



Newsletter

As we start a new year and new term, we thought we would share some of our activities, events and news from last term with you. We had lots of fun learning during the second half of the Autumn term.

As you know, Mr Lane has now retired. He was very grateful for all of your thoughtful messages and gifts and wanted us to pass on his thanks.

Mrs Towle is now Acting Headteacher until a permanent Headteacher is recruited.

Online Learning

If your child is isolating due to having COVID symptoms or has tested positive (and they are well enough) class teachers will set home learning via Seesaw. Please contact school if your child requires this.

We also have some laptops that we can lend to children who are isolating so they can complete their remote learning. Please let us know if you require one for your child.



Merridale sets remote learning through Seesaw ([Student Sign In - Seesaw](#)) when children cannot attend school. All children have their own accounts and have been provided with their access code. If you require any support with this, please contact school via office@merridaleprimary.co.uk



Year 1-6 children also have access to Doodle ([DoodleLearning | Personalised Online Maths & English](#)). The four Doodle apps can be used daily by children to improve their knowledge and skills in Maths, English, Spelling and Times tables. If you require any support with this, please contact school via office@merridaleprimary.co.uk

Jewellery Policy

The only items that are considered appropriate for school, for health and safety reasons, are one pair of small stud or sleeper earrings and watches.

The school does not approve of other jewellery or cosmetics unless for cultural reasons. Any items that are worn must be removed or covered with a sweat band/plaster (to be provided from home) for PE and all items are the responsibility of the pupil. Please note that staff are not allowed to remove or look after jewellery for children.

Long hair must be tied back for PE lessons.

Year 5 and 6 Theatre Visit

On Wednesday 17th November, Years 5 and 6 visited the Grand Theatre for a presentation from children's poet, Valerie Bloom. The children loved hearing about her writing experience and processes. Year 6 were also incredibly lucky to have a visit from Valerie herself back at school in the afternoon. They wrote a kenning poem together



PLEASE HELP TO KEEP YOURSELF AND OTHERS SAFE WHILE CASES OF COVID-19 ARE INCREASING.

If in doubt, take a test.

The three main symptoms of COVID-19 are:



High
temperature



New continuous
cough



Change to how
things taste or smell

If you have any of these signs, you must **stay at home** and book a free PCR test as soon as possible.

A PCR test is for people who think they have symptoms of COVID-19. It is a swab test that is sent to a lab to be analysed.

Sometimes, people with COVID-19 do not have the three main symptoms listed above. Instead, they have any of the following symptoms:



Diarrhoea



Sore throat



Muscle or full
body aches



Tired and
unwell



Headache that
lasts a long time



Blocked or
runny nose



Sickness or
vomiting

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Book Fair

Thanks to everyone who visited our Book Fair in November. Because so many families purchased books, we made over £400 in commission. We will use this money to buy new books for classes and our school library.

Forest School and Outdoor Learning

During Autumn 2, Years 5 and 6 took part in some Forest School outdoor learning sessions with a specialist teacher. The children enjoyed den building, games, outdoor art using clay and finished with a campfire session.



School Nurse Drop In sessions

Our School Nurse, Reeta Chaudhry, will be in school every Thursday morning 8.30am-10am. Parents and carers are invited to call in (in complete confidence) to talk about any medical questions or concerns you have about your child. You do not need an appointment.



Diwali Celebrations

On Friday 5th November, we celebrated Diwali. Children enjoyed dressing up in their celebration clothes and taking part in creative workshops. We also enjoyed watching our bhangra dancers perform.



Road safety Poster competition winners

In October, we set children the challenge of designing a road safety poster to help us stay safe when using and crossing the road. We had so many excellent entries that it was difficult to choose a winner so we chose 3! Well done to Andriana, Year 4, Isha, Year 3 and Zariya in Year 2 for their winning entries. You can see their winning poster designs on the pages at the end of this newsletter.

Odd Socks for Anti-Bullying

In November, we wore odd socks for anti-bullying and celebrated what makes us different and unique. We celebrated our individuality and expressed ourselves.





