Duncombe Primary School Newsletter

16th October 2026

Dear Duncombe Families,

I am delighted to take on the role of Headteacher at Duncombe.

Having worked at Duncombe since 2010, it is an enormous privilege to now serve our school as its substantive headteacher. Duncombe has been such an important part of my professional journey, and I feel incredibly proud to take on this role within a community that means so much to me. It is a genuine pleasure to work alongside our wonderful children, supportive families and dedicated staff,

I am immensely proud of all that we achieve together at Duncombe. Last year, our SATs, Multiplication Tables Check and phonics screening results were fantastic. I would like us to build on this academic success this year.

Our next important challenge to tackle together is **attendance**. Our attendance figures are significantly lower than those of other schools across the borough, and improving this will be one of our key priorities this year. Let's work in partnership to make a real difference in this area.

I want Duncombe to continue to be a school where every child feels safe, valued and inspired to achieve their very best; where staff feel proud to work; and where families feel part of our school community. The strongest schools are built on strong relationships, shared values and a sense of belonging. Our ASPIRE values are for our children, staff and our parents.

Thank you for the trust you place in us and for the part you play in making our school such a special place.

Let's work together as a community to make sure Duncombe is a school of excellence which every family wants to join.

Warmest wishes,

Katija Ali

Coffee Morning:

Reception Phonics: Tuesday 20th October 09.00 - 10.00

Important Dates

Friday 23rd October-Cultural clothes day to mark BHM

Friday 23rd October-BHM assembly 2.20-3pm Years 1-6- children only

Tue 20th Oct: Year 6 trip to Natural History Museum

Wed 21st Oct: Flu Vaccine catch up (2nd visit)

Half Term - Monday 26th Oct - Friday 30th October Children return on Monday 2nd Nov

Oct 31st: Deadline for applying for secondary school for year 6 children.

School Attendance

Julia Donaldson **80%**	**Maya AngeLou** 97%
Eric Carle: **88%**	**William Shakespeare** **98%**
Judith Kerr **87%**	**Emmeline Pankhurst** **97%**
Greta Thunberg: **94%**	**Martin Luther King** **91%**
Florence Nightingale **90%**	**Marcus Rashford** **97%**
Marie Curie **94%**	**Nelson Mandela** **96%**
Isaac Newton **96%**	

Whole School Attendance this week = 94.09%

Attendance and Punctuality

Our target for individual and whole school attendance is 95%.

Click here to see the attendance prizes we will be awarding for this year.

The higher a pupil's attendance, the more they are likely to learn.

School starts at 8:50am. It is important that your child arrives on time to ensure they have a positive start to the day.

If your child is going to be absent, please call the school office on 02072725620.
The school office is open from 8am – 4:30pm.

Celebration Awards

Julia Donaldson 2YO: Zuri
For settling in well. You are showing great independence in exploring nursery, knowing what you want and your perseverance in achieving your goal. Keep it up.

Eric Carle 3YO: Mustafa
You are a delight to teach, soaking up new information and being keen to engage in all activities on offer. Your love for stories and adult engagement show your enthusiasm for learning.

Judith Kerr Reception : Hafsa
For your enthusiasm across all areas of learning! You have been working so hard to learn your phonics sounds, recite our daily poem and share your ideas during maths lessons. Your calm, positive energy shines through in everything you do

Greta Thunberg Year 1: Umaynah
For always showing that she is ready, respectful and safe. I have been really impressed with how focussed she has been in maths. Well done Umaynah. Keep up the good work.

Florence Nightingale Year 1/2: Riyaan
For showing such enthusiasm and ambition in your writing this week! You have worked so hard to form your letters neatly and use clear finger spaces between your words. Keep up the fantastic work!

Marie Curie Year 2: Myles
For his perseverance in maths and writing and his effort when contributing to class discussions, showing great determination and resilience, even when he finds things challenging.

