



Friday 19th November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Learning Community

Please have a look at the blogs this week to find out what your child/children have been learning in school and how you can support them at home.

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

This week, we focused our discussions around road safety and anti-bullying. Please see the links on our website to find out more about our week.

Whole School Activities – Merry Hill

Celebrating Diversity

On Monday Rabbi Sharfstein led a Hanukkah assembly for our KS1 children. He brought in a large menorah, the same height as the children, and explained that each night one additional candle is lit until they are all lit together on the final night of the festival. The children also got the opportunity to play a large scale dreidel game, which is one of the most famous Hanukkah traditions. Rabbi Sharfstein talked about the importance of spreading kindness and the children left the assembly reflecting on what they could do to show kindness to somebody at school or at home.

This week our Safeguarding Governor, Caroline Loison, held a remote visit and led a virtual assembly for the children on Mitzvah Day. She explained to the children that Mitzvah Day is a day dedicated to helping others. She explained that this is not just people from the Jewish faith who celebrate Mitzvah day, people from lots of different religions get involved too. We look forward to hearing about how children have helped others this weekend.

Parent Phonic and Reading Survey

As some of you may be aware, the government have introduced a validation process for the teaching of phonics, early reading, in order to improve levels of literacy to:

- Give all children a solid base upon which to build as they progress through school
- Help children to develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information

Whilst it is not a statutory requirement for schools to choose one of the programmes from the validated list, it does ensure the phonics programme includes all of the DfE (Department for Education) criteria for an effective phonics programme. Our team have spent a lot of time researching the different programmes and thinking about which will best meet the needs of our pupils. As parents/carers you are an important part of our learning community and as such we would like to ask your opinion about this essential part of our curriculum.

A Happy Face, A Learning Place, A Growing Space

We would really appreciate your support with completing a survey attached to this newsletter about your child's reading. This survey is voluntary but will be extremely helpful as we continue to improve the standards of reading in our school. The link to complete the survey is below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=SocVEYBj9kSODOx37PrB68Q1O3Un6H5Js19dzaOqJujUMkhETDVZWkhHWTQOMUVYUzIzTkJaME1WTy4u>

Year 1 and 2 Parents Sport England Survey- We need your help!

KS1 are taking part in the Sport England Active Lives survey. The survey measures participation in sport and physical activity. As a result Sport England will provide our school with a bespoke report outlining the results as well as a Healthy School Rating Scheme. This helps us recognise and encourage pupils' health and well-being across KS1.

In addition Sport England would love to hear from parents. The survey is easy to follow and takes around 5-10 minutes to complete. **Each completed parental survey is an additional £10 worth of free equipment for the pupils to enjoy which is amazing!** Each parent reply would make a huge difference to the additional PE resources we could offer.

The link to complete the parental survey is: <https://ipsos.uk/HBZKRY>

Staff CPD

This week our staff took part in further studies that focused on Social Stories. It was led by an external Special Educational Needs specialist from Colnbrook School. Social Stories are primarily used to support children with Autism but can be an effective tool for any child who needs support with social understanding. They are short descriptions of a particular situation, event or activity, which include specific information about what to expect in that situation and why. With some new members of staff on our team, we are providing targeted CPD, which ensures our inclusive provision continues to be outstanding and supports the range of needs within our school community.

Christmas Market

Thank you to the FoMH for arranging the Christmas Market. It was a great turnout and they raised £300. Additionally, thank you for supporting the local stallholders who we are sure appreciated all of your purchases.

Thank you very much for all your support.

Have a lovely weekend,

Melissa Adams
Headteacher