



'Making a Difference'

## Mere Green Primary School

Mere Green Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B75 5BL

Tel: 0121 308 1384

[www.meregrn.bham.sch.uk](http://www.meregrn.bham.sch.uk) Email: [admin@meregrn.bham.sch.uk](mailto:admin@meregrn.bham.sch.uk)

Head Teacher: Kristal Brookes

### Newsletter 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back and Happy New Year, I hope that you had an enjoyable break and feel refreshed and ready for the New Year. The start of a new year provides hope and positivity for the future, if you have made a New Year's resolution, I wish you luck and hope that you are already starting to see some small steps to success.

The new term has allowed us to review our school priorities and set goals for the remainder of this academic year. This year we are working on the following priorities:

- Developing the curriculum
- Developing leadership at all levels
- Embedding our new Behaviour Policy
- Improving collaboration and communication with parents and the community

In the previous newsletter, I outlined some of the things that we have implemented to help improve communication; however, we would love to get your feedback on what we do well and what we could improve. Miss Thornton (Deputy Headteacher) will be hosting a virtual Parent Voice event on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 9.30am, we would love as many parents as possible to get involved in the discussion. Senior Leaders will also be out on duty collecting feedback so please chat to a member of the team if you have time. If you are unable to attend the event, but would like to share your feedback, please email [admin@meregrn.bham.sch.uk](mailto:admin@meregrn.bham.sch.uk) your feedback is important to us.

**Kristal Brookes (Headteacher)**

### Covid 19

Please continue to inform school if your child is symptomatic or receives a positive test result. Attendance to school is mandatory and children should attend school daily, unless they themselves are symptomatic/positive. We thank you for your ongoing cooperation.

The 10-day self-isolation period for people who record a positive PCR test result for COVID-19 has been reduced to 7 days in most circumstances, unless you cannot test for any reason. Individuals may now take LFD tests on day 6 and day 7 of their self-isolation period. Those who receive two negative test results are no longer required to complete 10 full days of self-isolation. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 6 of the self-isolation period and tests must be taken 24 hours apart. This also applies to children under 5, with LFD testing at parental or guardian discretion.

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If both these test results are negative, and you do not have a high temperature, you may end your self-isolation after the second negative test result and return to your education or childcare setting from day 7. Anyone who is unable to take LFD tests will need to complete the full 10 day period of self-isolation.

### Staff Absence

You may have read in the news that schools are struggling with staff absence linked to the pandemic. Currently we are experiencing minimal staff absence in school, we have contingency plans in place to maximise attendance and minimise disruption. If your child's class teacher is going to be absent for a period of time, we will update you at the earliest opportunity and will inform you of the planned cover. Please bear with us when we are experiencing staff absence and trust that we are doing everything we can to minimise disruption.

### Hope Food Bank

We were overwhelmed by the support we received for our Reverse Advent Calendar campaign, collecting food donations for Hope Food Bank. The donations that you made were far beyond what we hoped and have made a real difference to the Mere Green community. Thank you once again. We also hope that you found it a useful opportunity to talk to your child/ren about this growing issue within society and that it opened up interesting questions and conversations.



### Wellbeing Week

Last week saw our first ever wellbeing week. Placing children's personal, social and health education at the forefront of our curriculum, specific lessons were planned to address the NHS' 5 steps to mental wellbeing. As it was just a three day week, your child/ren carried out a range of lessons that helped them: connect with other people; learn new skills and pay attention to the present moment (be mindful.) The children thoroughly engaged with the learning across the week and especially had an amazing time connecting with new people during their interhouse bake off. Watch out for our next wellbeing week next half term.



### Big Issues: Climate Change

As part of our ongoing curriculum intent to provide our children with a better understanding of local, national and global issues, children from Years 1-6 will be learning about Climate Change next week. Depending on the year group, children will be considering key questions such as: What is climate change? What is its impact? Why is it happening? What is renewable energy? What do we need our global leaders to do to tackle climate change?



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### Class Dojos

Last week you will have received a letter informing you of our use of Class Dojos as part of our reward system. We have invited you to join your child/ren's class so that you can see when your child receives an award. You should have received an email from your child/ren's class teacher. If this hasn't come through, please speak directly to the teacher or email through to the school office with your correct/current email address. Invitations can easily be reissued.

As we have already received over 70% take up from parents, we plan to move away from Marvellous Mes and use Class Dojos to also communicate about your child's day. So, going forward, this app should provide a great deal of communication about what your child is learning and what goes on each day in school.

