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Term 3 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025

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# Mersham Primary School

Church Road, Mersham, Ashford, Kent TN25 6NU

[www.mersham.kent.sch.uk](http://www.mersham.kent.sch.uk) 01233 720449



**I would like to say a huge thank you to Jemma Hanger and the PTFA for organising the visit from Zack George (aka Steel from Gladiators) yesterday. His prestaton about the importance of a healthy diet, exercise, keeping hydrated and having confidence and self belief absolutely captivated the children alongside his insights to the Gladiators themselves! The children asked some brilliant questions and participated so well. It really has been a highlight of the term so far! I have asked class teachers to ensure that the class photos taken are available on Google Classroom.**

**Cheryl Chalkley  
Headteacher**

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## Sporting News – Football

On Wednesday, our football team began their 2025 season with a 2-1 home win against Great Chart. It was a match that had been postponed since before Christmas due to a water-logged pitch. Mr. Fraser was incredibly pleased with the team and their performance. James and Chris were our goal scorers to help us to victory.

Chris was also awarded player of the match and his team agreed that this was well-earned because, 'He was amazing running up and down the wing...the Great Chart defence couldn't stop him!' A great start to the season - well done team!

## Uniform

We are increasingly seeing children wearing items to school that are not official school uniform, particularly jumpers that are appearing in various shades of green, from a range of brands. School uniform is an expectation in most schools to create a sense of belonging to a school as well as to avoid children comparing their clothes with others and/or competing with designer labels etc. Most of our school uniform is available from supermarkets – the exception is the school jumper which is a distinct green and is available from a choice of suppliers (details on the website). We also offer pre-loved jumpers that are in excellent condition through the PTFA for an even lower cost. Please can all parents ensure that their child(ren) are wearing the correct school jumper/fleece and if there are any particular issues that they talk to Mrs Chalkley directly.

## Upcoming Events

5 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Walk in Wednesday
10-14 Feb	Book Fair
14 <sup>th</sup> Feb	End of Term 3
24 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Start of Term 4
24-27 Feb	Book Fair
28 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Interim reports to Parents
4 <sup>th</sup> March	Parents Eve 5-7:30pm
5 <sup>th</sup> March	Parents Eve 3:30-6:00pm
4 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Service at the Church 9:15am
4 <sup>th</sup> April	End of Term 4

## **Get their Feet Moving & Grooving!**

Calling all KS2 movers and shakers! An Arbor mail message went out on Wednesday to all parents/carers of children in KS2 with information about an exciting new after-school club opportunity coming to Mersham. Within the information sent was a link to express interest and begin liaising with Ellie to set up payments etc.

We can't wait to welcome Ellie and we're really looking forward to seeing the children share some of their amazing moves at future school events! If you did not receive the message and link on Tuesday, please see Mrs Benjamin.

## **Breakfast Club/After School Club**

Please can we remind children and adults that the access road at the side of the school is occasionally used by vehicles. Children using the access road for Breakfast Club/After School Club should walk to and from the school gate, under the supervision of an adult. There has been an occasion this week where a child ran alongside a moving vehicle (which was travelling at the 5mph speed limit) and overtook it posing a huge risk to their safety.

## **Book fair competition**

Our book fair is due to start on Monday 10th February and we have an exciting competition where you could win a £5.00 voucher to spend on books at the fair! All you need to do is submit a photo of yourself reading in the most weird and wonderful place imaginable! We are looking for the most creative photo from each class. Yes! That's six £5.00 vouchers up for grabs, 1 for each class, so get snapping! Please hand your photos in to your class teacher or send them to your class email address.

In addition to this, every pupil that makes a purchase at our book fair will be able to deduct £1.00 from their total in honour of World Book Day. You do not need to show the voucher, just simply take it off your total when you pay.

Please submit your photos by Monday 10th February. Enjoy! Mrs Sly (English subject lead)

## **Walk In Wednesday**

Our next Walk-In Wednesday will be on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February between 3:15-3:45. Walk-in Wednesday finishes promptly at 3:45pm as the staff are required in the weekly staff meeting. We look forward to seeing you then.

## **Mersham Monkeys**

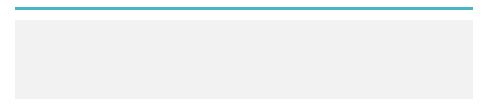
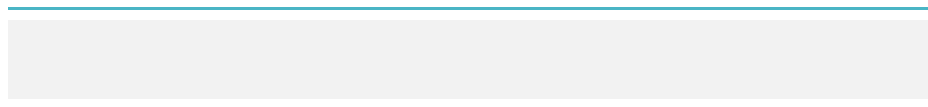
Mersham Monkeys, our Parent and Toddler Group, has been running in the school for over 10 years and has been attended by numerous parents as well as other members of the community. However, we have come to realise that with the growing challenges in school, it is no longer financially viable to run, particularly in terms of staffing. We have therefore made the difficult decision to close Mersham Monkeys at the end of this term. The last session will be on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February.

