







Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are now halfway through the Autumn term and already so many events and exciting learning opportunities have taken place at Merridale. We have been delighted to see the children return from the summer holidays with a positive attitude towards their learning and our school values.

House Points

As you know, all children were allocated a house this term as part of our new house points system to recognise children’s efforts and achievements in school. Children have been awarded raffle tickets and house points through the first half of the Autumn term and we have included the totals so far for each house, below. At the end of term, the house with the most points will be awarded the House Cup.

House		House points so far this term
Ash		625
Sycamore		818
Elder		943
Lime		837

New handwriting scheme

From September, we have introduced a new handwriting scheme across school called “Kinetic Letters”. We have arranged a parent/carer work shop on **Wednesday 11th January 2023** for parents and carers to come along and find out more about the scheme and learn how you can help your children at home with their handwriting.

Contact Details

We are committed to becoming a paperless school and, as such, will increasingly be sending communication via text message. Please make sure school has an up to date contact number for you so that you do not miss any communications. All text messages will be sent to the “Priority 1” mobile telephone number that we have for your child. If you are not receiving any messages for your child, please contact the school office.

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.

New Deputy Headteacher

Mrs Sarah Byrne was recently appointed as our new Deputy Headteacher after the appointment of Mrs Towle to Headteacher earlier this year.

We look forward to working closely with parents and carers and our local community to continue to build on the strengths of our school. For now, Mrs Byrne will remain as the Year 6 class teacher.



Newsletter

Attendance and Punctuality

Please remember that we have a 15 minute window for children to come into school at the start of the day (**from 8.35am until 8.50am**). From 8.50am, children need to come into school via the main office and will need to be signed in by an adult. Being on time for school is very important to ensure children are registered and settled in, ready to start learning promptly at 9am. During this time, all children are also offered a breakfast bagel so it is important for children to arrive in their classes on time so that they can have enough time to eat this.

We will update parents and carers by text message each term with your child's attendance percentage. Please remember that we aim for children to have at least 96% attendance as this is our target for whole school attendance.

We know that there are times when children cannot attend school. If your child is unwell, please make sure you contact school as early as possible in the morning so you can register the absence with the school office. Medical evidence for absences due to illness may be requested, as stated in our attendance policy.

You can find further details on attendance on our website: [Attendance | Merridale Primary](#)

School **cannot** authorise absences for holidays or trips during term time, as stated in our attendance policy. If you would like to request a leave of absence for your child, you must do so in advance, in writing by completing a form from the school office. School will then write to you to confirm whether or not this absence will be authorised.

What will happen if my request is not authorised but I still take my child out of school?

Your school will notify the delegated local authority officer who may issue a Penalty Notice to you if 5 days or more have been taken.

A Penalty Notice of £60 could be imposed per child and per parent. If this is not paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, the cost rises to £120 which must be paid between 21 and 28 days of receipt of the notice. All Penalty Notices will be delivered by hand or first class post.

If the notice has not been paid in full by 28 days of receipt, the local authority must either prosecute for the offence or withdraw the notice.

Once issued a Penalty Notice may only be withdrawn in the following circumstances:

- Proof has been established that the Penalty Notice has been issued to the wrong person.
- The notice ought not to have been issued e.g. where it has been issued outside the terms of the Code of Conduct.

This prosecution is for the offence of failing to secure attendance at school not for non-payment of the fine. Prosecutions are brought under S444 of the Education Act 1996. Parents/carers need to be mindful that a conviction for this offence can result in a criminal record.

Catering Survey—Meat options

To complete our survey on school meal meat options, please complete the form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/ydP9qbtd6j>

Online Safety Information Session for Parents and Carers

We are excited to announce that we are holding a FREE online safety information session for parents and carers. Everyone that attends will be entered into a prize draw to win a £30 Amazon Gift Voucher.

Reserve your place by completing the form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/A1f1ZjttUD>



Newsletter

Dinner Money



Our school meals are now provided by Caterlink.

Dinner money remains the same at £2.30 per day (£11.50 per week) for children in Years 3/4/5/6 who pay for their meals. All school meals must be paid for via SimsPay. Our school meals menu is available on our school website: [School Meals | Merridale Primary](#)

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.