Isaac Newton Year 3: Rowayda
She is someone who shows a lot of ambition and enthusiasm in all of her work. She tried really hard on our narrative about Supertato, had some great original ideas and used a lot of description. keep it up Rowayda!

William Shakespeare Year 4: Nafi
For his effort and enthusiasm in Maths. He worked really hard this week to complete his work to a high standard with good presentation. Well done!

Maya Angelou Year 4: Lucas
Well done, Lucas, for showing great enthusiasm during carpet sessions! You always have creative ideas and are a thoughtful contributor to our discussions. It is wonderful to hear your interesting views and ideas on a range of topics. Keep up the fantastic work!

Martin Luther King Year 5:
Mumtaz
Mumtaz, you are a super contributor in class! You are a great partner and table partner, showing kindness and helpfulness in equal measure. This week, I have been especially impressed with your enthusiasm for learning, particularly in reading. Keep it up!.

Emmeline Pankhurst Year 5: Leon

Well done, Leon:! You always have creative ideas and are a thoughtful contributor to our discussions. Keep up the fantastic work!

Marcus Rashford Year 6: Kerim
For really impressing with your effort, focus and sensible behaviour in our poetry rehearsals. You have shown enthusiasm and looked at your own poems independently. Keep up the great attitude.

Nelson Mandela Year 6: Saffa
Well done, Saffa, for showing independence and ambition in your learning! You asked thoughtful questions to improve your work and completed a fantastic homework project. Keep up the excellent work.

Orchard Room: Belle
Belle, well done for your hard work in phonics, and for saying and writing your new sound. We also loved hearing your talking and singing this week!

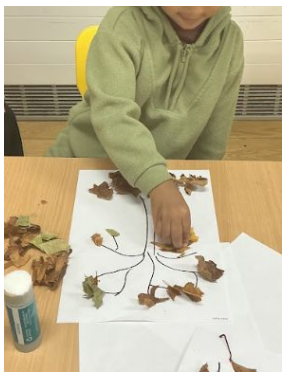
Fantastic Work and Learning at Duncombe

2YO Nursery -

Little nursery has been exploring circles. We have been on the hunt in and around our nursery.
We have found loads and have used them in our play. We have painted with them, draw around them, used them in the sand and water and much more.

Help your child look for Circles at home, on your way to or from school, the park or the supermarkets.
Don't forget to add it to your child's Tapestry, as we would love to see.

3YO Nursery
We have made tomato soup this week and are getting so good at chopping. We are also starting to learn to retell a story - Brown Bear.
There were so many Autumn leaves in our garden we have also been using them for art.



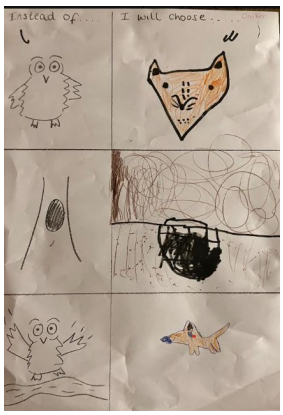
Fantastic Work and Learning at Duncombe

Reception

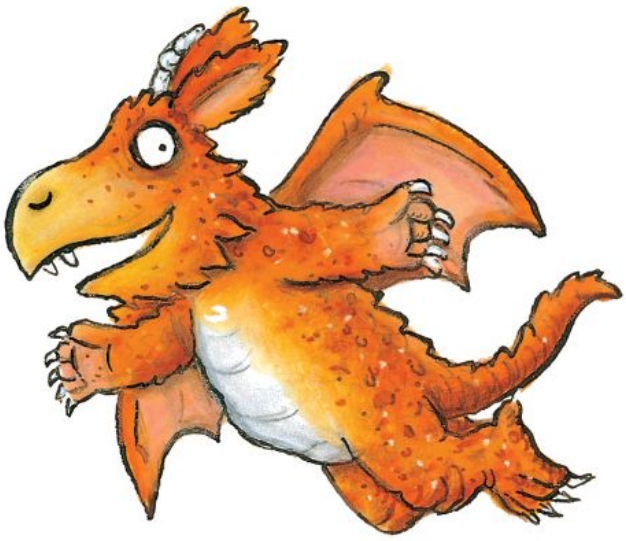
Phonics To support our lessons we have been making phonics watches to help us recap and practise our sound of the day.

