



19<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have enjoyed some cold and crisp weather here this week. Winter offers a particularly exciting new world for the children to explore and our curious learners loved venturing outside to play with the frost and ice.



### Exciting News: Commencement of School Window and Roofing Project!

We are thrilled to announce that after careful planning and preparations, the much-anticipated roofing and window project at our school will finally commence this week. This important initiative is a significant step towards ensuring the longevity and safety of our beloved school building. As we embark on this endeavour, we appreciate your understanding and patience throughout the upcoming months.

During the pre-construction planning, county have identified additional work that needs attention to maintain the integrity of our facilities. Rest assured, we are committed to transparency and will be providing you with detailed information on the various phases of the project and any potential disturbances and strategies that may arise.

The children's teaching, learning and well-being remain our top priorities, and we will keep you updated every step of the way. We appreciate your continued support as we work towards enhancing the overall environment at Merry Hill.

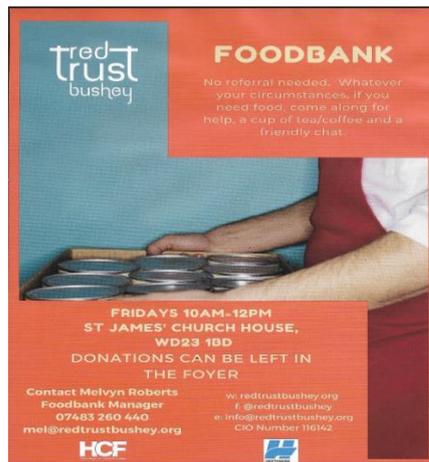
#### **What does Merry Hill offer for families needing financial support?**

You may remember that back in June, I wrote to you about our Herts County Council commissioned visit which reviewed the effectiveness of our school's actions to reduce the impact of economic exclusion on pupils. This week we had a very successful review visit from County; we will share the report findings shortly.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the information sent in June so that you can access support if and when it is required. Below is a list of what we already offer and we are in the process of creating a website page which will show all this information.

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- **Pre-loved uniform** sales
- **Unbranded uniform** is perfectly acceptable and readily available from supermarkets
- Melissa Adams (Headteacher) is our **point of contact** for families requiring financial support (my door is always open, so please come and see me if you would like to talk)
- Financial support is available for **school trips** should this be required
- **After school clubs** – we want as many children to attend as possible and can offer financial support if needed / some funded places
- **Free activities** included in the newsletter to keep the children entertained within a budget
- Links to **food bank** (see below)



- **Pupil Premium Strategy** on our website details the work we are doing in school to support our pupils

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

**New devices:** Some children may have received a new device for Christmas and in order to keep your child safe online we recommend setting up parental controls, if you have not done so already. Please see the information below:

**Consoles:** All consoles offer parental controls such as limiting the time spent on the device or restricting who your child can communicate with. Find out the specific settings below:

**PlayStation:** <https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/psn-safety-parents-guide/>

**Xbox:** <https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/family-hub>

**Nintendo Switch:** <https://www.nintendo.co.uk/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-1183145.html>

**Mobiles/Tablets:** You can set up parental controls and restrictions on most mobile devices, which can limit what your child can access. Additionally, make sure appropriate settings are applied on the apps your child is using.

Apple devices: <https://www.apple.com/uk/families/>

Android devices: <https://families.google/familylink/>

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**Further information:** Internet Matters provide a checklist

here: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/e-safety-checklist-getting-your-kids-tech-devices-set-up-safe>

### **'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/>

#### **Mastering Number At Home**

This week your child would have brought home, in their book bags, the Mastering Number activities for week 5, which is the final week of the Mastering Number at Home Project.

We have received some very positive feedback to say that the children have really enjoyed playing these fun games with you at home and that parents feel supported with the language the children should be using in maths so that they can reinforce and expect the same at home. If you started a little later on the project or are still working your way through the activities, please continue to do so and send your child's diaries in, via their book bag, when you have finished. The online workshops are still available on the Maths page of our school website if you need any reminders or prompts. <https://merryhill.org.uk/our-learning-community/our-curriculum/maths/>

Thank you for your enthusiasm with the project; doing short activities such as these every day will have a positive impact on your child's outcomes as well as their confidence and enjoyment of maths.

### **'Collaborative Learners' – *our place in the world***

#### **Cost of Living**

Every week, we aim to feature a suggestion for a free (or inexpensive) family activity that you can enjoy together. If anyone has any tips or ideas of free or inexpensive activities you would like to share with our community, please let the office know. I hope you find these activities enjoyable and valuable for quality time together.

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## Cheslyn House and Gardens

**What:** Henry and Daisy Colbeck originally owned the house and gardens. A renowned architect, Henry Colbeck designed Cheslyn House and, together, the couple created the original gardens. Visit and you will be able to enjoy;-

- Formal, open area
- Semi-natural woodland area
- Pond
- Aviary with budgerigars, quail, assorted finches and other varieties of small birds
- Wildlife and plants

**Where:** Cheslyn House and Gardens, Nascot Wood Road, WD17 4SL

**When:**

November to February 9am to 4pm

March and October 9am to 6pm

April to September 9am to 8pm



I hope you all have a wonderful weekend!

Sincerely,

Ms Melissa Adams  
Headteacher

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