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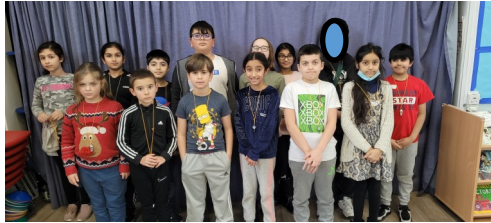
Peer Mentor PlayMaker Training

On Friday 3rd December, our Peer Mentors completed some PlayMaker training and received their PlayMaker award.

The PlayMaker Award is a great introduction into leadership, giving learners knowledge of how to organise small games and activities that can be used when children are supporting their peers at break and lunchtime.

The PlayMaker Award aims to help learners develop leadership skills such as organisation, communication and teamwork, as well as helping to build confidence and self-esteem as they take on the responsibility of assisting in leading their peers and younger children.

We look forward to our Peer Mentors putting this training into action on our playgrounds.



Autumn Term Achievements

Well done to our Autumn Term prize winners. These children impressed school staff throughout the term with their efforts and achievements. We are so proud of your hard work!



Year 5 and 6 Squirrel Computing days

In November, Years 5 and 6 enjoyed their Computing days, delivered by a specialist teacher.

Year 6 combined photo editing and digital artwork to create striking images as part of their Bright Sparks topic.



Year 6 Sing for Christmas at St John's Church

On Monday 6th December, Year 6 joined other local schools for a Sing for Christmas event at St John's Church in Wolverhampton following on from their workshop in school, led by Wolverhampton Music Service. The children and staff had lots of festive fun.



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Year 3 Stone Age Experience day at Kingswood

On Wednesday 8th December, Year 3 visited Kingswood to experience what it was like during the Stone Age as part of their Discover topic for next term. They helped make a campfire and then had some dough to cook bread on the fire! They also had the chance to make their own dens and later on they had a go at using a bow and arrow and a spear to aim for a target. They ended the day by trying to transport a piece of log using just some large sticks and string. We had a great day!



Contact Details

It is vital that the school office has up-to-date, correct contact details for all parents and carers in the event of an emergency.

If you need to inform us of any change in circumstances or medical information, you can e-mail school at:
office@merridaleprimary.co.uk
to let us know.

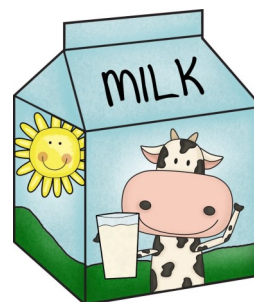
Christingle service

It was lovely for children and staff to visit St Chad and St Marks' Church on Tuesday 14th December for our Christingle service. The children enjoyed making their Christingles and celebrating together.



Milk Money—Spring term

Milk money for the Spring term is £14.56 per child (if you pay for milk for your child). Please pay this no later than Friday 21st January. SimsPay is preferred please. If you need support setting up a SimsPay account, please see Mrs Hitch in the school office.



Christmas Dinner

Thank you to Cathy and our kitchen team for their fabulous Christmas dinner in December. The food was delicious and children and staff enjoyed wearing their festive jumpers too.

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WOW Walk to School

We continue our Walk to School challenge this half term. Children who walk to school at least once per week are awarded a special badge at the end of each month. Walking to school helps us to keep active and healthy whilst also reducing traffic around our school at busy times of the day.



Attendance

Missing school means missing out. We aim for all children to attend school, on time, every day that they are able to. We know that attendance and punctuality has a direct impact on children's learning and well-being. Children who are regularly absent or late to school do not achieve their potential and fall behind in class.

It is the legal responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that their child/ren attend school.

If your child is unable to come to school, we ask parents/carers to contact school before 9.00 a.m. to confirm the reason for the absence.

If your child has a medical appointment, please provide evidence of this to the school office.

For further information on attendance, see here:

[Attendance | Merridale Primary](#)

[Attendance Figures | Merridale Primary](#)

Punctuality

School starts at 8.50am each day. Children that arrive late miss important learning at the start of the day. Please support your child's learning by making sure they arrive at school on time each morning.

Sickness

Please note that any child with sickness or diarrhoea must be clear for at least 48 hours before returning back to school – Many thanks for your co-operation.