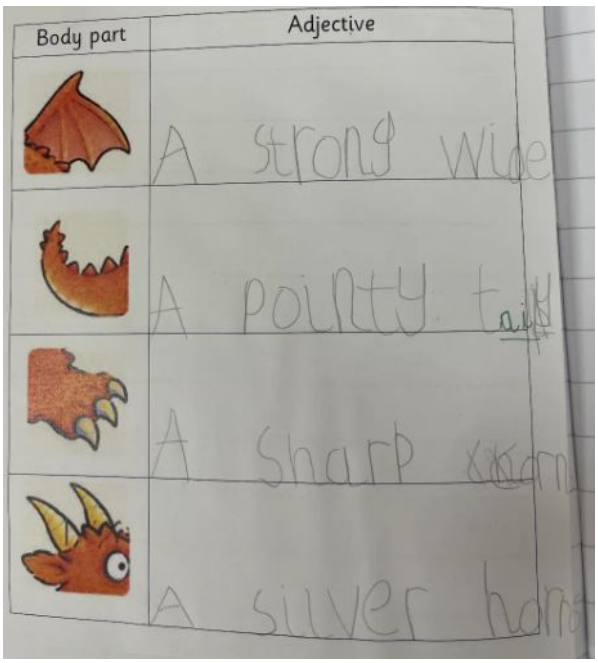
Literacy We have been innovating our core story, *Owl Babies*, and turning it into *Fox Babies*! We have been retelling our adapted story, learning about where fox cubs live and exploring how they might show their excitement when Mummy fox returns.

Maths We have been exploring how a number stays the same, no matter how objects are arranged or rotated. Using four Magnatiles, we discovered that we could make different shapes, such as a square, a line or an L-shape, while still having four tiles.



Year 1 - Year 1 have started a new writing unit based on the story *Zog*! We used exciting adjectives to describe Zog. He has sharp claws, a spiky tail and pointy horns. Oh no! Zog is missing! We are going to write our own missing posters to help find him. Can you help us find Zog?

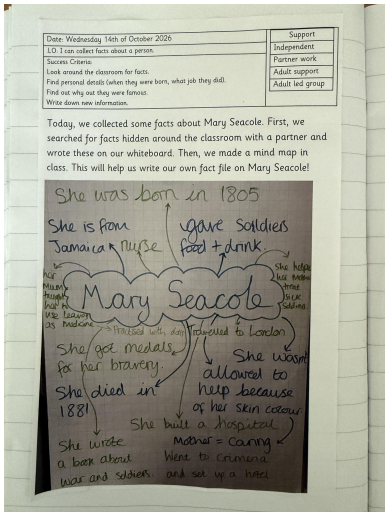




Fantastic Work and Learning at Duncombe

Year 2

Year 2 have been learning all about the inspiring life of Mary Seacole. As part of their learning, they went on an exciting fact hunt to discover more about who she was and the incredible things she achieved. They found out interesting facts about her life, including how she cared for wounded soldiers during the Crimean War. The children learnt about her bravery, kindness and determination to help others.



Date: Wednesday 14th of October 2026

L.O. I can collect facts about a person.

Success Criteria

Look around the classroom for facts.

Find personal details (when they were born, what job they did).

Find out why out they were famous.

Write down new information.

Support
Independent
Partner work
Adult support
Adult led group

Today, we collected some facts about Mary Seacole. First, we searched for facts hidden around the classroom with a partner and wrote these on our whiteboard. Then, we made a mind map in class. This will help us write our own fact file on Mary Seacole!

She was born in 1805

She is from Jamaica

Nurse

gave soldiers food + drink

Mary Seacole

She got medals for her bravery.

