
Term 1 – 6th September 2024

Mersham Primary School

Church Road, Mersham, Ashford, Kent TN25 6NU

www.mersham.kent.sch.uk 01233 720449



Welcome back! I hope you have all had a lovely Summer break. A particular warm welcome to all those children who have just joined the school, including those in Reception. All our new Ducklings have done brilliantly over the last few days and it has been a real pleasure watching them settle into school life so successfully. The rest of the school have also adjusted well to their new classes and teachers – Ducklings and Parrots deserve a special mention as they adapt to the new mixed age classes. Again, they have done brilliantly. We now also have our new Phoenix classroom (Kingfishers previous classroom) up and running where the pastoral team will be based. This will provide a much better environment to support our nurture and pastoral interventions and many children are already utilising this space to help support their needs. I would like to say a huge well done and thank you to the whole staff team who have spent a considerable amount of their summer holiday moving classrooms around and ensuring everything was ready for the start of term.

**Cheryl Chalkley
Headteacher**

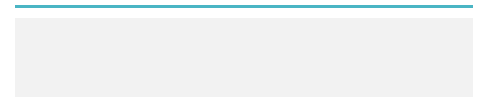
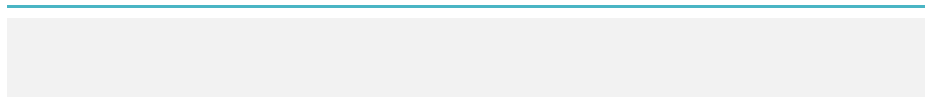
Staffing Changes

Mrs Kingston resigned at the end of last term and has taken up a position at her previous school. This has left the school in a very difficult position and we are currently advertising for a replacement Office Manager. In the meantime, Mr Dewey has very kindly agreed to come out of retirement and work a Monday and Tuesday to ensure key parts of the role are completed until we have someone else in post. The whole school are extremely grateful to him and I am sure many of you will join us in welcoming him back, even if it is only for a short period of time!

I would also like to welcome two new members of staff. Mrs Victoria Earle has taken up the role of teaching assistant working in Year 4 (mornings only) and Mrs Freya Gisby-Clark will be providing additional support in the mornings in Phoenix classroom. We are very pleased to have them both join the team.

Upcoming Events

12 th Sept	Kent Test
12 th Sept	PTFA informal meeting at The Farriers 3:30pm
13 th Sept	Yr R in full time
17 th Sept	Emotional Wellbeing Teams Coffee Morning for new Year R parents 9am
4 th Oct	Harvest Festival at the Church 9:15am
24 th Oct	End of Term 1
25 th Oct	Staff Training Day
4 th Nov	Start of Term 2
7 th Nov	Open Eve for Yr R prospective parents
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11 th Nov	Anti-Bullying Week
12 th Nov	Parents Eve 5:00-7:30pm
13 th Nov	Parents Eve 3:30-6:00pm



New Attendance Policy with effect from September – Please see the updated pages on the school website <https://mersham.kent.sch.uk/attendance/>

In light of changes in DFE policy that come into effect during August, the attendance policy has been updated and is on the school website. **Key changes that parents need to be aware of:**

- We will be asking for evidence of medical appointments that take place during the school day for all pupils. Examples include a copy of an appointment letter or a screen shot of a text confirming the appointment.
- Changes to penalty fines. The penalty fine for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks is going up to £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days. The penalties also become more serious over time e.g. if a parent went on holiday each year during term time.
- If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days i.e. there is no discount.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead

Breakfast Club/Early Drop Off

With costs of food and staffing ever increasing, we will be having to increase the cost of Breakfast Club from £2.50 to £3.50 from September. The charges for Breakfast Club have not changed in the ten years that it has been running, so a slight increase is long overdue. In addition, with the changes in school hours, we have made the decision that from September, we will no longer offer the option of Early Drop Off at a reduced charge. Breakfast Club will continue from 7:45am until 8:35am when the gates open for the rest of the school. Children will continue to be able to have the option of breakfast up until 8:15am. After this time, breakfast will no longer be served to allow the Breakfast Club staff sufficient time to clear up the kitchen before the start of school day.