School Milk

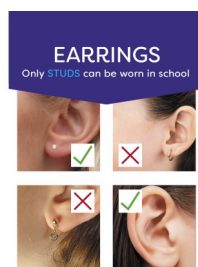


Milk Money is now payable to Coolmilk. The school will no longer be taking payments for milk. If your child is under 5, they will be provided free milk until their 5th Birthday. If you wish your child to continue to receive milk after they turn 5, please register with Coolmilk and make a payment at least a week before via the website: www.coolmilk.com. If your child is eligible for free school meals, the school will continue to provide free milk (please check with the school office if you are unsure if you need to pay). If you require any further information please, contact Mrs Hitch in the main school office.

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.



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.**

Year 1 and 2 Christmas Play

Tickets are now on sale for the Year 1 and 2 Christmas Play on 14th December at 2pm. Please reserve your tickets by completing the form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/MSqMQ2nmXW>



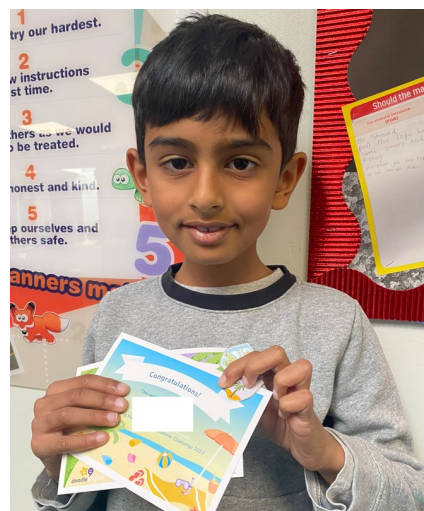
Newsletter

What have we been learning?



E-Safety Workshops for Years 5 and 6

On 28th September, Year 5 and 6 children took part in some E-Safety workshops led by Believe2Achieve. These sessions covered topics such as staying safe online, strangers online, age appropriate gaming, safe practice, social media safe practice, dangers, inappropriate language, apps, posting inappropriate pictures, bullying online and how to avoid it as well as mobile phone general devices safety, parental engagement and avoiding online peer pressure. Children were encouraged to share their experiences around safe practice and telling trusted adults if they are ever concerned by online activity or images.



Doodle Summer Challenge Achievement

Well done to Oscar in Year 3 for completing the Doodle Summer Challenge. Oscar is a real Doodle Superstar who regularly uses our online learning platform to boost his understanding away from the classroom.



Newsletter

What have we been learning?



Mini Medics with Adult Education

On Friday 14th October, a group of parents/carers and pupils spent the morning learning basic first aid and life saving techniques alongside a tutor from Adult Education. Children and their parents/carers had lots of fun learning in a hands-on way though this session.



Food Bank Friday

Thanks to all of our families who donated as part of our recent Food Bank Friday collection. All items have now been sent to the Well (Wolverhampton Food Bank) for distribution to families in need across the city.

Merridale Minis

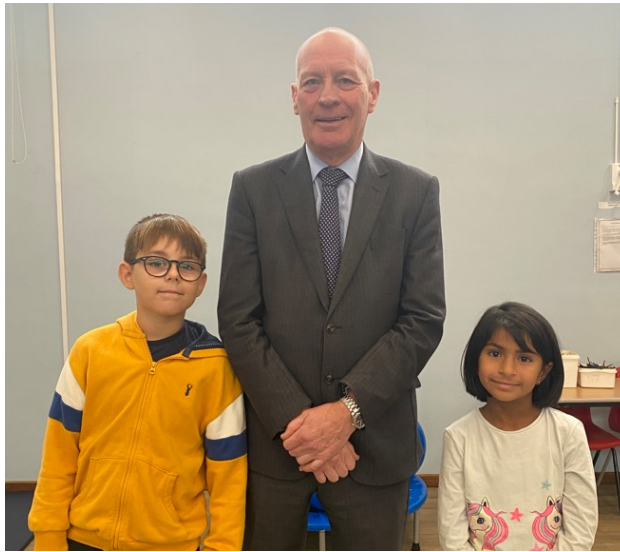
Our new pre-school group, Merridale Minis, is now up and running on Wednesday mornings each week during term time. All places are now full but parents and carers can join the waiting list by contacting the school office





Newsletter

What have we been learning?



Magistrate Visit

We were delighted to be visited by Mr Pearson, local magistrate on 26th September. Mr Pearson led an assembly to explain to children about his work and role in the justice system. Children enjoyed asking lots of great questions to find out more.