She died in 1881

She wasn't allowed to help because of her skin colour

She built a hospital

Mother = caring

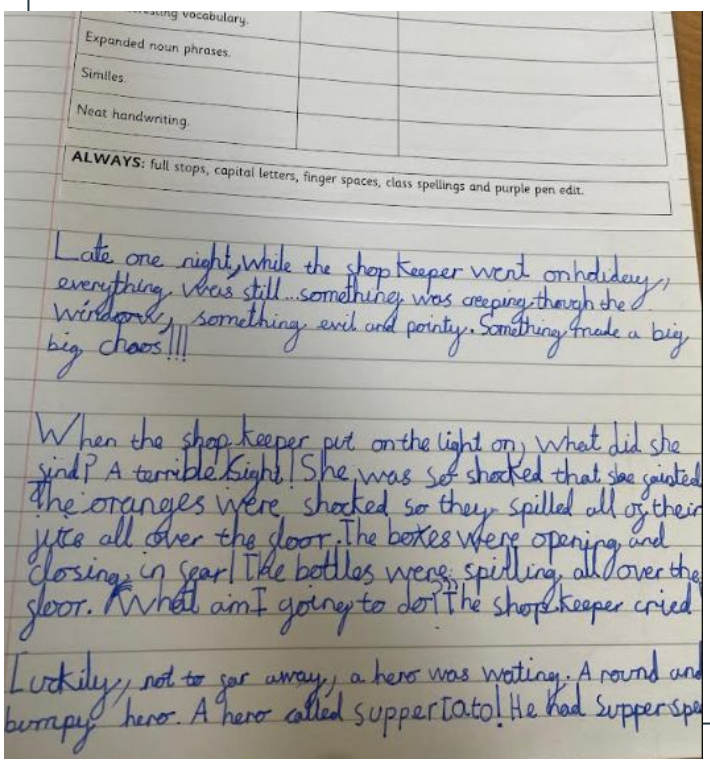
Went to Crimea and set up a hotel

She write a book about war and soldier.

Travelled to London

Year 3.

Year 3 have been working really hard on our narratives of Supertato! They used expanded noun phrases and similes to create great descriptions for their characters and the settings. Here are some amazing examples of published work!



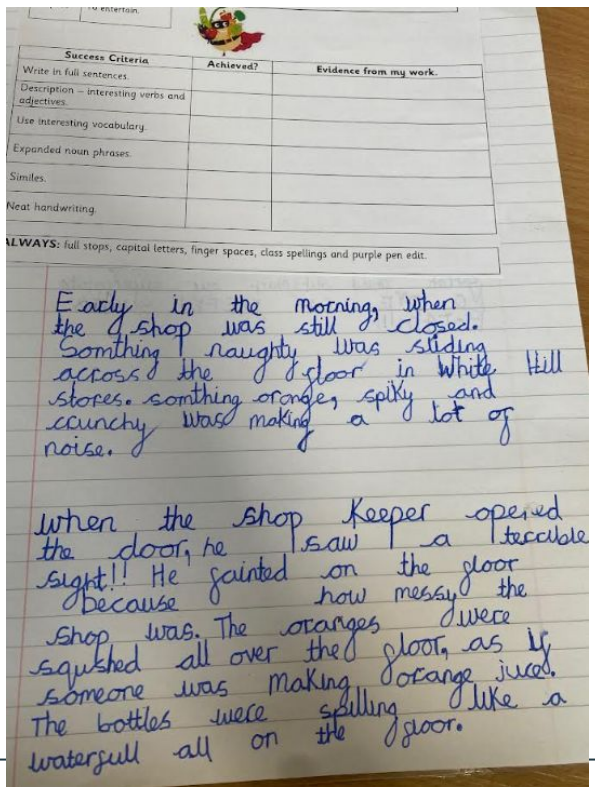
Expanded noun phrases.		
Similes.		
Neat handwriting.		

ALWAYS: full stops, capital letters, finger spaces, class spellings and purple pen edit.

