

# ALEC REED ACADEMY



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Acting Principal and CEO: Phil Cosby

28<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you know the Academy prides itself on being a diverse school with high levels of tolerance and kindness for one another. Whilst we are geographically far away from the events taking place in Ukraine, members of our academy community will be directly affected and may have families or roots in the region. The news and social media feeds are filled with the latest information, and some of it is very upsetting and worrying. Children listening and viewing distressing images can become frightened and fearful. As with all conflicts there are concepts and ideologies that can be difficult to explain, especially when the imagery of war is so distressing. I expect many of our pupils will be raising questions as they seek reassurance about what might happen next. It is important that as a community we pull together to make everyone feel safe and secure and not at risk of retribution, unpleasant comments or bullying.

Within the academy we will do our best to navigate the pupils through this distressing and complex situation by helping them to establish facts. We will point them towards "trusted, reputable sources that explain the "what, where, when, why and who". It is important that they have accurate information which is based on fact, from reliable sources. Mis-information, disinformation and conspiracy theories are prevalent on the internet, especially during times of conflict and the risk posed by misleading narratives and information increases.

It is important that we [Educate Against Hate](#) when dealing with issues relating to conflict and promote dialogue in the classroom that can support pupils to achieve a greater understanding of the complex and sensitive topics surrounding this and other conflicts around the world. In school we will encourage healthy debate by facilitating discussion without it becoming personal. We will encourage pupils to explore a range of diverse perspectives and consider the different voices being heard. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on the fact that there isn't an answer for everything – in many circumstances there is no one 'right' answer. Central to this will be the fact that it is acceptable to disagree with someone's idea. That doesn't mean that you disagree with the person.

I am sure that you will be acting in a similar way at home and to support parents and pupils across all phases I have provided some links to resources that you may find useful.

Supporting your child if they see upsetting content online about what is happening in Ukraine (Childnet)

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/supporting-your-child-with-upsetting-content/>

We should not hide from children what is happening in Ukraine (Schools Week/Children's Commissioner)

<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/we-should-not-hide-from-children-what-is-happening-in-ukraine/>

How to talk to children about what's happening in Ukraine and World War Three anxiety (Metro)

<https://metro.co.uk/2022/02/24/how-to-talk-to-children-about-whats-happening-in-ukraine-16163133/>

Help for teachers and families to talk to pupils about Russia's invasion of Ukraine and how to help them avoid misinformation (Department for Education)

**'The Collins PiXL Award for Outstanding Progress'** National Award Winners 2014



<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2022/02/25/help-for-teachers-and-families-to-talk-to-pupils-about-russias-invasion-of-ukraine-and-how-to-help-them-avoid-misinformation/>

How and when to talk to children about war, according to a parenting expert (Independent)

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/children-war-talk-russia-ukraine-b2023695.html>

I hope you find these resources useful. My thoughts and prayers go out to any members of our community that are caught up in this tragic situation.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Cosby', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Phil Cosby**  
**Acting Principal & CEO**