Gifted and Talented Award

We were delighted to present Leja in Year 6 with her Gifted and Talented award from the Summer term as we came back to school in September. Leja was joined by mum and dad for a special assembly to receive her prize for her achievements in maths.



Aspire and Reach Martial Arts and Mentoring

This term, we have been joined by a Martial Arts coach and mentor from the local charity, Aspire and Reach. During the first half of the Autumn term a group on invited Year 5 and 6 students have taken part in the Martial Arts programme after school and we look forward to rolling this out to a Year 4 group this half term.





Newsletter

What have we been learning?



Accessibility sessions

Children from across the school really enjoyed learning about all of the things you can do if you use a wheelchair during our recent sessions with the Penn Hall School Outreach team. The children loved trying out the wheelchairs to understand more about how to use them. The children thought this was lots of fun—but quite tiring for their arms!



We love the Outdoors!

During their Seasons topic, Year 1 have been on Autumn walks and spotted signs of Autumn.

Have you spotted any of the signs of Autumn whilst you've been out and about?

We love learning about how to stay healthy!

Nursery tasted different types of fruit and learned that fruit is a healthy food type as part of our recent Health Living week.

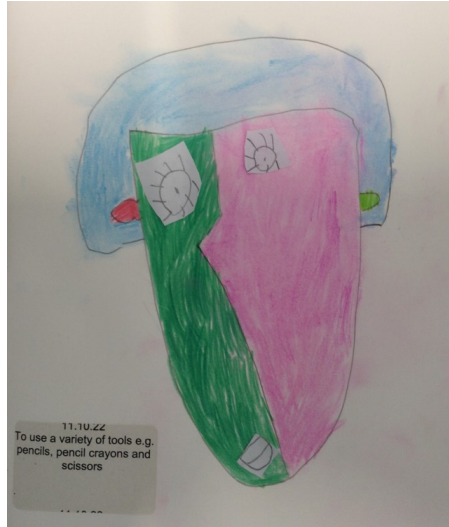
Do you know what to eat to make sure your diet is healthy and varied?





Newsletter

What have we been learning?



We love being creative!

In Art Year 1 have learned about Pablo Picasso and completed portraits in the style of cubism.

Do you like our wonderful art work?



Reading Challenge Winners

Well done to our Reading Challenge winners for this half term. We are so proud of you for reading for at least 20 minutes per day, at least 5 times per week.



Newsletter

What have we been learning?



Author Visit at Wolverhampton Grammar School

Year 5 had the pleasure of going to Wolverhampton Grammar School for an author event. They met David Farr and learnt about the inspiration behind his first ever children's book. As well as this, they had the opportunity to be authors and create an opening to their own story. They loved listening to David read extracts from his book and had some super questions ready to ask him.



Year 5 Bulb Planting at Bantock Park

On Friday 21st October, Year 5 enjoyed planting crocus bulbs at Bantock Park to support Wolverhampton Rotary Club's end polio campaign. We can't wait to see them bloom next spring!



Newsletter

What have we been learning?

Merridale celebrates Diwali

Children and staff had lots of fun celebrating Diwali on 21st October. We loved getting dressed up and learning all about the festival of lights. Years 2-6 also enjoyed a special Ramayana dance workshop to bring the Diwali story to life!





Values

Newsletter

Merridale Values

Each half term, we focus on a core value. This half term we are learning about **KINDNESS**.

What does **KINDNESS** look like?

- treat others as you want to be treated
- be welcoming
- build relationships
- smile
- encourage others
- be helpful
- be caring
- use positive words and actions
- give compliments
- communicate



We will be looking out for children that demonstrate this value throughout the half term and rewarding them with special stickers. Please could you discuss kindness with children at home and explore ways to reinforce it. How can you show kindness to others?





