vouchers](http://www.bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/gift-vouchers) to buy vouchers for your child before the Fair.
- If you can't attend the Fair in person, your child can order books via a Wish List - please ask your school for details.

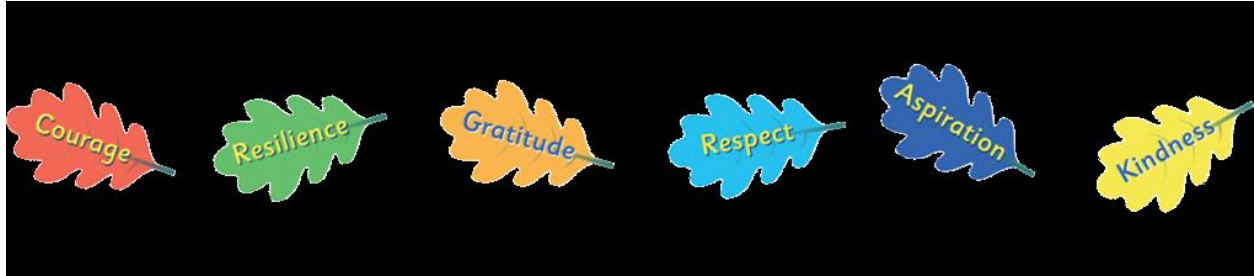
### HELP EARN FREE BOOKS

Scholastic is one of the largest providers of free books to schools via our Reward scheme which helps to ensure that as many children as possible have access to books that support reading for pleasure. Every time you buy from the Book Fair, you help to make a difference by supporting literacy in your child's setting. Last year, with your help, we gave over £5.3M worth of free books to schools nationwide, which stocked school libraries and classrooms.



\*Free books are subject to terms and conditions. Please contact your Book Fair Organiser or Scholastic Book Fairs for details.

## Stars of Manor Park



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### **STAR OF THE WEEK!**

*These children were especially chosen because they have shown all of our school values consistently this week!*

**Nursery** Lhon

**Indigo** Jasmine

**Violet** Esa

**Copper** Pari

**Gold** Yingxuan.

**Aqua** Isa

**Turquoise** Hannah

**Cerise** Sarah

**Crimson** Hawa

**Bronze** Romero

**Ochre** Xian

*Ruby      Mohammed*

*Topaz      Avram*

*Emerald      Elise*

*Teal      Adnan*

*A big well done to you all!*

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## House Points!



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*House points :*

1st Berners-Lee 920

2nd Lightwood 915

3rd Edwards 770

4th Aston 705

***Very close between Berners-Lee and Lightwood!***

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A Very Special Piece of Homework For Every Family in the UK - Courtesy of ITV



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*The broadcaster is encouraging every school in the country to set a different kind of homework ahead of **World Mental Health Day on 10th October**. Designed in collaboration with a psychologist and the teaching community, the task encourages young people to have a proper chat with an adult they trust about the hardest subject on their minds. [Click here for more information.](#)*

[ITV Get Talking Mental Health - Article, Information and Key Facts](#)

[ITV Special Homework Video - Get Talking Mental Health](#)





## Supporting Your Child's Mental Health

# SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

## 10 Conversation Starters for Parents

Talking about mental health to children is sometimes hard. To the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects that we perceive our child is too young or not ready for. But rather than keeping children in the dark, this guide is designed to help you confidently talk about mental health, so they feel comfortable talking about their own worries and end any stigma before it begins.



### 1 LISTEN

This sounds obvious, but it is not something we are always great at. Active listening is where we listen without interrupting or making judgements and shows interest in what is being said. If your child feels listened to in the 'smallest of problems' they will become confident that you will listen when the 'biggest of problems' arise.

### 2 ASK TWICE

The campaign from time to change is great. <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/support-ask-twice-campaign>. Be tenacious about your child's wellbeing. Children instinctively know when your questions and support come from a place of wanting to help and care.

Are you sure?

### 3 THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A STUPID QUESTION

This advice also relates to the first point. If your child can ask you any questions about the smallest of things and you listen and answer without shaming or belittling, then they will have more confidence to ask the biggest of questions.

### 4 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Children appreciate honesty, particularly if you are having to share information or talk about a difficult subject. For example, you may be talking about death or loss: 'It's very sad that Nana has died' or 'I feel sad that Nana has died'. How you talk about a subject will differ depending on their age and developmental maturity. Talking about death to a younger child for example will be different to that of an older teen, as their experience and understanding of death is different.

### 5 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Assess the severity of the mental health difficulty you are noticing. Is the difficulty making it hard for your child to function regularly throughout everyday life? How frequently is your child affected, how long does it last and how persistent is it? Are they having problems controlling the difficulty? Talk to your child about your concerns and that it is likely they will need further support beyond family and friends.

### 6 TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH NATURALLY

Speak about mental health as part of everyday life, so that talking about our feelings and those of others is normalised. If the usual 'are you ok?' is not creating an opportunity for dialogue then say something like 'I know when something like that has happened to me I felt like this... is that how you are feeling or are you feeling something else?'

### 7 EMPATHISE

'It makes sense that you would feel this way, it is understandable'. Children often worry about things that we, as adults, might see as trivial or silly. However, for them at their age and stage it is a big concern and they need our kindness and care when they show their vulnerability and share their worries.

### 8 HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL SAFE

Teens particularly feel that by talking about their worries or concerns that this will make things worse. Reassure your child that you will discuss a plan of action together and what may or may not need to happen next. If they are a younger child, it is likely you will need to lead the conversation and explain next steps.

### 9 MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Be mindful of the language you use at home to describe and talk about mental health. Stigma often arises from misconceptions and a choice of language which is harmful. Using the word 'mental', 'man-up' or other such words in a derogatory way won't encourage your child to talk about their mental health for fear of being belittled.

### 10 IT IS OK TO SAY 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT'

Adults do not have all the answers but often children think they do. It is ok to acknowledge that what your child is experiencing is not something you have come across before or know anything about, but that you will work it out together and seek help together.

## Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



## Sources of Information and Support

Your GP  
Young Minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/>  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>  
<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/news-and-blogs/parenting-tips/2016/november/a-simple-guide-to-active-listening-for-parents/>  
<https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health>



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*The Waiting Room has been developed for citizens across Birmingham to provide links to 100's of Birmingham and Solihull based services that can help you take more control of your own health and wellbeing. It also provides links to key national organisations that can help you be more informed of the options available.*

*Manor Park Academy use these services to support children and families. If you need any support or advice, call in at the office to discuss these services.*

*[Home - The Waiting Room \(the-waitingroom.org\)](http://the-waitingroom.org)*

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Follow us on 'X'



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*Thank you so much to those of you who have given us a follow!*

*Please head to @MPA\_Primary*

*or click*

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*to find daily updates about the amazing things your children are doing at school!*

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## Dates for your Diary



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*Stay and Read - Every Friday 8.40am - 8.55am Reception and Nursery Classes*

*Reception Open Day - Tuesday 24th October*

*Parent's Evening - Monday 22nd and Thursday 26th October (Including Book Fair!)*

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**At Manor Park Primary  
Academy everyone  
has the right to feel safe.**

**At Manor Park Primary  
Academy everyone  
has the right to learn.**