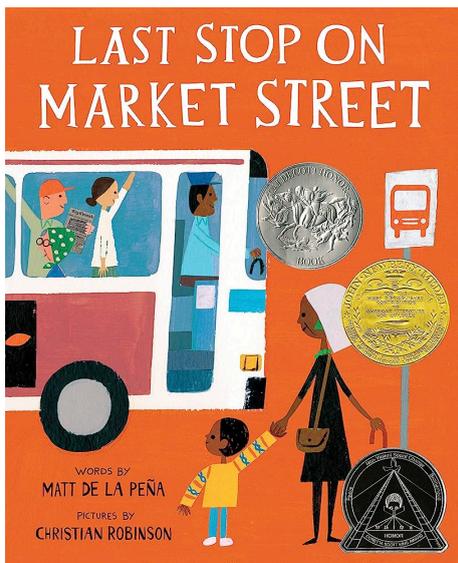


## Character Education - Compassion



During Summer 2, the children were introduced to our sixth and final character trait of the academic year, 'compassion.' The children listened to the story Last Stop on Market Street by Matt De La Pena. The story follows a young boy named CJ as he learns to appreciate the beauty in everyday things during a bus ride. The story raises questions about the diversity of people and their circumstance, the obligation of charity, and celebrates the role that compassion and helping other people plays in our life. Finally, the book touches on the topic of inequity and what the proper response to it ought to be.

During the assembly, we discussed the meaning of compassion is caring about others, treating them with kindness and feeling a strong desire to help people in need. **In our discussion, we agreed that we know that we can all help those less fortunate than ourselves.**

Compassion means

- We all help each other.
- We treat others with kindness.
- We all feel a strong desire to help others in need.
- We can feel empathy for others.
- We feel motivated to help other people who are suffering.

We agreed that compassion is similar to kindness, but it is when you feel empathy towards how someone else may feel and want to help them. We delved further into thinking about the impact our actions have on each other and discussed small acts of compassion we could show towards others, in different situations.

In the following assembly, the children discussed moral dilemmas, offering advice to others on how to show compassion and empathy towards others. The children offered advice to different children on how they can support their friends.



#### **How to support at home**

1. **Play cooperative and team-building games.** Have a daily interaction with your children in a fun, team-building capacity promotes prosocial abilities.
2. **Give your child a role at home to help around the house.** Giving children responsibility can help them understand different points of view and have compassion for others.
3. **Establishing an, 'acts of kindness,' jar.** Encourage acts of kindness in your home. Create a jar, or a box, where your child can offer instances of kindness they have done throughout the week. Read these out at dinner time to celebrate the compassion they have shown.
4. **Reading stories about helpers.** There are many books for children with kindness and compassion as central themes. The more the topic is discussed, the greater the opportunities to practise in real life.

5. **Teach children loving-kindness meditation.** There are many available and taking the time to invest in this practice will lower stress for those taking part. Other mindfulness resources can be found [here](#).
6. **Discuss suffering.** Though it may prove to be a difficult conversation, helping children notice the suffering of others is a first step in cultivating the action needed to alleviate that suffering.
7. **Ask children who they would want to help in the world.** They're likely noticing more suffering than you might realise.
8. **Read about helpers.** Help your child understand the helpers in their world and how their work in compassionate endeavours are valued.
9. **Teach them self-compassion.** We learn too quickly to be hard on ourselves about failure. While we all want kids to succeed, notice when your children are suffering from that failure instead. Help them to know that it is okay to fail, especially if we can learn from it.
10. **Model, Model, Model.** Show your children what it means to have compassion toward others and toward yourself.



A stranger's  
compassion can make  
a world of difference.

OPRAH WINFREY

See below books which explore, 'compassion.'