Newsletter

Term Dates

Wednesday 2nd November 2.15pm: Parent Ambassador coffee afternoon in the bungalow
Wednesday 2nd November 2.45pm: Year 2 open Story time session for parents and carers
Thursday 3rd November 8.30am—10am: School Nurse drop in session for parents and carers
Thursday 3rd November: Year 2 author visit to Grand Theatre
Friday 4th October: Book Swap event at school
Monday 7th to Thursday 10th November until 4pm: Book Fair in school
WB 7th November: E-Safety Focus week - Online relationships
Friday 11th November: Year 6 Borth second payment due date (£35)
WB 14th November: Anti-Bullying Week
Friday 18th November: Odd Socks for Anti-Bullying day
Friday 18th November 8.30am—10am: School Nurse drop in session for parents and carers
Friday 25th November: Year 1 visit to Bantock House
Friday 25th November: Year 1 visit to Bantock House
WB 28th November: E-Safety Focus week - Online reputation
Tuesday 29th November: Year 4 visit to Singers Hill Synagogue
Tuesday 29th November 2.15pm: Year 6 Discover Showcase for parents and carers
Thursday 1st December 8.30am—10am: School Nurse drop in session for parents and carers
Wednesday 7th December: Look for a Light lantern display in the school hall after school for parents and carers
Thursday 8th December: School Christmas Dinner day (children are invited to wear their Christmas jumpers if they wish)
Tuesday 13th December: Year 1-6 Christmas Service at St Chad and St Mark's Church
Tuesday 13th December: EYFS Christmas Craft workshops –parents and carers invited to attend
Wednesday 14th December 2pm: Year 1 and 2 Christmas Play performance for parents, carers and family members
Wednesday 14th December: Year 5/6 Christmas Singing group to perform at local Care Home
Thursday 15th December: Christmas Disco
Friday 16th December 3.20pm: School closes for the Christmas holidays
Tuesday 3rd January: School re-opens to pupils
WB 9th January: E-Safety Focus week - Online Bullying
Tuesday 10th January: Year 6 Singing Workshop
Friday 13th January 3.30pm: Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check meeting for parents/carers
Thursday 19th January 3.30pm: Year 1 Phonic check meeting for parents and carers
Thursday 19th January: Year 4 Royal Academy of Culinary Arts Cooking Session 2
Friday 3rd February: Year 6 Borth third payment due date (£30)
Wednesday 15th February 3.30-8pm: Parent consultation appointments
Friday 17th February: INSET Day (school closed to pupils)
Monday 20th February—Friday 24th February: Half term (school closed)
Monday 27th February: School re-opens to pupils
WB 27th February: E-Safety Focus week - Managing online information
Thursday 2nd March: World Book Day
Friday 3rd March: Book Swap event at school
Wednesday 15th March: Year 6 Borth final payment due date (£30)
Friday 17th March: Food Bank Friday Collection
Tuesday 21st March 2.15pm: Year 6 Discover Showcase for parents and carers
Wednesday 29th March: Year 4 Easter experience at St Chad and St Mark's Church
Thursday 30th March: Easter Disco
Monday 3rd April to Friday 14th April: Easter Holidays (school closed)
Monday 17th April: School re-opens to pupils
Monday 24th April: Eid celebration day in school —children are invited to come to school in celebration clothes for this if they wish.
WB 24th April: E-Safety Focus week - Health, Well-being and Lifestyle

Dates continued on the next page...



Newsletter

Term Dates (continued)

Monday 1st May: Bank Holiday Monday (School closed)

Tuesday 2nd May: School open to pupils as normal

Friday 5th May: Buddhism day in school

WB Monday 8th May: Year 6 SATs week

Wednesday 17th May: School photographs

Friday 19th May: Book Swap event at school

Tuesday 23rd May 2.15pm: Year 2 Discover Showcase for parents and carers

Thursday 25th May 3.30pm: Year 6 Borth meeting for parents and carers

Friday 26th May: INSET Day (school closed to pupils)

Monday 29th May—Friday 2nd June: Half term (school closed)

Monday 5th June: School re-opens to pupils

WB 12th June: E-Safety Focus week - Privacy and Security

WB 12th June: Year 1 Phonic Check week

Friday 16th June : Food Bank Friday Collection

Monday 19th June—Thursday 22nd June: Book Fair after school until 4pm

Wednesday 21st June—Friday 23rd June: Year 6 Borth residential visit

Tuesday 27th June 1.45pm: Year 1-6 Sports Day

Wednesday 28th June (times to be confirmed): EYFS Sports Day (Nursery and Reception classes)

Thursday 13th July 3.30pm: Reception reading/phonics meeting for parents/carers

Friday 14th July 3.20pm: Nursery closes

Thursday 20th July 9.15am: Year 6 Leavers' Play performance for parents and carers

Monday 24th July: Summer disco

Tuesday 25th July 3.20pm: School closes for the Summer holidays

Wednesday 26th July—Sunday 3rd September: Summer Holidays (School closed)

Monday 4th September: INSET Day (school closed to pupils)

Tuesday 5th September: School re-opens to pupils

Come in!
For tasty food
and good company



Free meals
Wednesdays
5.00pm

Everyone is welcome

FoodCycle
Wolverhampton
Wesleyan Holiness
Church
2 Merridale Ln
WV3 9RD





CASH COMPASS WORKSHOPS



Learning and sharing tips on saving money, healthy meals, how food can improve your mood, and lots more

ST CHAD'S & ST MARK'S CHURCH, LIME ST WV3 0EX




**STARTING 12TH OCTOBER
1:30 - 3PM**



12th
October

HOW TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR FOOD BILL?

