

Raynham Primary School

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The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP

Prime Minister

10 Downing Street

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Dear Prime Minister,

Re: Community safety, unity and cohesion

We felt encouraged to write to you following your speech on 13th December 2019 urging us to *'unite this country'* with the promise of spreading *'opportunity to every corner of the UK'* alongside with your speech on 24th July 2019 emphasising that your *'job is to make'* our *'streets safer'* whilst *'serving us, the people'*.

As a school, serving a community in one of the most deprived areas of the UK, we see the wisdom of such statements. What better way to demonstrate your belief in them than seeing first hand the challenges our children and adults alike are facing where we live! So we are inviting you to come and see.

We are very proud to be part of a culturally diverse community that enriches our life experiences, and we would love to continue to build strong links with the residents in our postcode, whilst continuing to positively influence the children we teach to become responsible local and global citizens. However; the relentless cuts in the police seem to have had an undesired impact reflected through the spate of crime including robberies, muggings and the presence of drugs, which has severely impacted all of us. In particular, when the advice by police, in some instances (though kindly meant), is for the victim to move their family outside of this area to keep them safe, one realises something is clearly not right if that seems to be the solution to avoid these crimes. For us, who deeply care for the community where we have lived and served for decades, that is not the most feasible option as that is turning a blind eye to a problem, not the solution.

Through collective responsibility demonstrated by our hard working dedicated teachers, teaching assistants, office, support staff, parents and carers, we are passionate about our children's right to live in a safe environment, where they are able to thrive through leading healthy lifestyles that include the ability to walk safely around their neighbourhood and to their school, be able to play carefree in the local park without worrying about drugs lurking around whilst collectively upholding our British values in a diverse, culturally enriching community.

These issues are beginning to negatively influence the lifestyle choices we, as a community can make, as we are in fear of our personal safety and that of our children when we walk the streets around our school, in particular, as many of us, including members of staff and their children, have personally experienced these in one way or another, some more violent than others. In addition, as the government is also keen to become 'carbon neutral' we are beginning to see that many people are moving away from greener lifestyle choices such as walking and cycling to using car, specifically as a safer choice to travel in our area. Some of us, who have sold our cars in preference of walking and cycling, are now reconsidering after our children's safety has been compromised through these crimes.

We, as a school, are doing our utmost to educate our children through PSHE lessons, assemblies and instilling British values building the foundations for them to become responsible global citizens; particularly, as it is evident that many of these crimes are committed by young people. However; a coordinated effort involving the government, the local council, increased police presence and establishment of safer neighbourhood communities alongside of creating guardians of the communities acting as positive role models is required to ensure that effective measures are put in place so that we enable the perpetrators of these crimes to make more positive life choices whilst keeping our community safe.

We urge you to visit and invest in communities such as ours so that we can begin to restore our faith in that politicians indeed remember that they are here *'to serve us, the people'* in order to *'unite the country'* by providing *'opportunity to every corner of the UK'* including us and our children who after all are the future of this country.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Most respectfully,

Raynham Primary School Community