Children in Need

In November, we raised money for Children in Need by dressing in our pyjamas. The School Council also decorated and sold biscuits and cakes to raise money for this charity. We raised £215.67 in total. Thank you to everyone who donated.



Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Thanks to everyone who supported the Merridale poppy appeal in November. Children wore their poppies with pride and took some time to consider the sacrifices made by our armed forces in keeping us safe. We raised £207.65 for the Royal British Legion.



Look for a Light

Children enjoyed making their lanterns for our Look for a Light display on 15th December. Our lantern display in the hall looked beautiful!





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PE Kits

To avoid bringing PE kit from home, we are asking that children come to school wearing their PE kit on their PE day. Please ensure that children wear suitable clothing (tracksuit bottoms/ shorts, t-shirt, sweatshirt/fleece) on their PE day as they will stay in these clothes all day. Children will need suitable outdoor footwear (trainers) on their PE day and also ensure that long hair is tied back, jewellery/ watches are removed or covered with plasters/sweat band.

Year 3 have PE on a Monday

Year 6 have PE on a Tuesday

Years 1 and 2 have PE on a Wednesday

Year 4 have PE on a Thursday

Reception and Year 5 have PE on a Friday

Please note that only watches and stud earrings are allowed to be worn in school at any time but these must be covered or removed for PE for safety.

Dinner Money

Dinner money is £2.30 per day (£11.50 per week). SimsPay is the preferred method of payment please. Please ensure all dinner money is paid at the start of the week.

Some parents and carers in receipt of income support and Working Family Tax Credits are entitled to free school meals and milk. Please ask at the school office for more information.

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are eligible to receive a free school meal everyday under the Universal Infant Free School Meals funding.

Parking restrictions

Please can I remind you that the school car park is for staff use only. Please park outside of school where it is safe and legal to do so.

Please can I also ask that you respect our school neighbours by not parking in front of drop-down kerbs.

Face masks and Face coverings

When not teaching, supporting children, eating or drinking, all school staff are now required to wear face masks in school.

Please can we ask that parents and carers also wear face masks when entering the school site.

Face masks MUST be worn in the main school entrance area

Outdoor Learning

Government advice is for learning to take place outside wherever possible. Children will be going outside as often as the weather allows so please ensure they are dressed appropriately for this and have a warm coat and appropriate footwear.

We also ask that all children bring a named pair of wellies to keep at school please.



Daily Testing for Close Contacts of those with COVID-19

People who are fully vaccinated or children between 5-18 years and 6 months that are identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 should take a Lateral Flow test everyday for 7 days and can continue to attend school as normal. Unless they have a positive test result or develop symptoms at any time –in this case, a PCR test and isolation pending the result is required.

Children under 5 years old do not need to take part in daily Lateral Flow testing but can do so at the discretion of their parents and carers.

Further information available here:

[Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection)



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Term Dates

Friday 21st January: Third payment date for Year 6 Borth residential. £30 due by this date—SimsPay is preferred

Friday 26th January: **£14.56 milk money for Spring term to be paid by this date if you pay for milk for your child. SimsPay is preferred.**

Friday 28th January: Year 4 Cooking session 2 with Royal Academy of Culinary Arts (£2.00 per child) further details to follow.

Wednesday 9th February: Parent Consultations 3.30-8pm—further details to follow

Friday 11th February: Food Bank Friday collection

Monday 21st-Friday 25th February: Half term. School closed

Wednesday 9th March: Year 3 Wroxeter Visit—further details to follow

Friday 18th March: Fourth and FINAL payment date for Year 6 Borth residential. £30 due by today—SimsPay is preferred

Friday 18th March: Red Nose Day—Comic Relief—further details to follow

Tuesday 5th April: year 4 visit to Carding Mill Valley —further details to follow

Monday 11th April—Friday 22nd April: School closed for Easter holidays

Monday 2nd May: Bank Holiday—school closed

Friday 6th May: Eid Celebration Day

Monday 9th May-Thursday 12th May: Year 6 SATs week

Wednesday 25th May: School Photographs

Monday 30th May—Friday 3rd June: Half term. School closed

Monday 6th June—INSET Day—school closed to pupils

Friday 10th June: Food Bank Friday collection

Wednesday 22nd—Friday 24th June: Year 6 Borth residential

Wednesday 20th July 3.20pm: School closes to pupils for the Summer holidays

Thursday 21st July: INSET Day—school closed to pupils

Monday 5th September: INSET Day—school closed to pupils

Tuesday 6th September: School re-opens to pupils for the Autumn term

If your
small
always
sit on a
car seat

Always
look
both
ways

Look

Listen

Watch

Always
look at
the walk
or stop
to know
when to
go.

light

Always
be super-
vised by
a parent

Never
run on
the
road



STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN!