- Top tips on how to cut your weekly food bill without reducing quality and nutrition



Save Money!

HOW TO SPEND LESS AT THE SUPERMARKET?


- Ways and tips to spend less - everyone loves a bargain

19th
October

26th
October

VISIT TO WOLVERHAMPTON CENTRAL LIBRARY

- Libraries can change lives for the better - not just book, but lots more
- Bring your children to find out more 'stuff'



HEALTHY EATING

- Information and tools on keeping healthy.
- What is a Balanced diet?

2nd
November

9th
November

HEALTHY EATING ON A TIGHT BUDGET

- How to make healthy food choices that won't break the bank

Budget





DIET AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Tips on how food can affect your mood

16th
November

23rd
November

CREATE OUR COMMUNITY COOKERY AND CASH SAVING TIPS BOOK

- Sharing your best recipes
- Sharing your top money-saving tips

Coffee and a chat

YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR
PARENT AMBASSADOR



Coffee Afternoon

COME ALONG FOR A DRINK, BISCUIT AND A CHAT WITH OUR
PARENT AMBASSADORS, MARGARET AND HAJRA.
MEET OTHER PARENTS AND CARERS FROM MERRIDALE.

THIS EVENT IS FREE TO ALL.
NO NEED TO BOOK.

WEDNESDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2.15PM
@ MERRIDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL BUNGALOW



All are welcome

Relax and share

Thanks to all of the parents and carers who attended our Parent Ambassador Coffee afternoon last half term. We would like to invite anyone who is interested to come along to the next one on Wednesday 2nd November. If you are interested, there is no need to book—just come along to enjoy a hot drink with Merridale parents and carers and our Parent Ambassadors.

Is my child too ill for school?

When children are ill, there are times when they must not attend school so that they do not pass anything onto other children and staff.

Find out more here:

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)



Chicken Pox When all spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis None*	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 48 hours from last episode	Glandular Fever None*	Hand, foot & mouth None*	Impetigo When lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
Measles or German Measles 4 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	Scabies After first treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Slapped Cheek None*	Whooping Cough 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
	Flu Until recovered	Head Lice None*	Threadworms None*	Tonsillitis None*	

This information is based on the [Public Health Agency guide - full copy here](#)

*No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed.

[Guidance on infection control in schools poster.pdf \(hscni.net\)](#)



Reading at home

For children learning phonics through Read, Write, Inc



Phonetically Matched Book

This book is specifically matched to your child's current phonic level. Please listen to your child read this book by themselves everyday for 20 minutes. If your child has finished reading their book within the week **please hear them read it more than once!** This is good practise and helps them to become fluent.

Scan this QR Code to see how to use a Phonetically Matched Book Bag Book



This book will be changed once a week, not always on the same day. Make sure your child brings their book back to school everyday.

Record reading daily in the reading record.

Here is an example of what this might look like.



Date	Book and Page Number	Remarks
16/3	A house fit for a mouse pg 1-5	Great sounding out
17/3	A house fit for a mouse pg 5-10	Retold the story well!
18/3	A house fit for a mouse pg 11	Answered questions with a bit of help

Sharing Book This book is a book to enjoy together with your child. It may contain sounds your child does not know so help them to decode these and read together. This book will be changed once a week, not always on the same day.

Library Book Your child has chosen this book from the library to enjoy. It could be fiction or non-fiction. It may contain sounds your child does not know so help them to decode these and read together. Please read together.



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!**

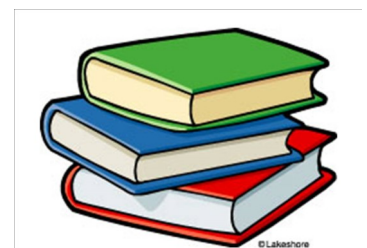
Evidence from research shows that children who read daily are more successful learners, leading to increased confidence and enjoyment of reading.

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.