



3rd May 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Parent Partnership

Next week we will be sending out a questionnaire to gather your feedback on our communication. Effective communication between home and school is so important and really helps to support the children so we are keen to ensure that what we are doing is working. Please keep an eye out for this next week. We appreciate your support and feedback.

Staffing News

It is with mixed emotion that we announce Mrs. Nicoll, our esteemed classroom teacher, will be leaving us at the end of this academic year. Mrs. Nicoll will be relocating to Cheshire to be closer to her family. While we are deeply saddened to bid farewell to such an exceptional teacher, we are also overjoyed for her as she embarks on this new chapter of her life with her family. Mrs. Nicoll has been an invaluable member of our school community, bringing with her a level of commitment, passion and dedication that has enriched the lives of pupils and staff alike. Furthermore, as a member of the military community, we are particularly grateful for Mrs. Nicoll's service and the profound impact she has had with our Forces families during her time here. While her presence will be greatly missed, we are thankful for the time we have had with her and wish her nothing but the best in her future endeavours.

In light of Mrs. Nicoll's departure, we will be advertising for a classroom teacher. Please inform anyone you know who might be interested in working at Merry Hill that there is a vacancy available and please get in touch. We have advertised on Teach in Herts website https://www.teachinherts.com/find-a-job/view,class-teacher_93226.htm

Leading Maths Specialist Teacher

We are thrilled to share some fantastic news from our school community! Our very own Mrs Ineson recently went for an interview to become a leading maths specialist teacher, providing invaluable expertise not only for our school but also for others in the community.

Her passion for mathematics education, commitment to excellence and desire to support others in their learning journey make her an ideal candidate for this role. This opportunity represents a significant milestone for Mrs Ineson and reflects her hard work and dedication to her profession. It is not only a testament to her skills but also to the quality of education here at our school.

As part of this role, Mrs Ineson will be working closely with the Maths Mastery hub, extending her expertise to benefit a wider network of students and educators whilst also continuing in her role as Assistant Headteacher here at Merry Hill. This collaboration will undoubtedly enhance the learning experience for everyone involved.

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We could not be prouder of Mrs Ineson's achievements, and we are excited to see the positive impact she will continue to make in the field of mathematics education. Please join us in congratulating her on this exciting step in her career!

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

Online Safety

Are you concerned about the amount of time your children spend in front of screens? Whilst there are actually no set guidelines, we know that screen time can affect our mental health so it important to be mindful about it. The first week in May is dedicated to Screen Free Week so this is a perfect opportunity to take a break from screens and experience more peace, connection and fun! <https://screenfree.org/2024-sfw-announcement/>

The following advice is a good starting point (and a lot of these points are things you probably do already)

- All games need to have the appropriate Pegi rating
- Ensure all security is in place and parental controls are on everything
- Make sure your child understands the need to keep personal details and passwords completely secure
- Have at least an hour – preferably more – screen free before bed to allow your child to wind down - the blue light emitted from screen suppresses melatonin out natural sleep hormone.
- Try having screen free rooms such as bedrooms and bathrooms
- Try having screen free times such as meal times (which also really supports language development)

Have a look at the suggested family activity below to help promote screen free time.

'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/>

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

As members of our community here on School Lane, it is important that we uphold values of respect and consideration for one another's property. One of our neighbours on School Lane has brought to my attention that there have been instances of children climbing onto the low-rise wall on School Lane, both before and after school. Regrettably, this behaviour has contributed in damage to the wall.

As a school, we hold the values of respect and responsibility in high regard. It is important that we instil these values in our pupils not only within the school grounds but also in their interactions with the wider community. While we understand that accidents can happen and children may not always be fully aware of the consequences of their actions, it is important that we collectively address this issue.

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We kindly remind all parents/carers to speak with their children about the importance of respecting property boundaries and refraining from climbing on the walls of private property. Thank you.

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.



101 Family Activities

screen-free week

AT HOME

1. Listen to the radio.
2. Write an article or story.
3. Paint a picture, a mural, or a room.
4. Write to your elected officials.
5. Read a book. Read to someone else.
6. Learn to change the oil or tire on a car, or learn to fix something.
7. Write a letter to a friend or relative.
8. Make cookies, bread or jam and share with a neighbor.
9. Read magazines or newspapers. Swap them with friends.
10. Go through your closets and donate items to Goodwill, the Salvation Army, or a local rummage sale. Have a garage sale.
11. Start a diary/journal.
12. Play cards.
13. Make crafts to give as gifts. Try a new craft.
14. Do a crossword puzzle or play Sudoku.
15. Save money: cancel your cable TV!
16. Learn about a different culture. Have an international dinner.
17. Teach a child some of your favorite childhood games.
18. Study sign language.
19. Write a letter to your favorite author.
20. Cook dinner with friends or family.
21. Make cards for holidays or birthdays.
22. Play chess, bridge, or a board game.
23. Play charades.
24. Have a cup of coffee and a conversation.
25. Repair or refinish a piece of furniture.
26. Make a wooden flower box.
27. Wake up early and make pancakes.
28. Read a favorite poem. Read poems by poets new to you.

OUTDOORS

29. Learn about native trees and flowers in your area.
30. Plan a picnic or barbecue.
31. Go bird watching. Learn the names of local birds.
32. Walk the dog. Wash the dog.
33. Plant a garden. Work in your garden.
34. Take a nature hike.
35. Feed fish or birds.
36. Watch the night sky through binoculars and identify different constellations. Observe the moon.
37. Learn to use a compass.
38. Take photographs and then organize them into an album.
39. Do yard work.
40. Go camping.
41. Take an early morning walk.
42. Climb a tree.
43. Watch a sunset; watch the sunrise with a friend.

AROUND TOWN

44. Attend a community concert. Listen to a local band.
45. Visit the library. Borrow some books.
46. Visit a local bookstore.
47. Visit the zoo.
48. Visit the countryside or town. Travel by bus or train.
49. Attend a religious service.
50. Go to a museum.
51. Walk to work or school.
52. Attend a live sports event.
53. Look for treasures at a yard sale.
54. Try out for a play. Attend a play.

fairplay childhood beyond brands
Screen-Free Week is brought to you by Fairplay.

I hope you all have a wonderful bank holiday weekend! We look forward to welcoming you back on Tuesday 7th May.

Sincerely

Ms Melissa Adams
Headteacher

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