



Merry Hill

Infant School and Nursery

Headteacher: Ms. Melissa Adams MA, NPQH

25th October 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

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

Embracing Wellbeing through Physical Activity and Autumn Walks

As the clocks go back this Sunday and the crisp autumn weather sets in, it's the perfect time to encourage our children to get outside and stay active. At Merry Hill, we believe that physical activity is not only essential for children's health and wellbeing but also plays a key role in supporting their learning.

With the evenings drawing in, we encourage families to make the most of daylight hours by going on autumnal walks. The changing season brings a wonderful opportunity to explore nature, breathe in fresh air, and enjoy the beautiful colours of autumn. These simple activities can do wonders for both body and mind, helping children (and parents!) to stay active and energised.

Physical activity is directly linked to improved concentration, better sleep, and a positive mood—all important factors in supporting children's learning and development. Whether it's a walk in the park, a family bike ride, or playing games outdoors, these activities can provide much-needed movement and fresh air after a day of learning in the classroom.

We encourage our Merry Hill families to embrace the autumn season, wrap up warm, and get moving. These moments of activity not only boost wellbeing but also create the perfect opportunity for family bonding and reflection on the day's learning.

Let's keep our learners active, healthy, and happy as we head into the winter months!

'Curious Learners' – what we learn

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 see the wonderful learning that has taken place over the week.

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

'Ambitious Learners' – how we act when we learn

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Golden Rules

This half term we have focused on one of our Golden Rules each week to help embed positive behaviour and values in our school community. By focusing on each rule individually, children have had the chance to fully understand and practice these important behaviours and we are seeing a really positive impact on our children.

Our Golden Rules are:

- Do be gentle
- Do be kind
- Do work hard
- Do look after property
- Do listen to people
- Do be honest

How you can support at home:

- Continue to **model** these behaviours in everyday life.
- **Praise** your child when they show kindness, honesty or hard work.
- **Encourage** open conversations about the importance of these values.

'Collaborative Learners' – our place in the world

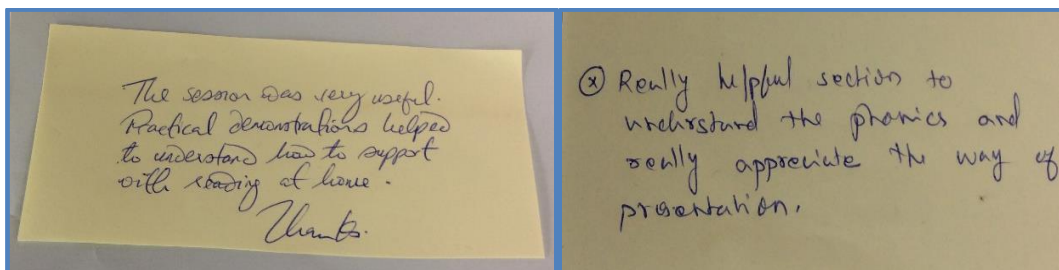
Phonics Parent Workshop: A Successful Partnership in Learning

On Monday, we had the pleasure of welcoming Yr. 1 parents to our Phonics Workshop, led by our Assistant Head teachers; Mrs Summers and Mrs Ineson. The session focused on the Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) phonics programme we use at Merry Hill, and it was a wonderful opportunity to showcase how phonics is taught in our classrooms.

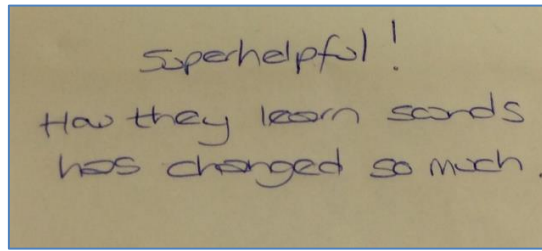
Parents were guided through a mock phonics lesson, where they gained insight into the strategies and methods we use to teach children how to read and develop their phonemic awareness. Following this, the children joined their parents to demonstrate these skills in action which was definitely the highlight of the session. It was a fantastic moment to see the children confidently engaging in their learning, and the parents were delighted to witness first-hand how phonics lessons unfold in the classroom.

After the demonstration, children had the chance to read with their parents, fostering a real sense of partnership in their learning journey. Throughout the workshop, parents were invited to ask questions, share their thoughts, and engage with the teaching staff, making it an interactive and informative session.

We received many positive comments from parents, who found the workshop insightful and appreciated the opportunity to be part of their child's learning experience. It was a truly successful event that highlighted the importance of collaboration between home and school in supporting children's early literacy development.