Late one night, while the shop keeper went on holiday, everything was still...something was creeping through the window, something evil and pointy. Something made a big, big, chaos!!!

When the shop keeper put on the light on, what did she find? A terrible sight! She was so shocked that she fainted the oranges were shocked so they spilled all of their juice all over the floor. The boxes were opening and closing in fear! The bottles were spilling all over the floor. "What am I going to do!" The shop keeper cried.

Luckily, not to far away, a hero was waiting. A round and bumpy hero. A hero called Supper[a]to! He had supper spe



Success Criteria	Achieved?	Evidence from my work.
Write in full sentences.		
Description – interesting verbs and adjectives.		
Use interesting vocabulary.		
Expanded noun phrases.		
Similes.		
Neat handwriting.		

ALWAYS: full stops, capital letters, finger spaces, class spellings and purple pen edit.

Early in the morning, when the shop was still closed. Somthing naughty was sliding across the floor in White Hill stores. somthing orange, spiky and crunchy was making a lot of noise.

When the shop keeper opened the door, he saw a terrible sight!! He fainted on the floor because how messy the shop was. The oranges were squished all over the floor, as if someone was making orange juice. The bottles were spilling like a waterfall all on the floor.

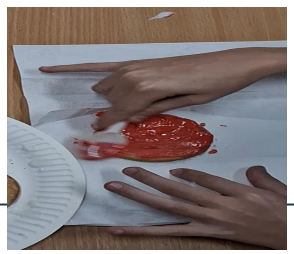
Fantastic Work and Learning at Duncombe

Year 4

Year 4 have been enthusiastically rehearsing for their Black History Month assembly. Linking to their class topic of Africa, they have been learning to read and play rhythms on the drums and sing songs in preparation for their performance.

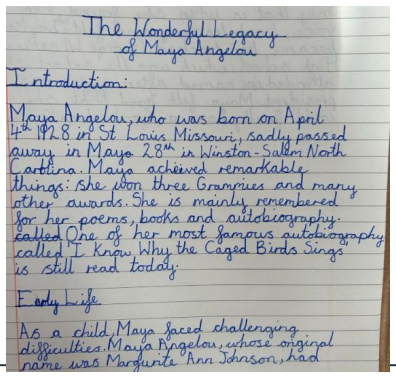
Year 5-

In Geography, we explored Scandinavian designs by decorating our own biscuits. We used red, blue and white icing to decorate them with beautiful patterns inspired by traditional Scandinavian designs. We showed great creativity, care and attention to detail in our work!



Year 6

As part of our Black History Month celebrations, Year 6 have been busy researching and writing biographies about the inspirational Maya Angelou. They worked hard to include relative clauses, experiment with a variety of punctuation and present their work beautifully and neatly. We are incredibly proud of their hard work.



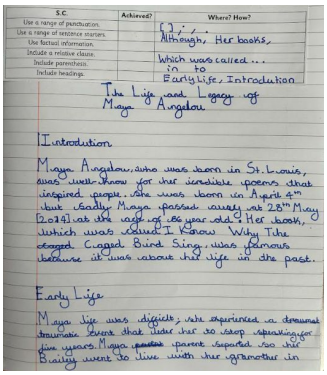
The Wonderful Legacy of Maya Angelou

Introduction:

Maya Angelou, who was born on April 4th 1928 in St Louis Missouri, sadly passed away in Maya 28th in Winston-Salem North Carolina. Maya achieved remarkable things: she won three Grammies and many other awards. She is mainly remembered for her poems, books and autobiography. Called One of her most famous autobiography called 'I Know Why the Caged Birds Sings is still read today.

Early Life

As a child Maya faced challenging difficulties Maya Angelou, whose original name was Marguerite Ann Johnson, had



S.C.	Achieved?	Where? How?
Use a range of punctuation.		Although, Her books,
Use a range of sentence starters.		
Use factual information.		which was called...
Include a relative clause.		
Include parenthesis.		
Include headings.		

