

St Joseph's Camberwell Catholic Schools' Federation

Pitman Street, Camberwell, London, SE5 0TS

www.stjosephs.southwark.sch.uk

Executive Headteacher: Ms. D. Jameson

head@stjosephs.southwark.sch.uk

Infants

Tel: 0207 703 9264

office@stjosephs.southwark.sch.uk

Juniors

Interim Head of School: Mrs T. Mokogwu

Tel: 0207 703 3455

admin@stjosephs.southwark.sch.uk

Hard copies of the Safeguarding Policy are available from the school office.



9th March 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the current situation between Russia and the Ukraine escalates, so do anxieties around the situation and this has been noticeable, especially with some of our children.

For those caught up in this situation, its unimaginable – and for those looking on from afar, maybe with families and friends in both countries or neighbouring countries, the feelings of fear and helplessness can be overwhelming.

For children, who have less of an idea of what is going on, this can be even more terrifying.

So how is it best to explain what's going on to your children, how is School dealing with this and how can you go about reassuring any anxieties your child may have?

News like this can be scary to children if not handled in the right way, and it will be different for different ages. There is no 'one way' approach, as all children are different, but it is important that the subject is treated with sensitivity and understanding of what children need to know, weighed against what they are hearing from other sources.

Children of all ages will also feel more worried when they think that no one is willing to talk about things that are worrying them- they will think that it is too scary or upsetting to talk about, which then adds to their worries.

As Parents, Carers and Teachers we can feel we should be talking to our children about what is happening and keeping them informed. But it is important to think about how much information you would personally like to give your child. It's also always a good idea to let children know that, if they have any questions, they can ask you or their adults at school.

Talking about the distance between the UK and ongoing events can be helpful. Knowing this can help to reassure your child that the chance they will be directly impacted is quite minimal. They may want to talk to you about the people that are directly impacted. Keeping language age appropriate and being led by your child is important.

Listen to what they're asking you and don't give more information than they are asking for. And if you don't know all the answers to their questions, don't be afraid to say you don't know.

It is also crucial for Parents and School to be aware of how they discuss the Ukraine and Russia situation with other adults around children or in earshot. Children are susceptible to how adults respond to issues, which can have a massive impact on a child's anxieties.

In school, we are addressing children's concerns when they are raised and letting them know that, people are not responsible for government decisions. That governments may have made choices which have led to the current situation for a variety of reasons, and that we cannot apportion blame to them and call

them 'enemies' of each other (a word that has come into use this week in conversations and play). We acknowledge that children of different nationalities in our schools, and especially those families in the Ukraine and Russia, should be proud of their heritage and not feel responsible for things that are currently happening.

We pray for peace at this difficult time and ask that leaders be guided going forward, to make the right choices for their countries and their people, so that the conflict will be short-lived, casualties will be few and justice will prevail.



Prayer for Peace – Ukraine-Russia Conflict

At this time of escalating tension we pray with people around the world for peace to prevail:

God of nations, whose sovereign rule brings justice and peace,
have mercy on our broken and divided world.

Shed abroad your peace in the hearts of all and
banish from them the spirit that makes for war,
that all races and people may learn to live,
as members of one family and in obedience to your law.

Amen



Ms D Jameson

Headteacher