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Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome Reception parents to our next phonics workshop in November. Additionally, we will be hosting Maths Workshops next term, following the same format, to continue building this strong partnership.

Thank you to all the parents who attended, and we look forward to more of these successful sessions in the future!

As posted in last week's MH Matters and in response to parent requests, we have included a link below to remind you of the reading support available on our school website.

<https://merryhill.org.uk/our-learning-community/our-curriculum/english/>

On this page are reading lists, videos demonstrating how we teach phonics and how to read our phonic books with your child, as well as additional guidance videos modelling the pronunciation of sounds within the English language. Our site has been designed to be mobile phone friendly and therefore requires clicking on the plus sign next to the headings to reveal further information. See below:

Essential Letters and Sounds – Information for Parents



Please speak to a member of staff if you require further assistance.

Celebrating Success Stories from a few of Our Merry Hill Families

At Merry Hill, we love celebrating the successes of our children and the wonderful support they receive from home. This term, we've had some positive moments to share, particularly around the impact of reading at home.

We've been delighted to see so many thoughtful and encouraging comments in the children's reading records. Parents and carers have shared their joy and pride in their child's reading progress, and we love seeing how engaged our families are in supporting this vital part of their child's learning journey. These notes and comments not only reflect the joy of reading but also the strong home-school partnership we value so much.

I've also had the pleasure of meeting with several parents in Reception who shared their amazement at the progress their children have made in reading this term. One parent expressed, "Wow! I didn't even know my child could read like that!" It's these moments of discovery and pride that truly highlight the impact of consistent support from both home and school.

Thank you to all the parents and carers who continue to write in their child's reading book and share these special milestones. Your involvement plays a crucial role in developing confident, enthusiastic readers. We look forward to seeing more success stories as the year progresses!

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A Month to Remember

As we approach November, we are excited to announce our assembly theme for the month: A Month to Remember. This special initiative aims to honour the service and sacrifices of our Armed Forces, supporting a sense of community, reflection and learning among our pupils.

Assembly Highlights

Throughout November, we will hold a series of assemblies, each designed to engage and educate our pupils while aligning with our curriculum drivers:

- **Week 1 (4th November):** We will begin our month of remembrance with an assembly led by Padre Skillen from Northwood HQ, focusing on the significance of Remembrance Day and promoting mental health awareness through reflection and resilience.
- **Week 2 (11th November):** In honour of Remembrance Day, we will hold a commemorative assembly, including a moment of silence and a discussion about the importance of remembering those who served.
- **Week 3 (18th November):** Our assembly will focus on learning from the past, discussing how our choices can contribute to a peaceful world. Children will be encouraged to set personal goals for promoting kindness and respect at school, home and within the community.
- **Week 4 (25th November):** We will invite our military personnel families to speak about their roles in the military. We have asked for those attending to wear uniforms as the children are always inspired by the presence of service members. This session will include brief talks and a chance for children to ask questions to support community connections and curiosity.

We look forward to a meaningful November, where our pupils can reflect on the contributions of our Armed Forces and engage in thoughtful discussions about peace, kindness and community.

Have a wonderful half term; I look forward to hearing all about your adventures when we welcome you back on Monday 4th November.

Sincerely,

Ms Melissa Adams
Headteacher

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Dear parents, carers and children

We hope your children are all settling into their new schools and year groups and enjoying learning and improving their reading skills

Hertfordshire Libraries have so much to offer your family, its free to join and your library card gives you membership of all of our 46 libraries!

With your library card you can:

- borrow up to 30 books at a time
- spend time in the library reading, studying and working – bring in your coffee!
- read free e-books, online magazines and newspapers and listen to free audiobooks on your phone or tablet

Our staff work really hard planning events and activities for you each term so we wanted to let you know about all the great things going on in your **local libraries** - Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar (Oakmere) and Radlett

If you want to access our main website for all of Hertfordshire libraries you can do so here: [Libraries and archives | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

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Reveley Lodge & Garden

88, Elstree Road, Bushey Heath, WD23 4GL

www.reveleylodge.org

JOIN US FOR *Scary* HALLOWEEN FUN AT REVELEY LODGE!

Wednesday 30th and Thursday 31st October
10am - 1pm, and 1pm - 4pm

- Follow the Halloween garden trail
- Win prizes in our spooky rock and ghoul hunt
- Discover giant spiders and other ghastly, ghostly, gruesome surprises hidden around the garden
- Children's Halloween crafts and activities*
- Children's story reading
- Refreshments for sale

Entry £6 per child
(must be accompanied)
and £2 per adult

Visit website to book



*Extra charges apply

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