
Term 3 – 7th February 2022

Mersham Primary School

Church Road, Mersham, Ashford, Kent TN25 6NU

www.mersham.kent.sch.uk 01233 720449



This last couple of weeks have been really busy in school and several classes have enjoyed having visitors in to enhance their learning as well as 'theme' days. Year 6 enjoyed an Evacuee Day and spent the day dressed as evacuees, experiencing what it might have been like to be an evacuee during World War II. They have also had a workshop on staying safe out in the community. Years R, 1 and 2 have had a jungle themed drama workshop that involved the children in saving the white tiger and Year R have had a visit from two police officers one of whom brought their police car (many thanks to Mrs Pressland and Miss Reed for your help with this!), They will be dressing up tomorrow as 'what they would like to be when they grow up!' I know all the staff are really enjoying being able to include these enhancements to the curriculum again, which always have such a huge impact on children's learning - we have more planned across the school after the half term break!

**Cheryl Chalkley
Headteacher**

Upcoming Events

11 th Feb	Interim Reports to Parents
11 th Feb	End of Term 3
21 st Feb	Start of Term 4
21 st Feb	Year 6 Bikeability
28 th Feb	Parents Eve
2 nd March	Parents Eve
3 rd March	World Book Day
8 th March	International Women's Day
14 th March	Science Week
1 st April	End of Term 4
19 th April	Start of Term 5

Interim Reports and Parent's Evenings

We will be providing all parents (Year 1-6) with an interim report on the 11th February. Parent's evenings will then be held on 28th February and 2nd March where this report will provide a starting point for the discussion with the class teacher. We will be continuing to hold parents' evenings for all parents virtually, via Google Classroom, as there was significant feedback that this worked better for both parents and the school. More details will be sent when we return to school after half term.

Free School Meal Vouchers

All children who are eligible for free school meals will receive an email from Wonde tomorrow with information on how to claim their supermarket vouchers for the school holidays.

Covid – when do I need to get a PCR test

Please can I clarify for all parents that if your child has symptoms of Covid-19 i.e. a new continuous cough, a high temperature or a change in their sense of taste or smell, they must still get a PCR test irrespective of the results of a lateral flow test. It is only if a person has no symptoms but has a positive lateral flow test that there is no longer a requirement to get a follow up PCR test but they should follow self-isolation guidance in the same way as anyone else who tests positive.

Article from the Kentish Express

Fantastic to see Mersham Primary School mentioned in Damian Green's article in the Kentish Express, following his visit a couple of weeks ago. The year 5 and 6 pupils did an excellent job of representing the school during that visit and I am so proud that our local MP has felt compelled to comment publically on how much he enjoyed their questions.



Our Man in Westminster

by Damian Green

At times when it is reasonable to be pessimistic about the state of the country and the world it is often refreshing to hear what young people are thinking.

I enjoyed two visits to primary schools in recent days, in both of which I was questioned firmly but politely by children who were evidently engaged and idealistic about the future.

The two schools were Ashford Oaks and Mersham, and at Ashford Oaks the main topic of conversation was the environment, in the wake of the COP 26 Conference.

The range of issues brought up under this general umbrella was fascinating. Our conversation covered not just the very topical point of energy generation and where we get our power from, but the state of the sea after plastic pollution, the changeover to electric vehicles, and how we avoid wasting water.

I learned the sobering fact that only 1% of the water in the world is drinkable. At Mersham the main reason for my visit was to present the prize to the winner of the school's Litter Angels competition, but while they had me there Years 5 and 6 took the chance to question me on many different aspects of life as an MP. These ranged from the practicalities of being in Westminster for part of the week and Ashford for the rest to the headlines of recent days, including parties at Downing Street.

I really enjoy these sessions as a way to plug back into the real world after days at Westminster, and in this instance as a way to cheer myself up about the future.

One of the things I have learned about young people at any age is that they would much prefer a straight answer which they disagree with than any attempt at political ambiguity.

This is itself an excellent way to sharpen the brain.

Family, Food and Fun – Holiday Food Club for families in Ashford.

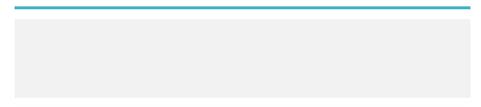
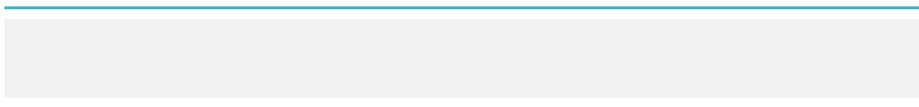
Please see attached flyer for more information

Youth Mental Health Support in Ashford

Taming My Temper – A 6-Week Anger Management Course

Taming My Temper is a course which aims to support young people who have difficulties controlling their emotions by helping them to explore the ways in which they can reduce their levels of anger, and also the hostility that they display.

