



Term 2 – 12^h December 2025

Mersham Primary School

Church Road, Mersham, Ashford, Kent TN25 6NU

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Thank you very much to everyone who came along to the Christmas Service this morning at the church – it really feels like the festive season is in full swing! It was lovely to see the Church so full and I know the children very much enjoyed singing for you all. A special thank you to Mrs Howard for working with the Year 6 pupils who were reading today – your advice and guidance really paid off and they all read brilliantly. Thank you also to the staff team and Mrs Benjamin in particular, for their hard work in ensuring all the children were able to take part today.

**Cheryl Chalkley
Headteacher**

Staffing

With a very strong short list of potential candidates, I'm pleased to let you know that we have appointed Mrs Kelly Bishop to take on the role of Office Secretary after Christmas. Mrs Bishop is already known to many of you as one of the core members of the PTFA and as such knows the school and the community well. She also has a strong background in administration and I have no doubt that she will quickly slot into the role. We very much look forward to welcoming her to the team after Christmas. In the meantime, thank you to everyone for your patience with all of us who have been covering the office role in the interim.

The Choir

The Choir have been amazing again this week singing for our local community. On Saturday morning they brought joy to shoppers at Tesco and as a result raised £205.23 for the PTFA, which in turn will benefit the school. On Sunday, they took part in the Carol Service at the Church and again sang beautifully as part of that service. Finally, on Wednesday, they sang at the Pilgrim's Hospice for patients and staff. Thank you to parents and members of the PTFA who have supported those events.

Upcoming Events

17 th Dec	Class Christmas Parties
18 th Dec	Pantomime
19 th Dec	Christmas Dinner
19 th Dec	Christmas Jumper Day
19 th Dec	End of Term 2
5 th Jan	Start of Term 3
7 th Jan	Walk in Wednesday
4 th Feb	Walk in Wednesday
13 th Feb	End of Term 3



Attendance

With so many children being unwell these last couple of weeks, please can I remind parents that if their child is not in school for any reason, you need to contact the school to let us know, ideally before the start of the school day. You can do that by either phoning the school, leaving a message via the 'absence' line, sending a message via Arbor or emailing us. Please can I also remind parents that any medical/dental appointments should, wherever possible, be outside of school hours. If that is not possible and your child has to miss part of the school day to attend an appointment, please note that we will ask to see evidence of that appointment e.g. the appointment letter or the email/text that confirms the appointment time. Thank you for your co-operation.

Christmas Jumper Day

All children are being invited to wear a Christmas Jumper on the last day of term when we will also be having our Christmas Dinner in school. Children should wear uniform as normal and just replace their usual school jumper with a Christmas jumper instead, if they would like to.

Christmas Cards in School

As we head into the season of goodwill...instead of children taking their Christmas cards into their classes, the Phoenix Room is now the new hub for cards! We will have a post box outside the Phoenix Room for everyone's cards which the children will then sort and deliver!

We look forward to receiving lots of wonderful cards to deliver this year! Miss Read and Miss Wheeler

Parent Governor Vacancy

We have had quite a bit of interest already in this role – if you are interested and have not yet contacted me, please can you do so before the end of term on 19th December.

Due to the resignation of one of our governors, we now have a vacancy for a Parent Governor.

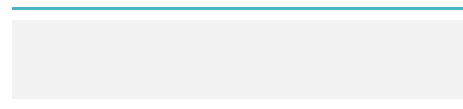
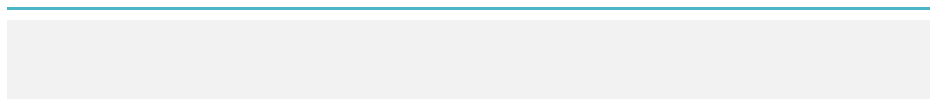
Being a school governor is a challenging but hugely rewarding voluntary role. It provides an opportunity for people to make a real difference to our young people, and to give something back to the local community. Individuals will also be joining the largest volunteer force in the country. Our school needs a governing board that has balance and a diversity of knowledge, skills and experience to enable it to be effective.

There is no requirement for interested individuals to understand the education system, just to possess the necessary skills, character and time to contribute. There is plenty of training available to help new governors learn about education plus we offer a mentor to support. Schools benefit from a range of professional knowledge on their governing board.

The governing board provides strategic leadership and accountability in our school. It has three key functions:

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils
- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

The average time commitment is four hours per month, although it will vary depending on the needs of the school and the role. This includes 6 full governing body meetings per year. As well as these meetings governors may like to contribute to such specific areas as Health and Safety and Finance.



If this is something you might be interested in and you would like more information, please contact Mrs Chalkley to discuss further.

Supermarket Vouchers for the Christmas Holidays

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.