Cross the Road Safely at a zebra crossing

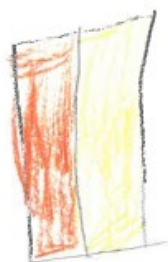
You must watch and listen.
Think first - find the safest place to cross then Step.
Wait patiently until it's safe.



Walk whenever possible and safely.

Walking can reduce the risk of many diseases and pollution.
If you don't look safe, it can cause accidents.

Stop Look Listen Think





CORONAVIRUS

STAY ALERT TO THE SYMPTOMS

**HIGH TEMPERATURE
OR NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH
OR LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?**

Find out how to get a test, and how long to
isolate, at nhs.uk/coronavirus

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES

Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or a positive LFT or PCR test result

MUST NOT ATTEND SCHOOL.

Arrange a test and notify school IMMEDIATELY!

Telephone 01902 558760 or

E-mail: office@merridaleprimary.co.uk



Rise to the

Reading Challenge!

We expect ALL children at Merridale to read (or enjoy a book with someone else) for **AT LEAST 20 minutes at least five times a week!**

Evidence from research shows that children who read daily are more successful learners, leading to increased confidence and enjoyment of reading.

The **role of parents and carers** is central to your child's success with this challenge. Older children may enjoy reading independently each day, however, younger children will require an adult to read with/to them in order to meet their target.

Please ensure that you provide a quiet space for your child to read at least 5 days per week at home and **sign** their reading record to confirm that they have read for **at least 20 minutes**.

Children may read their school reading book or library book. They may also read any other book that they might choose. All of these should be noted down in their reading record and signed by a parent/carer. Just note the date, book title and how many pages have been read and sign in the comments box. If you also wish to write a short comment on your child's reading, that would be great!

At the end of each week, every child who has read for at least 5 days (if not more) will receive a sticker for their class reading chart. The children with the most stickers at the end of each half term in each class will receive a small reward.





Safe and Legal Parking outside Merridale Primary School

PLEASE KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE

The overriding reason for this guidance is to keep our children safe outside our school gates and to respect our neighbours whilst also making sure parents and carers do not break the law.

Drivers, parents and carers who break the law can be issued with a penalty charge notice (fine).

We know that the school run can be a stressful time. The last thing we want to do is make it harder, but it's really important for everyone's safety that you observe the rules and park safely. That's why it's a good idea, if you drive your children to school, to get here early and look for somewhere safe and legal to park.

Can I park on **double and single yellow lines**?

No. Please do not park on any yellow lines. Cars parked there can obstruct lines of sight for pedestrians who want to cross the road. Any car left unattended on a single or double yellow line for more than a few minutes can be issued with a penalty charge notice. You are only allowed to stop on double or single yellow lines for a short period of time to allow passengers to enter or exit the vehicle, providing no obstruction is being caused.

Can I park on school **zig-zag** or **keep clear** markings?

No. In the interests of safety, you should never park on those markings. Any vehicle found on them can be issued with a penalty charge notice. This also applies to Blue Badge Holders.

Can I **double park** if I remain in my vehicle?

No. This causes an obstruction for other road users and is a danger to pedestrians.

Can I park over **drop-down kerbs** in front of the houses opposite school?

No. This causes an obstruction and means that our neighbours around school are not able to get on and off their drives.

Can I park on the **school car park**?

No, this car park is for staff only. Parking on the school car park causes an obstruction for staff and is a safety risk for staff, pupils and families who might be crossing the car park on foot.

You must also make sure your child is using the correct child seat, restraint or booster seat when driving. Children under 135cm tall require a booster seat by law to ensure that they are safe when travelling in a vehicle.