## **Class Assemblies – Terms 3 and 4**

Class assemblies will be performed at 9:00am in the school hall.

Dates are as follows:

6 <sup>th</sup> February	Robin Class
13 <sup>th</sup> February	Falcon Class
27 <sup>th</sup> February	Duckling Class



6 <sup>th</sup> March	Parrot Class
13 <sup>th</sup> March	Kingfisher Class
27 <sup>th</sup> March	Toucan Class

### **Ashford Borough Council – Play Train naming competition**

Help us choo choo-se a name for our new play train

Younger visitors to Ashford Town Centre will soon be able to get on board a new dedicated play space, as plans for a new train themed play area have been unveiled by Ashford Borough Council (ABC). The project will see the installation of play equipment in the raised area in front of the bandstand creating a fun, attractive space for young children and families to enjoy in town.

The equipment will be specifically designed to reflect Ashford's unique heritage, incorporating elements related to the town's railway history, like locomotives, carriages, and platforms. The type and style of the play equipment has been chosen with sustainability in mind as well as considering things like maintenance, damage, anti-social behaviour in the design process. It has also been designed with accessibility and access for children of all abilities.

Help us name the new play area

Only one thing is missing – a name! We are launching a naming competition in all primary schools in the borough asking pupils to come up with a name for our new area. Something which is fun, train themed or Ashford-related!

The requirements are simple – all ABC needs is your suggestions emailed to us, and we will choo-choo-se the best one. All entrants must be aged between 4-11 and it must be their own idea (so no cheating from parents). Entries can be submitted via email to [media@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:media@ashford.gov.uk) ABC also asks that the name of the child, their age and their school are included with every submission, as well as a parent or guardian's contact details, so we know who to contact if they win.

The winner will have their idea for a name officially adopted and included on a plaque in the new play area and be invited to unveil the sign at the official opening of the play area with The Mayor of Ashford this Spring (exact date to be confirmed). They will also win a family ticket from Kent and East Sussex Railway and some train themed goodies from Kompan.

The competition opens on Monday 3 February and the closing date for entries is 5pm on Monday 17 February.

### **Term Dates 2025/26**

Please find below the term dates for the next academic year:

#### **Term 1**

Tuesday 2nd September – Thursday 16th October

Staff Development Days - Monday 1st September and Friday 17th October

#### **Term 2**

Monday 27th October – Friday 19th December

#### **Term 3**

Monday 5th January – Friday 13th February

#### **Term 4**

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April

#### **Term 5**

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Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May

Bank Holiday – Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May

### **Term 6**

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July

Staff Development Days – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July and Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July

### **PTFA Updates**

#### **Volunteers for summer fair planning**

We're already starting to plan for the summer fair in June. If you're able to help us make the biggest event in our calendar even bigger, we'd love your help and views. Please get in touch via WhatsApp (there is a PTFA rep in every class group), Facebook or by emailing

[hello@mershamschoolpta.co.uk](mailto:hello@mershamschoolpta.co.uk)

#### **Gladiator visit Thursday 30th January**

The PTFA were excited to be able to invite Gladiator Steel (aka Zack George) to school this week. We're so pleased that the children and teachers enjoyed his visit.

As well as an informative and inspiring workshop around fitness, body confidence, hydration and nutrition, our special guest answered questions with each class after the session. Here are just a few great questions answered on the day:

What did he do before he was a Gladiator?

- Zack was a Personal Trainer, has held the title of the UK's fittest man and used to compete over the world, winning many competitions.

How did he become a Gladiator?

- When he was young he was quite overweight and unhealthy. At 13, his dad challenged him to get fitter in exchange for a PS2. He did more exercise like running and playing sports and better controlled his diet. At 18 he started training at the gym and was a professional athlete at 24. He was a CrossFit champion and was found by the producers of Gladiators. Out of 1000+ candidates, he was chosen to be one of the 16 Gladiators we now know from TV.

What does his typical breakfast look like?

- Porridge, 2 bagels & 6 eggs

What is his typical weekly exercise routine?

- He trains each morning and afternoon, 6 days a week. Doing a mixture of cardio eg rower/bike, lifting weights in the gym, gymnastics, swimming once a week, tennis with friends at the weekend

How strong is he?

- He can lift 170kg (which is an average of 10 Duckling Class children) at a time

How fast is he?

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- The last time he counted he ran 100m in 11.5 seconds

How long can he hold a handstand?

- 2 minutes 33 seconds, as an "all-rounder" Gladiator he is the only one able to walk on their hands

What is his biggest injury?

- Whilst filming Gladiators series 2, in the semi final he tore a bicep

What are his favourite video games?

- he is too busy exercising to be a gamer

Plus lots of other questions such as

- Hometown, age & DOB & shoe size
- Car model
- Favourite pizza
- Favourite and worst gladiators

We are so glad the children and teachers enjoyed his visit.

