



12th January 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

A very warm welcome back to you all. I hope you had a relaxing break and wish you all a very Happy New Year! Looking forward, the spring term promises another busy term of exciting learning and memory making within our "Dig a Little Deeper" topic. The children will experience exciting enrichment activities such as World Book Day, hatching eggs and visits ranging from dinosaurs to King Henry VIII!



'Curious Learners' – *what we learn*

Please click on the link below to have a peek at some of the wonderful learning that has taken place in your child's classroom this week:

<https://merryhill.org.uk/our-learning-community/year-group-blogs/>

'Healthy Learners' – *how we ensure we are ready to learn*

We would like to send our appreciation to parents/carers for your patience and understanding with regards to traffic on School Lane this week. Safety is of the utmost importance here at Merry Hill; thank you to those who have been parking further away and walking the remainder of your journey to school. This impacts the road significantly and also helps to keep you and the children safe. We are in contact with local councillors and PSCO's and have asked for assistance from them in this matter. This week, we delivered a 'Road Safety' assembly to the children highlighting the importance of walking away from the road side and never walking alone, only with an adult. We also discussed how some drivers do not always follow the rules of driving, so we must also continue to look, listen and concentrate whenever we are near a road to help keep us safe.



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School Priorities 2023- 2024

As we are entering our second term we thought it would be a good opportunity to remind you of our school priorities for this academic year. Please see below:

SDP 1 - To enhance provision to enable greater independence

SDP 2 - To build lifelong effective word learners (Year 2 implementation)

SDP 3 - To offer comprehensive support to parents and carers, addressing the challenges arising from the cost of living crisis and other pressing needs

SDP 4 - To develop and foster a culture of celebrating diversity and practising anti-racism throughout the school community (Year 2 implementation)

SDP 5 - To rebuild our history curriculum for our 'Curious Learners' and ensure there is relevance to their lives

SDP 2 – Lifelong Effective Word Learners

This year we are introducing 'Word Aware' - our chosen whole school approach to teaching vocabulary – into our Nursery to support vocabulary development from the moment children begin their learning journey here at Merry Hill. Last term, our youngest learners really enjoyed meeting concept cat who teaches them all about concepts such as big, small, first, same and different.



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Word Detectives

We will continue using the Word Aware approach in Reception and KS1 but will extend our children by introducing the Independent Word Learners phase.

- ❖ We want our children to show an interest in words – both spoken and written.
- ❖ We want them to recognise when they don't understand a word and be curious about its meaning.
- ❖ We want the children to be proud when they learn a new word and share it with others.

There are so many words in our language that we simply cannot teach them all so our children will become word detectives, using taught strategies to uncover the meaning of unknown words.

Date for the diary – 2nd February 2024 – Vocabulary Parade – come to school wearing a costume, picture or hat to illustrate a word you are proud to know!

This year's focus will celebrate our uniqueness by coming to school showing a word we are proud to know. This could be linked to a special interest or sport the children take part in, it may be a word in your home language or it may be a very long word that the children are proud to know. Please do not go out and buy costumes, please see below for some inspiration!



Sincerely,

Ms Melissa Adams
Headteacher

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