

## manchester news

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### A friend in need is a friend indeed

Deborah Haile

THE red berets of the Guardian Angels may be a common sight on the crime-ridden streets of New York, but now they are moving in to the playgrounds of a Manchester primary school.

America's distinctive do-gooders have been keeping the public safe by patrolling the streets and subways of the Big Apple for more than 25 years.

And now an army of playground buddies at Crosssacres Primary School, in Wythenshawe, have adopted the same red-capped approach to help them stand out from the crowd.

During lunch times the eagle-eyed youngsters are on the lookout for classmates who don't have anyone to play with. They organise games in the playground and when they see anyone standing alone at the 'friendship stop' they help out.

Nine-year-old Bethany Brumby is one of the team of 10 angels. She said: "My teacher chose me to be a Guardian Angel.

"We have to wear a red hat in the playground and if there is someone who is crying or who has no-one to play with, we go over and see what is wrong.

"Then we have a go at trying to solve whatever the problem is.



**HELPING HAND: A Red Cap with Lauren Morgan, 6**



**PALS: Declan Cullen checks on a younger pupil**

"If they haven't got a friend we go and find them a friend. It's important because it helps people. Otherwise people wouldn't have friends. It's fun."

Teacher Joanne O'Mullane - personal, health and social education co-ordinator at the school - has set up the buddy scheme to help youngsters get along in the playground.

In the coming weeks she hopes to forge links with the youngsters' American counterparts to bring added excitement to the scheme.

She told the M.E.N: "The scheme is designed to look after children in the playground, to improve behaviour and to boost self-esteem.

"The children organise games and keep a lookout for children at the friendship stop. We are going to try and link up with the American Guardian Angels. The children are quite excited and looking forward to it."