
Term 3 – 6th January 2020

Mersham Primary School

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Happy New Year – I hope you all had a lovely break over the Christmas period. The last week of term was Arts week and I know some beautiful artwork was created over the week. Thank you to all of you who came in for the Year R Sparkles morning undertaking Christmas crafts and to all the Year 3 parents for helping make the juggling balls – it was fantastic seeing so many mums, dads and other relatives taking part! There was also some amazing music and dance going on – a huge well done to all the staff for planning and organising such an enjoyable last week of term.

**Mrs C Chalkley
Headteacher**

Payment Reminders

If you have still to pay for the pantomime trip or swimming (years 5 and 6 only), please could you arrange for the payment to be made as soon as possible. We do rely on parental contributions to enable us to include these activities within the curriculum – sadly, the school does not have anywhere near enough money within the budget to enable us to fund these experiences for children. We will have to consider in the future whether we can continue to provide offsite trips if we don't receive enough parental contributions to cover the costs. Many of you may not be aware that whilst the school receives Sports Funding money from the government, we are not allowed to use this money to pay for swimming lessons or the necessary transport so we have already made the decision to not include Year 4 in the swimming lessons this year because of costs to the school. If there are financial reasons why you are unable to meet the costs, please do speak to Mrs Chalkley to discuss how the school may be able to support. Thank you.

Pokemon Cards

We have had numerous issues with Pokemon cards at school and as a result we have made the decision to no longer allow them in school to avoid disagreements between children. If children are found to have them, the class teacher will look after them until the end of the day and then return them to the parent. We would very much appreciate your support with regard to this matter

Upcoming Events

6 th Jan	Start of Term 3
8 th Jan	Walk in Wednesday
21 st Jan	PTA Meeting and AGM
5 th Feb	Walk in Wednesday
6 th Feb	Young Voices O2
10 th Feb	Friends and Family week
13 th Feb	End of Term 3
14 th Feb	Staff Training Day
24 th Feb	Start of Term 4
2/3 Mar	Parent's Evenings
9 th Mar	Science Week
13 th Mar	Non-Uniform Day for Easter Egg Bingo
20 th Mar	KS1 Easter Egg Bingo
27 th Mar	Easter Service 9:30am
27 th Mar	KS2 Easter Egg Bingo
31 st Mar	End of Term 4
1 st Apr	Staff Training Day

Online Safety Guides for Parents

This week's guide from National Online Safety is all about **Screen Addiction**. Many children will have spent a lot of time on screens over the Christmas break – this guide provides some useful tips on how to manage that with your child.

Coming into school during the school day

Please could I remind all parents that if they need to come into school during the school day that they must report straight to reception, for safeguarding reasons. If another member of the family is coming in, please could you also remind them to report to the office – we have had a few occasions recently where children have been out for an appointment and then have been taken by the parent to their classroom without reporting to the office. Thank you for your support.

Free Books with The Sun newspaper and Harper Collins

From Saturday 23rd November until Saturday 18th January, The Sun and The Sun on Sunday will be providing tokens towards free books for schools. The school needs to collect 3,500 in order to get a pack of 105 free Collins Big Cat books. If you receive any vouchers, please can you pass them to Miss Tripp in the office. Thank you!

Co-opted Governors Needed

We already have our full quota of parent governors but should you be aware of anyone from the general community who would be interested in taking on this role and would like to learn more please contact Lesley Caldwell (Chair of Governors) on chair@mersham.kent.sch.uk

Being a school governor is a challenging but hugely rewarding voluntary role. It provides an opportunity for people to make a real difference to our young people, and to give something back to the local community. Individuals will also be joining the largest volunteer force in the country. Our school needs a governing board that has balance and a diversity of knowledge, skills and experience to enable it to be effective.

There is no requirement for interested individuals to understand the education system, just to possess the necessary skills, character and time to contribute. There is plenty of training available to help new governors learn about education plus we offer a mentor to support. Schools benefit from a range of professional knowledge on their governing board.

The governing board provides strategic leadership and accountability in our school. It has three key functions:

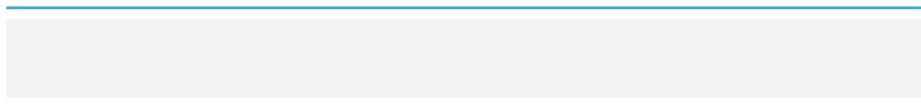
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

The average time commitment is four hours per month, although it will vary depending on the needs of the school and the role. This includes 7 full governing body meetings per year. As well as these meetings governors may like to contribute to such specific areas as Health and Safety and Finance. We are currently seeking co-opted governors with experience in one or more of the following areas : finance, human resources, legal, marketing and public relations, property and estates management or organisational change.

Winter Weather Guidance for Parents

Every winter brings the possibility of snow and ice. Extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption. Schools are often affected and it can be difficult to maintain an education service.

As a fundamental principle every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. However, schools may close due to 'unavoidable' circumstances. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite.



We recognise that it is important our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. Mersham Primary School will make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice this winter by e.g. gritting pathways, clearing access points etc.

How will we let you know if the school is closed?

If we do experience severe snow/ice resulting in hazardous conditions, Mrs Chalkley may have to take the decision to close the school. Once this decision has been made we will notify parents via the Kent Closures website. To determine whether Mersham Primary School is open or closed please visit www.kentclosures.co.uk. Search for the school in the search box. The Kent Closures website may also be used to find out if other services in Kent are open or closed, such as nurseries, children's centres and libraries. We also recommend parents sign up for Email alerts on the Kent Closures website. This service will send an email alert to let parents know if Mersham Primary School is closed. Local radio will sometimes provide information of school closures.

What can you do to help?

- Please visit <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/winter-service> for more information about gritting routes and travel issues around Kent so you can plan your journey.
- Please approach the school carefully – the hill can become very icy and it may be preferable to park at either the top or bottom and walk to the school entrance.
- Check with the school to see whether you need to provide a packed lunch from home in case school meals cannot be provided.
- Don't forget suitable warm clothing – gloves, hats, scarves, wellies etc. or even a change of clothing.
- If you are a working parent or feel you may have a problem with a sudden earlier pick up, please could you put a backup plan in place with another family member or parent and inform the school. This will allow staff to leave earlier for their safety if weather dictates.

Many thanks for your support in helping Mersham Primary School remain open during periods of severe snow/ice.

PTA News & Updates

PTA AGM

The PTA AGM will be held on Tuesday 21st January, 7pm in The Farriers Arms. All are welcome.

Cauliflower Cards

Thank you to everyone for their Cauliflower Cards orders. If you would like to have the original artwork your child produced to create the cards, please can you collect from the School Office by Friday 10th January. All art work will be thrown away after this date.