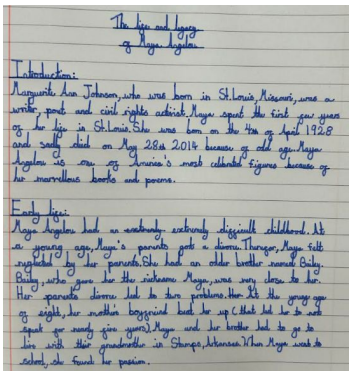
The Life and Legacy of Maya Angelou

Introdution

Maya Angelou, who was born in St. Louis, was well known for her incredible poems that inspired people. She was born on April 4th 1928 sadly Maya passed away on 28th May 2014 at the age of 86 year old. Her books, which was called I Know Why The Caged Bird Sing, was famous because it was about life in the past.

Early Life

Maya life was difficult; she experienced a dreadful traumatic event that made her so sleep separating for five years. Maya parent separated so she Bailey went to live with her grandmother in



The life and legacy of Maya Angelou

Introduction:

Marguerite Ann Johnson, who was born in St. Louis, Missouri, was a writer, poet and civil rights activist. Maya spent the first years of her life in St. Louis. She was born on the 4th of April 1928 and sadly died on May 28th 2014 because of old age. Maya Angelou is one of America's most celebrated figures because of her marvellous books and poems.

Early life:

Maya Angelou had an extremely extremely difficult childhood. At a young age, Maya's parents got a divorce. Therefore, Maya felt neglected by her parents. She had an older brother named Bailey. Bailey, who gave her the nickname Maya, was very close to her. Her parents divorce led to two problems. Her. At the young age of eight, her mother boyfriend beat her up. (Mate led to not speak for nearly five years.) Maya and her brother had to go to live with their grandmother in Stamps, Arkansas. When Maya went to school, she found her passion.

Offer Code for School Uniform

ARSENAL IN THE COMMUNITY

FREE YEAR 3/4 DOUBLE CLUB CAMP

FREE **DOUBLE CLUB** CAMP FOR **YEAR 3 AND 4** CHILDREN

AT **THE ARSENAL HUB**, N7 7BY

MONDAY 26TH TO FRIDAY 30TH OCTOBER

DAILY FROM **9.30AM TO 12.30PM**

FOOTBALL, WELLBEING AND READING ACTIVITIES

SIGN UP HERE:

EMAIL HENRY MILTON AT HMILTON@ARSENAL.CO.UK FOR DETAILS

FREE SWIMMING LESSONS IN ISLINGTON

Throughout the school holidays and in partnership with Islington Council, we are proud to be able to offer a variety of free swimming lessons for children and families. Lessons will run during Easter, May Half Term, Summer and October Half Term. Sessions include:

- Adult and child swimming lessons: 6-week course for under 3's *Summer holiday only
- Swimming lessons for 4 -13-year-olds, intensive lessons, Monday - Friday for 1 or 2 weeks
- Teen swimming lessons 13 -16-year-olds, intensive lessons, Monday - Friday for 1 or 2 weeks
- Family swimming lessons, 6-week course for up to 2 adults and 2 children to learn to swim together and enjoy the pool together *Summer holiday only

To apply please scan **QR code** or visit website at **better.org.uk/free-swimming-lessons**

You can email for more information at **summer.lessons@gll.org**

BETTER

ISLINGTON
For a more equal future

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Are you looking for a nursery?

