



Newsletter 21

23 February 2024



Growing together to build our future

Message from the Headteacher

What a wet week we have had! However, the weather does not stop us and we are all back to school for the new half term with lots of enthusiasm and energy for the term ahead.

Monday's inset day, staff enjoyed an engaging training day, focused on the theme of checking for understanding through embedding and honing our core questioning techniques. These include, 'Think Pair Share' and 'Cold Calling' and using mini (show me) whiteboards for pupils to show their understanding. We also focused on writing, reviewing pupils' work, considering our planning for the next half term and strategies to further support and improve writing.

Today, we are sharing the curriculum leaflets for classes so that you can see what children will be learning this term. These are also on the school website for you to view. Next week is parent consultation meetings and we very much look forward to meeting with you to discuss this midpoint in the year. This is an essential time to discuss with your child's class teacher how your child is progressing.

Today, you will be aware that a letter has been shared with you regarding the leadership of Merley for the next academic year and that I shall be stepping down as Headteacher in July. It has been the greatest privilege to lead Merley First School for 5 years and I can honestly say I have loved coming to work every single day. Merley is an incredible school and community with fantastic children and families and the most dedicated team of adults who are talented, hard working and who care deeply. And not to mention great fun! No two days are ever the same in school and I will miss Merley very much. However, I will continue to work for Initio and work alongside staff and leaders as Associate Director. I will still be popping by! It is also incredibly comforting to know that the school will be led by Mrs Baldwin with Mrs Waldron as Deputy Head, to ensure a consistent strength in leadership and continuity for everyone.

I still have plenty of time left before I leave in July to ensure that there is a strong handover with Mrs Baldwin, so I am not saying goodbye just yet!

Have a wonderful weekend,

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	95.75%
Year 4	94.69%
Year 3	96.16%
Year 2	96.75%
Year 1	95.54%
Reception	95.54%

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.

Forthcoming Diary Dates SPRING TERM 2024



February 2024

Monday 26th February - PTA Costume Swap for World Book Day (after school pick up)

Tuesday 27th February - Parents evening (bookings now live on Parentmail)

Thursday 29th February - Parents evening (bookings now live on Parentmail)

March 2024

Thursday 7th March - World Book Day - dress up as your favourite book character

Wednesday 27th March - Last day of term

Thursday 28th March - Staff training day (no children in school)

June 2024

Friday 14th June - Sports Day - morning only

Tuesday 18th June - Reserve Sports Day

Friday 21st June - Staff training day (no children in school)

July 2024

Monday 1st to Wednesday 3rd July - Year 4 PGL Residential

Friday 12th July - PTA Summer Fair

Tuesday 23rd July - Last day of term. 3.15pm finish.



WORLD BOOK DAY[®]

COSTUME SWAP

MONDAY 26th FEB
after school pick-up



**Please donate your pre-loved World Book Day
Costumes ready for a costume swap!
Donation bin in reception**

