



Term 2 – 20th December 2024

Mersham Primary School

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Upcoming Events

20 th Dec	End of Term 2
6 th Jan	Start of Term 3
8 th Jan	Pantomime
14 th Feb	End of Term 3

It has been a really busy end of term! Thank you to everyone who came along to the Church service this morning – it was lovely to see so many of you there. The children did brilliantly and they have certainly put me well and truly in the festive mood with their wonderful singing. Well done also to Ducklings and Parrots for their amazing performances earlier this week – the confidence and enjoyment that they all demonstrated whilst performing was amazing. I would like to thank the PTFA for their support at events this week and which also included providing crackers for all the children who had a Christmas lunch. Thank you also to all the staff who have worked tirelessly, alongside the children to ensure these events happen! It just leaves me to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and we look forward to welcoming the children back on Monday 6th January.

**Cheryl Chalkley
Headteacher**

Power Cut and Pantomime

Once again, thank you for your understanding yesterday when we were unable to open safely due to a power cut. We have been able to reschedule the pantomime for the morning of Wednesday 8th January so that will be something for the children to look forward to when we return.

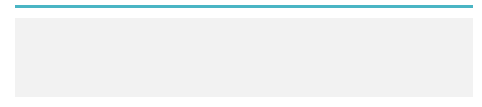
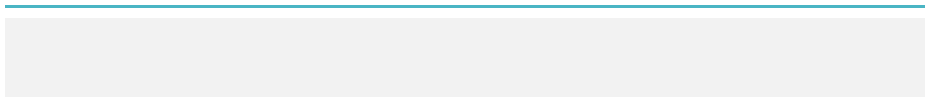
Staffing News

We have said goodbye to Mrs Seal today and we wish her all the very best for the future. Mrs Seal was instrumental in getting the After School Club up and running and we are all incredibly grateful to her for the hard work she has put in, alongside Ms Wolstenholme, in establishing the After School Club for our families. We were also very indebted to her for stepping into the office role earlier in the year when we were short staffed – we really could not have managed without her!

Support for Families on low incomes

Please find details on the link below for the Food Banks available in the Ashford area. If you or someone you know needs support, particularly over the festive season, please do take advantage of the services offered.

<https://www.ashford.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help/ashford-food-banks-and-other-essential-supplies/>



Attendance at School

As a school, we are very aware of the impact on children's learning if children are not attending school regularly. There are often genuine reasons for absence and during the winter season, there are lots of nasty bugs and viruses around. If children are poorly, then they should stay at home until they are well enough to return. However, the information below shows how just a few days of absence over a year (no matter what the reason), can result cumulatively in weeks of learning missed. Absence below 90% is considered a concern and below 80%, the school will take further action to support children in attending more regularly.

100%	0 days Missed
95%	9 days of Absence. 1 week and 4 days of learning missed
90%	19 days of Absence. 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed
85%	28 days of Absence. 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed
80%	38 days of Absence. 7 weeks and 3 days of learning missed
75%	46 days of Absence. 9 weeks and 1 day of learning missed

Supermarket vouchers for pupils eligible for Free School Meals.

For all those pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals, (this does not include pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 who are all eligible for Universal Free School Meals) food vouchers to the value of £60 will be sent by email on the last day of term to cover the Christmas holidays.

Winter Wellbeing Guide

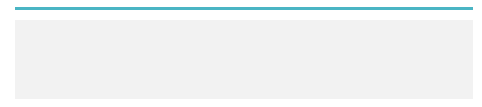
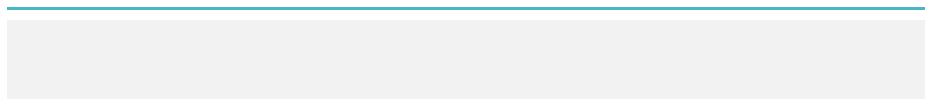
Please see below the link to our Young People's Winter Wellbeing Guide that has been produced by iThrive and KCC in conjunction with the NHS.

[Young People's Winter Wellbeing Guide](#)

The Book Trust Recommendations

If you are looking to buy high quality books for your children for Christmas, you may like to look at the recommendations from The Book Trust. They have recommendations for all ages and interests and will definitely support in finding a whole range of texts that you may be completely unaware of!

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/what-we-do/programmes-and-campaigns/for-primary-schools/book-recommendations/>



PTFA Updates

PTFA fundraising summary

As we're almost at the end of the year, we wanted to look back at our activities over the last couple of terms.

Since September 2024, we've raised almost £3,000 together, as can be seen on the attached breakdown. As a result of your efforts and generosity, we've been able to buy desks & chairs for classrooms, new play equipment for Duckling Class, gifts from Santa and supported our lovely wraparound care facilities. The PTFA also facilitated a community day where we helped freshen up our school grounds.

However – we'd love to be able to do more. A small handful of people work tirelessly to make the PTFA magic happen... if we had just a few more pairs of hands we'd be able to deliver so much more. If you're able to suggest any new ideas or able to give a little time to help plan and implement our activities we'd be very grateful. Do contact us via the class WhatsApp groups, Facebook or by emailing hello@mershamschoolpta.co.uk to get involved.

Gladiator visit January 2025

The PTFA are very excited to announce that we have an exciting visitor coming to visit our school next term. On Thursday 30th January, Zack George (AKA Steel) from the TV Series "Gladiators" will be visiting the children at school to speak about healthy balance eating, hydration, confidence and mind-set. He will then visit each classroom to answer questions and meet the children.

To support this visit, you'll see sponsor forms coming home with children next week to launch our "£20.25 in 2025 fundraising challenge". We're encouraging the children to get active in January and raise funds for school.

Facebook page

We thought it might be helpful to remind everyone that we have a PTFA Facebook page where we share information about our events and activities and can connect as a community. You can join us by searching for "Mersham School PTFA" on Facebook.

