



20<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we reach the final day of this half term, we reflect on the incredible journey of growth, learning and exploration our young Merry Hillers have embarked on. It has been a privilege to witness their development, curiosity and enthusiasm. The way our children have settled so nicely into school life and navigated incredible transitions is truly remarkable. As we prepare to break for half term, I ask you to take a moment to celebrate your child's achievements in this short time. 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 (and throughout the half term):

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

We look forward to more exciting adventures in the upcoming terms.

### **Hertfordshire's Library Service**

Attached to the newsletter this week, is a competition from Hertfordshire's Library Service with an aim to encourage all Reception children to sign up to their local library. It is free to join the library and the children love choosing their own books. Whilst this competition is directed at Reception children, we strongly recommend all children having their own library card so that, together, we are developing their lifelong love of reading. There are also events such as *Baby Rhyme Time*, *Board Games*, *Lego Club* held at different Hertfordshire libraries. Please see their website for a list of events:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/libraries-and-archives/events-and-things-to-do/library-events.aspx>

### **Roofing Works Update**

As per our previous communication, I would like to inform you that we will be commencing roofing works during half-term. This initial stage of the work will be the installation of scaffolding along the newer part of the school building. In addition, there will be a skip and a storage unit set up alongside the entrance to the school.

We would like to assure you that this work has been carefully planned with county and the building contractors to minimize any impact on our daily school routine. The safety and uninterrupted learning experience of our pupils remain top priorities.

What we should expect:

The roofing works, including the scaffolding, skip and storage unit, are strategically placed to ensure minimal disruption to the access into and from the school.

We want to again emphasize that the ongoing works will not interfere with the learning process. Classes will proceed as normal, and our dedicated teaching staff will ensure that children's experience remains undisturbed. We do anticipate that the work carried out, these construction activities, may spark your child's curiosity about the career of being a construction worker. Our staff are prepared to answer their questions and incorporate this real-life experience into their learning.

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We would ask that you discuss this exciting development with your child/ren and let them know that it is a part of maintaining and improving our school. This opportunity to observe the roofing works (from ground level of course) is a fabulous experience, showcasing how a school can undergo improvements just like our own homes.

Thank you all for your understanding and support during this time.

### **Invite to Toddlers Group**

We are delighted to invite all parents and carers with toddlers to join us for a coffee on Friday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> in the dining hall straight after drop off. From recent feedback we have learned that some of our parents and carers are eager to connect with other families from Merry Hill. The aim of this group is to provide an opportunity for you to come together in a supportive and welcoming environment. As this will be our first session, please expect that it will be a relaxed and informal meet up, making it easy to communicate with other parents/carers. You will have the chance to meet new families who share similar experiences of raising toddlers. Parenthood is best shared and this event is an ideal platform to share stories, tips and experiences. Most importantly to build a stronger community and have your toddlers meet some new friends. We look forward to sharing this special time with you.

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

#### **Harvest Assembly**

On Wednesday afternoon, we welcomed Father Andrew Burton from St. Peter's Church who led an assembly about Harvest Festival. Father Andrew shared a wonderful story about Babbity Bee, who visited lots of different flowers, sucking the nectar to make honey and collecting the pollen too. The children loved listening and particularly enjoyed telling our special visitor which colour flower Babbity was visiting and counting how many flowers she had been to! The story showed the children how important even the tiniest little insects can be because, not only do bees create delicious honey, they also help the flowers to reproduce and grow. Father Andrew and Sharon Fowler, who came from the Red Trust Bushey, were really impressed by our HUGE Harvest collection of cans and dry foods. Sharon took all the food back to the Red Trust Food Bank straight afterwards. All the food that Merry Hill families have generously donated is so needed, especially in the current cost-of-living crisis, and Sharon assured us that our collection will be greatly appreciated by all the people who use the Red Trust Bushey Foodbank and Café. Thank you, Father Andrew, for coming in and leading such an engaging assembly. And thank you, Sharon and everyone at Red Trust Bushey, for all the hard work that you and your colleagues do to ensure that as many Bushey residents as possible are fed and do not go hungry.



