

Dear Parents and Carers,

Most of you will be aware of the current crisis in Europe and will be looking for ways to explain it to your children, to cope with their reactions to the images on the news or wondering what you can do to help.

Although this kind of situation is difficult and worrying for all of us, in school we are very used to coming across unexpected traumatic situations and finding a way to deal with them sensitively. That's what we are doing here. Our school communities are multicultural, and we have families who come from a very diverse range of countries and whilst, as schools we do not take any official political stance, we do stand by our families and our children and we will help those who need to be helped.

As a group of school leaders, we have discussed the best way to help and listened to those agencies and organisations who are providing support to Ukraine at the moment. It seems that currently, there is a backlog of parcels and aid which is having difficulty getting to them due to customs issues, and also the sheer volume of help being provided. We will be sending out information shortly with details on how we are going to help and how you can support us in doing so.

We have decided several key points in how we will do this:

- we want our support to be meaningful
- we want to get our support directly to the people who need it the most through the agencies who can make the most of what we give
- we want to ensure that what we do is focused around helping people and support, rather than drawing attention to what we are doing to help: it is not about us, it is about them.
- we do not want to make a big school focus around the fundraising as there will still be families, especially ones with younger children who are trying to shield them from the events unfolding. When we talk to the children about these issues, we should manage it carefully, not because we have sent out letters or put up posters.

With regards to the last point, our schools now have information on all their websites on how to talk to your children at home about the situation and examples which can be shared to summarise the information in a way they can understand. Below are some key messages from that advice:

When discussing 'big' topics...

- Stay honest
- Keep it simple and age appropriate
- Normalise their feelings (and your own)
- Be led by their questions and give them opportunities to ask them
- Reassure your child of their safety with you

If you have any immediate concerns, please contact your class teacher or Headteacher in the first instance.

Take care.



Mr Gary Evans
Chief Executive Officer
The Blue Kite Academy Trust