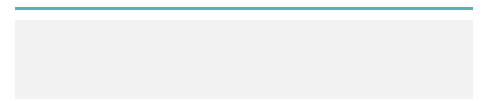
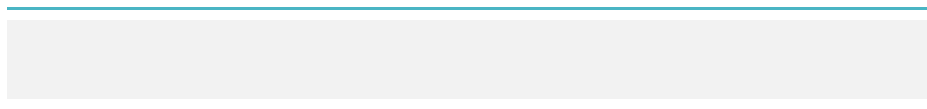
Medication in School

Any medication required by a pupil, whether prescription or non-prescription medication, should not be administered in school without the written consent of a parent/legal guardian. In order to tighten up on health and safety, we will no longer be keeping spare paracetamol in the school office for occasional use by pupils, following verbal consent from a parent over the phone. In future, if a child has a mild complaint for which paracetamol may be administered e.g. headache, parents will either be requested to come into school with the medication and administer it themselves or provide medication from home e.g. Calpol, Nurofen for Children and complete the usual medication consent in the office.

1st Brabourne and Smeeth Cubs (please see attached flyer for more information)

1st Brabourne and Smeeth Cubs have spaces for New Cubs this term. We aim to build skills for children through fun, adventure and teamwork. Both girls and boys are welcome to come along for a few weeks for a trial before committing to joining. We meet at the Guide and Scout hut on Fridays 5.45-7.00pm.

Our programme this term includes; Road Safety Badge (including a trip to see the murals in Ashford), Cyclist Badge, Nautical Skills (RNLI visit and canoeing tbc), Crafts, and lots more! All welcome, please email us to find out more.



Emotional Wellbeing Teams

The Emotional Wellbeing Teams will be offering a number of online workshops over terms 1 and 2 that parents are welcome to join. Please see the list of workshops below – please contact the school for the link to join any of these workshops.



Online Parent Workshops

Aimed at parents of children in primary school

Me & My Child: Understanding Resilience 25/11/24 17:30 –19:30

Introduction to Understanding Autism 19/09/24 17:30 –19:30pm

Understanding Your Child's Behaviour 14/10/24 17:30 -19:30pm

Understanding Anxiety 11/11/24 10:30 –12:30pm

Understanding Sleep and Autism 11/12/24 10:30 –12:30pm

Understanding ADHD in Children 1/10/24 10:30 – 12:30pm

**Workshop times alternate from term to term*

Our online workshops offer information around key topics to help understand what is going on for your child and strategies to support them, based on the latest evidence and practice.

If you would like to join, please raise your interest with your child's school so that they can send you the link. If you have any questions please speak to your child's school.

Our workshops are held on Microsoft Teams. You do not need an account to join. You will need access to the internet. Currently, this workshop is only available to parents/carers of children attending a EWT/EST school. Please speak to your child's school or check our website for our list of schools. If you require materials in another language or have any other access needs then please email:

EWandESTenquiries@neft.nhs.uk

We look forward to meeting you.



www.neft.nhs.uk

PTFA updates

The PTFA (Parents, Teachers and Friends Association) would like to welcome to any new families joining the school, and to welcome back those that were with us last (school) year.

There are lots of ways you can support the PTFA without leaving home, so please support our partner activities and do share with your friends and family too.

Your School Lottery

Did you know that our school operates a lottery scheme through Your School Lottery? Tickets are £1 each – choose our school to support, buy a one off or regular ticket and be in with a chance of winning fabulous prizes for yourself, plus school gets 40p for every £1 ticket sold. This is an easy and fun way to donate to school through the PTFA, so please sign up if you are able by visiting www.yourschoollottery.co.uk.

Easyfundraising

Easyfundraising partners with over 7.000 brands who will donate part of what you spend to our school. It won't cost you any extra, the cost is covered by the brand.

Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk to sign up, and please support our school "Mersham School PTA – Ashford".

Clothing Bin

The clothing bin outside school reduces waste by recycling your old clothing, bedding and more. Every time it's emptied, our school receives a generous cash donation. Please consider recycling your items here to support the school.

Pre-loved uniform

We have a good stock of pre-loved uniform, available for a small donation so *huge* cost savings compared to Mapac and other uniform suppliers.

Please email preloved@mershamschoolpta.co.uk to find out what we have in stock, or if you'd like to donate some uniform. Thank you.

Informal PTFA gathering 12th September

There is an informal PTFA gathering at The Farriers Arms on Thursday 12th September, 15:30-16:30. It would be lovely to see some new and old faces there, just for a social chat or if you have any ideas for future activities you'd like to share.

All of us are members of the PTFA, it's not a "clique" or "members only" group and you can give as little or as much time as you're able to offer.

It would be great to a more diverse group of people working on events and activities for the coming year so do come along and find out more about what we do and can do.