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### **Navratri Assembly**

Today our KS1 children had an assembly about Navratri. Navratri, which means “nine nights”, is a Hindu festival that spans nine nights and is celebrated every year in the autumn. Mrs Varia led the assembly then carried out an activity with some Year 2 children. This involved the children creating their own Dandiya sticks by decorating sticks found in our forest area using glitter and glue. They look amazing and the children really enjoyed creating them! Thank you to Mrs Varia for teaching the children about this festival!

### **FoMH Quiz Night**

The quiz night last Friday was a huge success! Our very own quizmaster, Mr Barrell, did a great job of making it light-hearted, enjoyable and great fun and no swotting up was required beforehand!

Join us hopefully in the New Year for another great evening of light entertainment.



### **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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## Half Term Activities in Atria Watford

### What:

**There's something creepy and crawly heading to Atria Watford this October Half Term, and all children are invited to enjoy the fun (dress up is optional).**

From Monday 23 October at 11 am to 4 pm daily, children can have FREE fun each day of the week outside Puttshack:

Here are some things you can expect to happen

'Kids can dive into the gooey adventure of making biodegradable slime, crafting oozing eyeballs and ghoulish goo. Transform gingerbread men into zombies or mummies at the Yummy Mummies workshop.'

Get creative with Creepy Ceramics for eerie home decor. Build 4D wooden haunted house kits and customize treat bags for a memorable trick-or-treating night



If you are interested in these events, please check out the Atria website:  
<https://atriawatford.com/events/october-half-term-fun>

I hope you all have a wonderful half term! We look forward to welcoming you back on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October.

Sincerely,

Ms Melissa Adams  
Headteacher

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UK Government

**STEP 2 SKILLS**  
PREPARE FOR SUCCESS IN HERTS

# FREE Half Term Family Workshops



## Autumn Explorers

Help your child (aged 5-10) develop Literacy, Maths and other skills through making crafts with natural materials.

**Waltham Cross**  
Tue 24th Oct  
10am-12pm

**Stevenage**  
Thu 26th Oct  
10am-12pm



## Story Sacks

Discover how to use 'found' materials to create a story sack/box with your child (aged 4-8).

**Waltham Cross**  
Tue 24th Oct  
1.30-3.30pm

**Stevenage**  
Thu 26th Oct  
1.30-3.30pm

Book your place:  [step2skills.org.uk](http://step2skills.org.uk)  01992 556194



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# Library Adventure with Hertfordshire Libraries

This autumn Hertfordshire Libraries are encouraging all Reception class children to have their own library card. Our special 'My First Library Adventure' promotion gives your child the chance to win one of 50 personalised signed books by author / illustrator Alex Willmore ('I did see a Mammoth!' and 'Spyceratops'). Plus two children will win a library visit with Alex Willmore for their whole class!

It's easy for your child to take part. Just visit a Hertfordshire Library twice by 31 October 2023 with their special 'My First Library Adventure' bookmark. For each step of the Adventure they will collect a 'paw stamp' to celebrate their progress.

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|  |  | <p><b>Visit one:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your child either joins the library, or shows us their library card. (For new members we will need to see proof of a parent/carer's name &amp; address)</li> <li>• choose and borrow 1 or more books</li> <li>• ask library staff / volunteers for 'paw stamps' on your bookmark</li> </ul> <p><b>At home:</b> enjoy sharing the book(s) together</p> <p><b>Visit two:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• return the book(s) to the library</li> <li>• collect more 'paw stamps', tell us about your favourite book, and enter the prize draw</li> </ul> |
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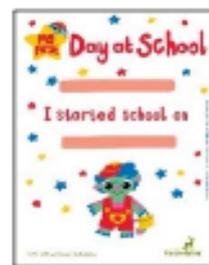
Children love to choose their own books, and it's free to join and borrow books from the library – just remember to bring them back on time or renew them if you want them for longer. Using the library regularly can help save money as you are borrowing and not buying, which is environmentally friendly too.

In your local library you will find thousands of books to choose from:

- picture books – to enjoy together
- beginning to read titles - to build your child's confidence as they learn to read
- information books – to spark their interest for learning about the world
- eBooks and audio books online and via the BorrowBox app – [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ebooks](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ebooks)

With new books purchased every month, there is always something new to discover!

When you visit the library, please ask for a 'My First Day at School' certificate too. We look forward to presenting your child with theirs.



[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)



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