

28th April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Vernon Park Primary School we aim to provide all children, parents, carers and the wider community with a safe, caring and inclusive environment where high quality learning experiences enable all children to be the best that they can be. Staff witness this Mission Statement in action every day. Our values of Kindness & Empathy, Friendship & Respect, Honesty & Responsibility, Tolerance & Fairness, Support & Inclusion and Challenge & Resilience are regularly referred to and practised by the whole school community.

Unfortunately, there have been occasions where some of our pupils are not embodying the Mission Statement and School Values to all situations in school. It makes me very sad to report that racist, as well as homophobic, comments have been made by pupils to their peers. These comments and remarks are not only extremely upsetting and distressing to the targets and any other pupils in the vicinity, but also have a profound and detrimental effect on the children who are the victims of these comments, as well as the children who witness racist or homophobic incidents. In addition, incidents of this nature have a profoundly negative impact on staff and our VP families and challenge the inclusive and supportive atmosphere of our school. Vernon Park will continue to hold a zero tolerance stance on all hate incidents: any incident will be reported to families, governors and the Local Authority and will be taken extremely seriously.

Incidents of racism and homophobia are all too common in the wider world with stories regularly reported in the media and all our pupils are aware of discrimination in all its forms: they are also aware of the school's stance on inclusion and our refusal to accept discrimination in any form. We expect all our VP stakeholders to subscribe to this ethos of inclusion and tolerance, support and respect and as such appeal to you all to help educate our children suitably so that they might in turn help to ensure these hate crimes are not perpetuated. Please make time regularly to talk to your children at home about what is happening in the wider world as well within the school community and how by following our Mission Statement and School Values, we can make sure racist and homophobic incidents do not occur at Vernon Park or in our community.

We are incredibly grateful to our VP families for helping to support our school community in bettering itself in this way and thank you in advance for your support in ensuring our school continues to be a place where our pupils can be the best they can be.

Yours sincerely

Claire E Lee
Head Teacher