



Merry Hill

Infant School and Nursery

Headteacher: Ms. Melissa Adams MA, NPQH

6th December 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Let the festive season begin...



Thank you to our wonderful FoMH for organising the Christmas Fair. It was a resounding success and brought much joy to the whole Merry Hill and Ashfield community. Your hard work and dedication made it all possible; we truly appreciate everything you do for the school. A huge thank you as well to the parents and carers who attended and supported the event.

The post boxes are out and the school has been filled with singing as our Merry Hill team work with the children to get our Christmas productions ready. We look forward to welcoming you to watch these performances.

EYFS (Nursery and Reception) Friday 13th December – 9:30am

KS1 Singing in the hall followed by Celebrating Progress:

Year One Monday 16th December 2:15pm

Year Two Tuesday 17th December 2:15pm

Home Learning Environment

We know that parents and carers play a vital role in helping their children develop early literacy skills. By interacting with your child, supporting, explaining, and encouraging them, you help them build on what they already know about reading and writing to develop new skills.

One effective way to support this development is by involving your child in real-life activities where they can contribute meaningfully. These experiences allow children to practice skills with your guidance now, so they can use them independently later.

A simple and enjoyable way to encourage literacy is by having your child add their name to greeting cards, this time of year is perfect for it! At first, your child might only make a line or a squiggle, but this early mark-making is an essential step in learning to write. Remember to praise their efforts to keep them motivated and excited to try again.



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Nursery Stay and Play Session

This week, we were thrilled to welcome our nursery children and their families for a special Stay and Play session. It was a wonderful opportunity for the children to become familiar with their new environment and start preparing for their exciting journey with us in January. Thank you to everyone who joined us – we look forward to seeing you all again soon!

Supporting children with SEND during the festive period

Christmas can be a magical time, but it is important to remember that not all of our children find Christmas a time of fun and excitement. For some it is overwhelming and induces anxiety. At Merry Hill, we carefully consider the impact that festive changes may have on children's wellbeing and learning. To support our pupils, we ensure that the safe environments they are accustomed to do not suddenly change. For instance, we stick to timetables and routines as much as possible, giving advanced notice of any changes. When decorating classrooms, we include the children in the process and are mindful of any sensory sensitivities.

Similarly, if you are decorating at home, please do so with the awareness that some children may find sudden changes overwhelming. Attached to this newsletter is a 12 step guide as well as link below which provide some useful tips for families to support children who may find this time of year challenging. I hope you find this useful.

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/leisure/christmas/tips>

'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*

This Week's Focus: The Golden Rule – 'We look after property'

Team Points Focus: Responsible Behaviour


This week's Team Point focus is responsible behaviour and we have been encouraging the children to take ownership of their actions and contribute to making our school a better place. We are looking for children to demonstrate responsibility by:

- Tidying up without being asked
- Picking up rubbish/mess that is not theirs
- Working collaboratively to improve our school environment

How you can help at home:

- **Set clear expectations:** encourage your child to take responsibility for their own space by having them tidy their room or help with household chores. Establishing routines can help the children develop responsibility.
- **Model responsible behaviour:** lead by example, children learn best by observing their parents.
- **Praise efforts:** positive reinforcement helps the children understand the importance of being responsible and encourages them to continue these habits.

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2.12.24	Responsible – taking ownership of your actions and their consequences. We are looking for children tidying without being asked, picking up mess/ rubbish that is not theirs. GR We look after property	 responsible
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Wishing you all a relaxing weekend, we look forward to seeing you next week.

Sincerely,

Ms Melissa Adams
Headteacher

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12 Tips for an autism-friendly Christmas

Christmas can be a magical time, but if someone in your family is on the spectrum, there's extra pressure to get it right. These simple pointers may help:

- 1** Have a designated place to relax and retreat, especially if you plan to have a houseful of guests. You could even label it as a 'quiet room'.
- 2** Be clear about when friends, family or neighbours may visit. Write up a schedule and stick it on the fridge or somewhere it is easily accessible.
- 3** Use advent calendars to your advantage – a countdown can be really beneficial to make people aware of upcoming events.
- 4** Some families opt for a one-day Christmas, when decorations and lights are put up and taken down in the same day.
- 5** Alternatively, how about decorating a designated 'Christmas room' to limit the impact of changes to other rooms in the house.
- 6** Look at the world through the eyes of your loved one – what aspects of Christmas do they enjoy? There are no rules – Christmas can be whatever works for you and your family.



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