### Phase 1 (Nursery, Reception and Year 1)

Welcome back phase 1! The children have returned from the Christmas break energised and enthused for the term ahead. It's been wonderful to see our youngest children apply their communication and language skills, they have been excitedly telling each other what they have

been up to over the break and have demonstrated excellent listening skills when participating in conversations.

Last week, Nursery were busy exploring the traditional tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. They have been sorting bears by size, retelling the story and even made porridge for the bears! This week, the learning is based on the tale of The Three Little Pigs. After reading the story, they conducted an experiment using straw, sticks, bricks and a fan, to see which was the strongest material.



We are delighted to welcome to Mrs Horton to the Reception team. As you are aware, Mrs Horton will be covering Miss Whateley's maternity leave for the remainder of the academic year. She has thoroughly enjoyed meeting and getting to know you over the past week and is looking forward to developing further relationships with you over the next half term.

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Reception have spent the week learning about Little Red Riding Hood and the children applied their phonics knowledge to read words and feed Granny the correct food. We are so impressed with the progress they are making in reading.

Year 1 had a great first day back participating in the 'bake off'. They worked collaboratively to bake and decorate their cake and found it very rewarding eating it the next day! We were so proud of their efforts. As part of wellbeing week, the children created their own wellbeing bingo cards, I wonder who will be able to tick an activity off this week?

A reminder that this half term, Miss Murray will be delivering our virtual phonics workshops. These sessions are designed to give you an overview of our programme and how you can best support your child at home. We hope to see as many of you there as possible.



### Phase 2 (Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4)

Welcome back Phase 2! It's been a delight to see the energy and enthusiasm children have brought to their learning this last week. Children have clearly had a wonderful break but are raring to go.

As part of wellbeing week, Year 2 had an amazing day baking and decorating cakes with new friends last week. The children loved the flavour of their cake and were able to talk critically about what they liked and how they could have improved it! Also this week, in Music, children have been exploring Chrome music Lab, creating and listening to music in readiness for later on in the term when they choreograph their own music.

Year 3 also loved their bake off and could see that the children really enjoyed developing new



friendships whilst they worked together collaboratively. From the measuring, to the baking and then the decorating, the children had a fantastic time. Also, in French this week, the children practised their French phonics from last term playing several games including no snakes, no ladders. They have now mastered 7 of the key French phonemes!



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Year 4 have produced some stunning seascapes this week. They explored the medium of watercolours and collage to create different moods, choosing appropriate colours to then create these Viking themed seascapes. In addition, in English, children have started a new unit of work looking at powerful advertisements. They have started to explore this week the features of a powerful advertisement and used talk for writing to rehearse the key features before they create their own.

### Phase 3 (Year 5 and Year 6)

Welcome back Phase 3! We hope you all had a restful break. It's been a super start to the new term with focussed learning and new experiences in full swing.

In year 5, we welcome Miss Jeeves as an additional teacher, working Monday-Wednesday. She began teaching with 5BA last term and has fitted in so well. She is a great addition to our year 5 team and is already making a difference to our children.

Year 5 loved their well-being activities last week, especially 'Bake Off' on Thursday. Children had to design and bake a cake together as a team, showing excellent collaboration skills, and then decorate it in the afternoon once it had been baked in the oven by the kitchen staff. Lots of Dojo's were handed out for contribution, positive attitude, effort in learning and mental strength.

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Miss Bursnell and Mrs Sahota are now teaching across Year 6 in the morning. The children in their groups have really excelled this week, displaying motivation and enthusiasm for learning this week.

Year 6 have an exciting new writing unit: a persuasive advert for a state-of-the-art spy gadget! The children have been exploring the effect of modal verbs, persuasive language and the use of quotes to sell their products effectively to budding spies. In Maths, they have been learning smart, mental strategies to work out tricky calculations quickly.  $25 \times 32$ ?  $5 \times 64$ ? No problem! Keep up the hard work, Year 6.



### Vacancies

We are recruiting for lunchtime supervisors. If you are interested in becoming a lunchtime supervisor, further details can be found on the ATLP website.

<https://atlp.org.uk/vacancies/>

### Dates for your Diary - In the next fortnight

*Please see the additional letter outlining whole school dates for the academic year.*

Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> January	Parent Voice Meeting (Virtual) Focus: Communication
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> January	Deadline for applying for a Reception place
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> January – Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	Big Issue Week – Climate Change Big Energy Saving Week
Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 1 phonics Workshop (Virtual) 9.15-10am
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> January	Phonics Support Workshop (Virtual) 9.15-10am

We would like to wish you a very happy New Year and we look forward to working with you to make a difference to the lives of our children,

Mrs Kristal Brookes and Team Mere Green