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Dear Parents and Carers

November is shaping up to be an incredibly active, purposeful, and community-focused month at Houlton School. Guided by our PRAISE values, our pupils have some fantastic opportunities to get creative, celebrate diverse traditions, and stand up for causes that truly matter.

We know how busy family life can be, so here is a quick, friendly guide on how your child can get involved in the fun this month:

- **Harvest Collections** (Running until Monday 30th November): This year, we are launching a dual Harvest Collection to support both our local community and our international connections. Please note that **donations are entirely voluntary and greatly appreciated.**
    - The Taste of the UK Exchange: We are putting together a special package to send over to our sister school in Houlton Maine! For this, we are seeking lightweight, traditional British foods e.g. curry paste jars, Cadbury's chocolate, packet Yorkshire pudding mix, tea etc.
    - The Local Food Bank Collection: To support families in our immediate area, we are gathering essential everyday store-cupboard staples. We are collecting food, as well as toiletries and sanitary products.
- **Diwali** Window Displays **(2nd-9th November)**: Tutor rooms are crafting colourful window displays and suncatchers. Please **donate spare crafting items** at home, e.g. tissue paper, chalk pens, beads, paper plates, or tracing paper, to add some sparkle! On 9th, the Refectory will also be offering a Diwali menu, inspired by cuisines from around the Indian subcontinent.
- **Remembrance Day (Wednesday 11th November):** We will hold a respectful outdoor service on the MUGA. Pupils are invited to look their smartest in school uniform, and members of the cadets, scouts, guides, or similar youth groups are warmly invited to wear their official uniforms with pride. **From 2nd November**,

please **donate extra craft supplies** like egg cartons or red card as supplies towards our class wreaths..

- **BBC Children in Need (Friday 13th November)**: This is a **normal uniform** day, but students can add spotty, yellow, or **Pudsey accessories** for a **£1 donation**. Whether it's Pudsey ears, yellow leg warmers, spotty tutus over school trousers, or spotty face paint, we want to see their best "Pudsey style". Pupils can also bring loose change for our Refectory College Coin Championship or to enter the auditorium Bear Pong tournament.
- **Odd Socks Day (Monday 16th November)**: To kick off Anti-Bullying Week, everyone is invited to **wear two completely different, bright, or patterned socks** with their uniform to celebrate what makes us all unique.
- **International Men's Day (Thursday 19th November)**: To help spark supportive, open conversations about men's physical and mental health, we are inviting pupils to take on the **Movember Check-In Challenge.** Encourage your child to ask (twice) how a male relative or friend is doing using the 8 steps that they have learned in tutor time.

In addition to these key events, we are exploring some incredibly important topics in our assemblies this month. Asking your child what they discovered is a lovely way to reinforce these positive values at home:

- **Fire safety:** With bonfire night and Diwali coming up, please take time to check what your child has learned at school about conducting these events safely.
- **Road Safety week (16th-20th November):** With shorter daylight hours and changing weather conditions, ask your child about their learning on pedestrian alertness, being a safe passenger, or cycle visibility.
- **Disability History Month:** Discuss celebrating achievements and removing barriers so that everyone feels valued.
- **Respect and Safety:** In line with national educational guidelines, we will address safety, respect, and protective behaviors. As part of this vital safeguarding focus, we will focus on topics such as domestic violence, sexual harassment and non-fatal strangulation, addressing them in a strictly age-appropriate manner that emphasizes bodily autonomy, consent and immediate safety. Take time to discuss their rights and consent at home.
- **Metacognition:** Ask them how they are "thinking about thinking" to find their own best learning and study styles.

We are incredibly proud of the empathy, social responsibility, and leadership our students demonstrate during these events. Thank you for your continued partnership and support in ensuring your children are prepared for a purposeful and reflective month ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs.Warde

Assistant Principal