This course helps young people to look at the causes of negative emotional behaviour, and how this can lead to a young person feeling angry. Young people will also learn ways to minimize negative emotions – exploring alternative ways to cope and remain calm.



The goal of this programme is to help young people to better understand why they may feel a certain way, and to help them to manage the ways in which they want to respond to those feelings. For more details on how to book a space, please visit: <https://www.maidstonemind.org/digital-taming-temper/>

A Better You

A Better You is Mid Kent Mind's personalised one-to-one wellbeing coaching programme, which aims to equip young people with a personalised plan to help them progress forwards. Whereas our other support works on a more peer-to-peer driven basis, our 'A Better You' sessions are entirely driven by the young people we work with – allowing them to take ownership for their sessions whilst also ensuring that the sessions focus on the areas which they feel are impacting on their wellbeing the most.

Our Wellbeing Workers can cover a range of different topics as a part of these sessions – ranging from managing their wellbeing and/or anger, relationships, aspirations, and identity and self-esteem. These sessions aim to empower the young person to take proactive steps which will both boost their confidence and their emotional resilience – whilst giving them a greater level of support than we can on a course.

For more details, visit: <https://www.maidstonemind.org/a-better-you-youth/>

Mindfulness and Me

Mindfulness and Me is a fun opportunity for young people to learn more about how Mindfulness can be an effective coping strategy for managing periods of poor mental health, or maintaining good levels of wellbeing.

This programme aims to teach young people how they can acknowledge and accept their thoughts, feelings and body sensations in positive ways – allowing them to become much more resilient so they can combine this with other coping strategies to overcome adversity.

For more details on this programme, please visit: <https://www.maidstonemind.org/free-mindfulness-sessions-young-people/>

Safer Internet Guides

Just a reminder to look at the Safer Internet Guides that were sent out via Parentmail earlier this week.

Term Dates 2022-23

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

Term 1

Monday 5th September – Friday 21st October

Staff Development Days - Thursday 1st September and Friday 2nd September

Term 2

Monday 31st October – Friday 16th December

Term 3

Tuesday 3rd January – Friday 10th February

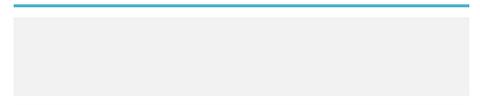
Term 4

Monday 20th February – Friday 31st March

Term 5

Tuesday 17th April – Thursday 25th May

Bank Holiday – Monday 1st May



Staff Development Day – Friday 26th May

Term 6

Monday 5th June – Wednesday 19th July

Staff Development Days – Thursday 20th July and Friday 21st July

Class Assemblies – Terms 3 and 4

These assemblies will be performed at 9:05am in the school hall and will focus on Online Safety. **We would appreciate it if all adults could wear a face covering.** Dates are as follows:

10th February	Falcon Class
3rd March	Duckling Class
10th March	Penguin Class
17th March	Kingfisher Class
23rd March	Toucan Class

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 difficult 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. Those circumstances being that it is no longer safe for staff or pupils to be onsite.

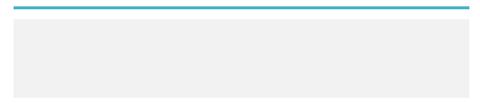
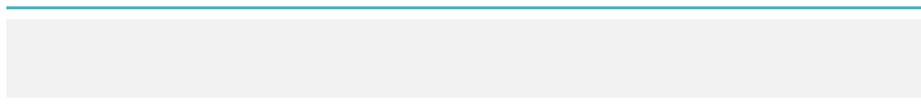
We recognise that it is important our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. Mersham Primary School will make every effort to prepare for severe snow/ice this winter by gritting pathways, clearing access points etc on the school site.

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 take the decision to close the school. Once this decision has been made we will notify parents via the Kent Closures website. To determine whether Mersham Primary School is open or closed please visit www.kentclosures.co.uk . Search for the school in the search box. The Kent Closures website may also be used to find out if other services in Kent are open or closed, such as nurseries, children’s centres and libraries. We also recommend parents sign up for Email alerts on the Kent Closures website. This service will send an email alert to let parents know if Mersham Primary School is closed. Local radio will sometimes provide information of 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 from the usual entry points.



- 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 weather dictates.

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