For future reference however, please note that The Household Support Fund which is responsible for the supermarket vouchers for school holidays will cease to exist from March 2026. It will be replaced by a new initiative, the Crisis Resilience Fund, aimed at providing targeted assistance for those most in need. At present, it remains unclear whether the new fund will include financial support for families eligible for free school meals during school holidays. Further details are expected in due course

Affordable Bike Sale This Saturday – see attached flyer

Cycle Circle is continuing to support the local cycling community by providing a source of Affordable Refurbished Bicycles. Our last bike sale of 2025 is this Saturday (13th Dec):

Why buy a bike from us?

- Families can save hundreds of pounds over buying new (* our bikes are sold for around 1/3 retail price)
- All our bikes are fully serviced, cleaned and ready to ride
- Plenty of stock in most sizes - kids and adult bikes
- Friendly team of volunteers will be on hand to help you select an appropriate bike (no hard sell here!)

Junior Adventure Group (JAG) Staff Vacancy

JAG are looking for an After School Club Manager for the club at Mersham Primary School. If anyone is interested in the role or if you know anyone who maybe interested, more information can be found via this link.

<https://www.junioradventuresgroup.co.uk/join-our-team/job-application/?adid=640970>

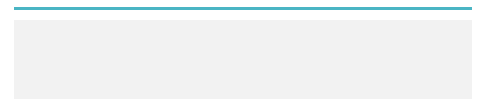
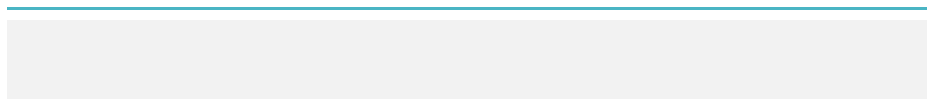
PTFA News

Christmas Activities

The committee wanted to thank the wonderful volunteers, ranging from parents and grandparents to friends, councillors and staff, who have taken the time out to support the many PTFA activities that have taken place over the last few weeks. Every hour of support makes all the difference, and we are grateful to you all!

Also, a big thanks to our children and families for supporting the events, visiting Santa, purchasing a raffle ticket, donating a gift to Elfridges and more! It all adds to the children's experience of school, as well as raising vital funds.

We have managed to raise an incredible £1,113 this December for the PTFA, after expenses. Thank you so much for all the support!



If your child wasn't able to visit Santa, but would still like to have a Christmas keepsake, please ask your child to visit the school office to collect one **free of charge**.

Amazon Wishlists

This coming week, keep an eye out for Amazon wishlists - each class has a wishlist for additional resources to use in their classroom. Watch this space!

Uniform

It's that time of year where we all need a little uniform top up! All of our quality pre-loved stock can be found in our Sumup store, at just £2 for a jumper or cardigan, so grab a bargain <https://mersham-school-pta-1.sumupstore.com/products>

Winter Weather Guidance from Kent County Council

Severe Snow/Ice Plan for Parents and Families

Every winter brings the possibility of snow and ice. Extreme bad weather can cause widespread and prolonged disruption. Schools are often affected, and it can be challenging to maintain an education service.

As a fundamental principle, every effort must be made to keep schools open, even if only limited numbers of pupils can attend. However, schools may close due to 'unavoidable' circumstances. Given those circumstances, it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be on-site.

We recognise that it is important for our school to remain open, so parents can continue to work and pupils can continue to learn. **Mersham Primary School** will make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice this winter by gritting pathways, clearing access points, etc

How will we let you know if the school is closed?

If we do experience severe snow/ice resulting in hazardous conditions, Mrs Chalkley may have to make the decision to close the school. Once this decision has been made, we will notify parents via the Kent Closures website, which can be accessed here: <https://www.kentclosures.co.uk>

To receive alerts, it is necessary for parents to register and sign up for email and/or Android smartphone notifications on the Kent Closures website. This service will send an email alert to let parents know if **Mersham Primary School** is closed. It is free to use.

Local radio will sometimes provide information on school closures.

What can you do to help?

Please visit www.kent.gov.uk/winter for more information about gritting routes and travel issues around Kent so you can plan your journey.

Please approach the school with caution – it can be really icy on the road in front of the school and through the village/country lanes.

Check with the school to see whether you need to provide a packed lunch from home in case school meals cannot be provided.

Don't forget suitable warm clothing – gloves, hats, scarves, wellies, etc. or even a change of clothing.

If you are a working parent or feel you may have a problem with a sudden earlier pick up, please could you put a back-up plan in place with another family member or parent and inform the school. This will allow staff to leave earlier for their safety if the weather dictates.

Many thanks for your support in helping **Mersham Primary School** remain open during periods of severe snow/ice.

