



15th May 2026

Dear Parents & Carers,

### Learning Together: Our Commitment to Excellence

At Merry Hill, we are committed to creating a culture where both children and adults strive for continual growth and excellence. This week's newsletter highlights some of the professional learning and collaboration taking place across our school as we continue working together to provide the very best opportunities for every child.

Learning never stops and that is not just true for our wonderful children. Our dedicated staff are continually developing their skills and expertise to strengthen teaching, support children's development and enhance the experiences we provide across the school.

The last few weeks have been particularly busy with professional development opportunities and we are proud to share just some of the ways our staff are enhancing their practice:

**Developing mathematical thinking from the very start** Our Nursery team have been part of a *Teaching for Mastery* pilot programme, focusing on how young children learn to sort and classify: essential building blocks for mathematical understanding. The key questions they are exploring – "What do you notice? What is the same? What is different?" are being used throughout the school to help children become mathematically curious and think for themselves.

**Early Years excellence** Our Reception team have been training on assessment processes, whilst another member of the team visited a local school to observe their Mastering Number sessions and engage in professional discussion about mathematical thinking.

**Supporting every child's development** Staff have been working with speech and language therapists, developing reading fluency skills, and enhancing their understanding of how to support children's communication needs.

**Sharing our expertise** We are also proud to support other schools in developing their practice. This week, we hosted a Year 1 Teacher from Swallow Dell who spent the afternoon in Moorhens class, learning from our approaches and developing her own teaching practice. It is wonderful to be able to share the expertise we have built here at Merry Hill.

**Building for the future** Several team members are working towards qualifications, including apprenticeships and level 3 (SEND) certifications, whilst others have been developing their skills in school systems and administration.

### A Happy Face

The Merry Hill Way remains at the heart of our school community and it has been lovely to see the children consistently living out our expectations in all areas of school life.

*A Happy Face, A Learning Place, A Growing Space*

## Team points:

**EYFS:** We ask to join in with others at playtime

**KS1:** We allow others' to join in our play and take their ideas into consideration.

## A Learning Place

### Year Group Blogs

Each week the class teachers post blogs, which enable you to find out more about our education offer and reinforce learning at home. Please click on the link below to find out more:

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

## A Growing Space

### 2026 - The Year of Reading

#### Building on our reading journey together

Over the last couple of weeks, we have shared some reading tips and resources to promote reading engagement at home. As part of our commitment to the Year of Reading, we want to share why talking about books with your child is one of the most powerful ways to support their reading journey. Please see the 'Book Talk' attachment below for further information.

#### Governors, Working Together for the Future

This week, we also held our Full Governing Body meeting, where Governors came together to review and ratify the school budget and financial projections for the next five years.

In a time where many schools nationally continue to face significant financial challenges, we feel very fortunate that through careful planning, strong financial management and the continued support of our school community, Merry Hill remains in a stable position. This allows us to continue investing in high-quality teaching, staff development, resources and opportunities that directly benefit the children.

Our governors play a vital role in supporting and challenging school leaders, helping to ensure that every decision made keeps the children and the future of the school at its heart. We are incredibly grateful for their ongoing commitment, time and expertise.

#### Community Events

Below you will also find some information about local events taking place over the half term.

Don't forget it is **Walk to School Week** next week so get your trainers ready! Have a lovely weekend everyone!

Ms Melissa Adams  
Headteacher

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## Book Talk at Home



### Why It Matters

When you talk with your child about the stories you share together, you're doing so much more than just reading words on a page. Book talk helps children:

- **Develop comprehension skills** – discussing what's happening in the story helps them understand and remember what they've read
- **Build vocabulary** – talking about new words and ideas expands their language
- **Make connections** – linking stories to their own experiences makes reading meaningful and memorable
- **Foster a love of reading** – when reading becomes a conversation, it becomes enjoyable and something to look forward to

### Top Tips for Book Talk at Home

#### Before reading:

- Look at the cover together and predict what might happen
- Ask: "What do you think this book will be about?"

#### During reading:

- Pause to discuss pictures and ask questions like "Why do you think they did that?" or "How do you think they're feeling?"
- Let your child join in with repeated phrases or predict what comes next

#### After reading:

- Talk about your favourite parts: "Which bit did you like best?"
- Make connections: "Has anything like that ever happened to you?"
- Ask open questions: "What would you have done?" or "How did the story make you feel?"

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# MOOVIES

ON THE FARM



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## BOOK NOW!

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY | SING | JURASSIC PARK

**FRIDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> JULY - SUNDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST**  
**OPEN-AIR CINEMA**  
**FOOD TRUCKS & BAR**

TICKETS: [BATTLESGREENFARM.CO.UK](http://BATTLESGREENFARM.CO.UK)



ANCHORMAN | THE GREATEST SHOWMAN | DIRTY DANCING

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This May half-term join us at Discover Bucks Museum in Aylesbury for a week of Mythical family fun!

23 - 31 May 2026

### Mythical May Family Crafts

Monday 25 May – Decorated Book Boxes (4-11yrs)

Tuesday 26 May – Dragon Marionettes! (4-11yrs)

Wednesday 27 May – Merlin's Potion Jars (4-11yrs)

Thursday 28 May – Nature Sprite Puppets (4-11yrs)

Friday 29 May – Spy Craft! With Mark Creasy (5-11yrs)

**Join us for fun activities every Bucks school holiday!**

For more event details, charges and to book please scan the QR code or visit [discoverbucksmuseum.org](https://discoverbucksmuseum.org)

### Explore the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery

Step into the magical world of Roald Dahl's stories. Crawl through Fantastic Mr Fox's tunnel, investigate minibeasts inside the Giant Peach, and explore sound with the BFG in this much-loved, hands-on gallery. Packed with playful exhibits inspired by Roald Dahl's stories, it's a joyful way for children to discover science and the world around them.

Open daily over May Half Term



### The SAXONS are here!

- Meet the Saxons through engaging films, sounds, and immersive experiences.
- Hands-on interactives and digital storytelling bring history vividly to life.
- Discover real artefacts and try the fun family trail and creative activities.
- An great day out for curious minds and young explorers!

Discover Bucks Museum  
Aylesbury HP20 2QP  
01296 331441 | [discoverbucksmuseum.org](https://discoverbucksmuseum.org)



SCAN ME

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