



Newsletter 14

14 December 2023



Growing together to build our future

Message from the Headteacher

Thank you for all the kind messages and gifts that have been passed on to myself and the staff this week. Everyone works incredibly hard at Merley First School to ensure that the children are learning, happy and safe every day and your kind words are much appreciated.

It has been a very busy end to the first term of the school year, with the Ofsted inspection coming just before each class launched into Christmas performances. We are so proud of how all the children have participated in the different performances and today we have ended the week with our Christingle service at the Lantern Church.

Today, we are saying goodbye to Miss Laws, Butterfly Class teacher. I'd like to thank Miss Laws for the care, compassion and teaching she has provided to our Reception children over the past three and half years. We wish her all the best in all she does next. From January, we welcome Mrs Lloyd (Mon/Tue) and Ms Sealy (Wed-Fri) who will be teaching Butterfly class.

I hope you all have a fun, festive holiday and we welcome you back to school on Wednesday 3rd January. Merry Christmas!

Katharine Anstey
Headteacher

This is a school for everyone. Everyone is welcome.



Safeguarding and Online Safety

Through partnership working with BCP Council, Dorset Police and the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group the Partnership has put together a briefing document with key information for parents/carers with more information about risks linked to county lines and exploitation.

If you have any serious concerns about a child, particularly if you think they may be suffering or at risk of suffering harm, please share this information promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead Team. If you are unable to contact a member of the school team and you wish to pass on serious concern, please call the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01202 735046. We are an Operation Encompass school, to find out more please follow the link [here](#).

Open conversation is best when negotiating online safety with children and young people. Find guidance on these conversations here from the NSPCC <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>

Privacy Notice

Initio Learning Trust is committed to protecting the privacy and security of personal information. The privacy notice describes how we collect and use personal information about pupils, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), section 537A of the Education Act 1996 and section 83 of the Children Act 1989. Please find the document [here](#) on the school website.

Policies can be found on our school website and contact the school office if you require documents in different formats.

Attendance

Thank you for your support in ensuring your child's attendance in school and being on time every day. Good attendance in school is a top priority and our expectation is that pupils attend school every day for every session. We believe that regular, uninterrupted attendance secures the best possible learning achievement for all our children and we are committed to working in partnership with families to achieve this. Schools are expected to monitor all pupils' attendance records closely and to pass these on to the receiving school when pupils transfer.

This week's attendance

Whole School	96.2%
Year 4	95.8%
Year 3	96.49%
Year 2	96.81%
Year 1	95.62%
Reception	96.25%

When will absences not be authorised?

The school will not authorise absence for any of the following reasons: holidays, shopping, looking after other members of the family, minding the house, birthdays or similar events. Children will be marked in as late after 8.55 am and children arriving after 9.15 am are recorded as an unauthorised absence. We carefully monitor pupils who arrive late for school and work with parents and carers to improve punctuality.

Do you have a comment, thought or question you would like to share with the school?

Please use the link [here](#) to access our communication form.

Is your child eligible for Pupil Premium funding?

You may be entitled to financial support towards uniform, trips, an extracurricular activity, milk and school meals. Use the link [here](#) to check.



It's never too early to talk to your children about mental health, as starting off with good habits can help them manage their wellbeing better as they grow up. Teaching them healthy coping mechanisms early on will mean they understand how to cope with periods of low mood and not great mental health.

Each week we will include a different suggestion to help connect with your child and support the development of their mental health.

Get creative

Creating art is a fantastic way for children to work through their emotions and manage their mental health. It'll really give them something to focus on and let out what's inside their head, without the need for any words.

Provide your child with paints, coloured pencils, felt tips and something to draw or paint on, and make sure you provide a suitable surface (either a table covered in a protective cloth or just an old table that you don't mind getting stained with paints or pen marks) and watch as they create.

You could also try some more structured creativity, like letting your child colour in a Mindfulness Colouring Sheet.



Forthcoming Diary Dates AUTUMN TERM 2023

January 2024

Tuesday 2nd January - Staff training day - No pupils

Wednesday 3rd January - Term starts children return.

Saturday 13th January - Merley PTA Quiz Night, Merley Community Centre

Magical Merley Memories



Reception

The Reception children created and made their Christmas cards ready to post home.

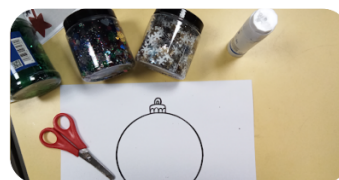
We enjoyed our sunny but cold walk to the local post box. The children loved posting their cards into the letter box and looking to see what time they would be collected.

Reception Parents....watch out for your special delivery.



Year 1

This half term we made a christmas decoration for someone else. We thought about who we were giving it to and had them in mind when decorating. We had to cut out our faces and stick it to the bauble. It was then time to decorate it with glitter, sequins and mini christmas trees! We also cut different shapes out of paper to make patterns.



Year 2

Year 2 decided to spread some Christmas cheer and best wishes this half term, by making cards for the residents of the Magna Care Home. We wrote Christmas poems to put inside the cards and discussed why thinking of others at Christmas is important. Well done Year 2, the cards looked fabulous!



Year 3

This term Year Three have performed a Christmas Carol Service to a live audience! We learned six different Christmas songs, some of them with actions too! The audience really enjoyed it and joined in the singing with us!



Year 4

In Autumn Two, Year 4 has been learning about how to hygienically prepare food and wash up. Alongside the knowledge they gained in DT, they learnt how to bake hygienically and safely using eggs and kitchen appliances. They were able to bake some delicious honey cakes which they had the chance to taste and evaluate in school! Yummy!