At Duncombe we offer nursery places for

2 year old

3 year old

4 year old

You maybe eligible for **15 or 30 hour.**

If you want to know more, **book a tour with us!**

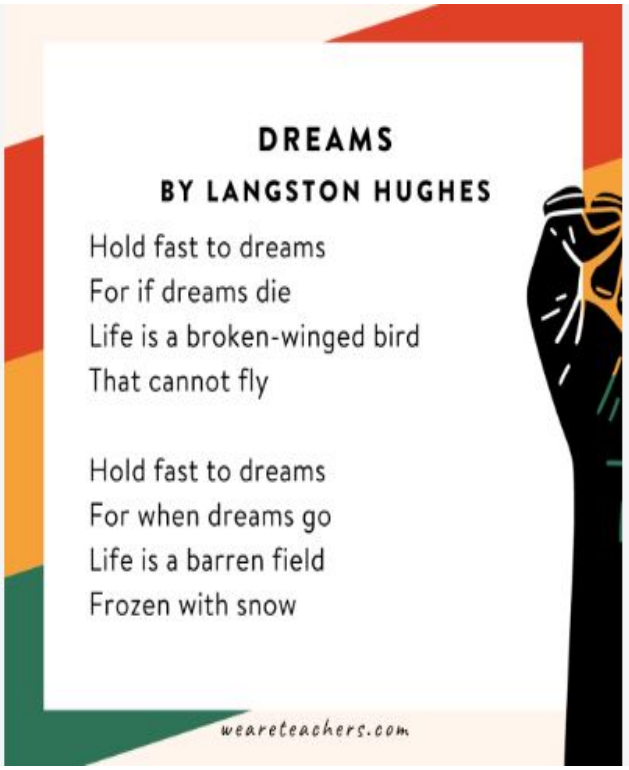
The Early Years Team are here to help as well as the office staff.

See you soon!!!

Celebrating Diversity- BHM

Yesterday, children at Duncombe Primary school took part in an online Nation wide workshop as part of Black History Month . **Radina and Davide**(from Emmeline Pankhurst class) wrote a short summary of what they learnt from this session.

- *People in the 1900'S were facing discrimination and segregation in school, restaurants and other public areas.*
- *We understood that this was unfair and doesn't agree with our school rules.*
- *People from ethnic minority backgrounds fought for their rights and held up signs to stop segregation. The government tried to stop them.*
- *Soweto is a place South West from Johannesburg, the largest city in South Africa.*
- *We learnt that **uprising** means when people speak up/protest against the people in charge because they are unhappy about the way they are being treated.*
- *Some key people who stood up for their community are:Rosa Parks, Nelson Mandela, Claudia Jones and Martin Luther King.*



DUNCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & CARERS

Safeguarding: As a parent or carer, you can play a vital role in helping us educate your children about staying safe. By acting on any concerns you may have about other children, you can help us safeguard all our pupils.

KEY INFORMATION

- We all have a role to play in protecting children and young people from child abuse and neglect.
- All children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Recent evidence suggests that a third of people who suspect child abuse do nothing. A number of people do not act on their suspicions because they're worried about being wrong. You don't have to be absolutely certain about your suspicions; if you have a feeling that something's not right, talk to the NSPCC, the school or your local children's social care team who can look into it.
- Information is usually gathered from many sources, and your report could form one part of a bigger picture.
- Every year more than 400,000 children in England are supported because someone notices they need help.

HELPFUL TOOLS & RESOURCES

The following tools will help you understand more about what abuse is, how to spot it and what to do if you have a concern:

What is child abuse and what are the signs?

Visit the NSPCC child abuse website for clear guidance and advice:
nspcc.org.uk

What can I do if I am concerned about a child?

You don't need to be sure - it's OK to report a suspicion. Call:

- **NSPCC Advice Line:** 0808 800 5000
- **Islington Social Care:** 020 7527 7400 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) or 020 7226 0992 (Out of hours)
- **Other Local Authorities: gov.uk/report-child-abuse**

What will happen after I report my concern?

You can call all the numbers above anonymously and simply seek advice. Find out more about what might happen after reporting on the NSPCC website.

How can I get help if I am a child?

Call **Childline on** 0800 1111.
Your call will not show up on your phone bill from a landline or on most mobile networks.

How can I keep my child safe on the internet? Go to the **LGFL Parentsafe website** or the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) **ThinkUKnow website**. Both have great advice.

How can Duncombe Primary School help?

If you have a concern about a child, even if they are not at our school, we can give you advice and help you report it. We will gladly see you in private if you want. Come into school and speak to our office or contact us via email or phone.