



# MERRYLANDS

## PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

SPRING TERM – FRIDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2025

### MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL – MRS PRYER

Dear Parents/Carers,

The children have made an excellent start to the new term. Across the school a wide range of subjects have continued to be taught this week. In Nursery, the children created repeated patterns in maths while the children in Reception were growing cress. Year 1 were learning about Neil Armstrong while Year 2 were labelling countries on a world map. Year 3 have been working with fractions in maths, Year 4 have been finding out about the importance of the River Nile in Ancient Egyptian times and Year 5 have been naming and locating continents, oceans and seas. Year 6 have also been conducting scientific investigations involving electrical circuits.

Good school attendance is key to children's educational success. When a child misses school, they miss out on learning and gaps in their knowledge and skills appear. Understandably, the more often a child is absent from school, the bigger the gaps in learning become. We fully appreciate that absence cannot always be avoided when children are really unwell but if they have a cold, cough, sore throat or haven't slept well please continue to send them to school. If they are feeling unwell and are not well enough to remain in school, we will contact you.

Remember next Thursday is World Book Day. We are looking forward to seeing the children dressed up as their favourite book characters!

I hope you all have a lovely weekend.

### ATTENDANCE

School Attendance Target: 97.00 %



**This week's Attendance: 92.80 %**

**The class with the best attendance in KS1 was Mrs Jarvis' class with 97.33 %**

**The class with the best attendance in KS2 was Mrs Almond's class with 97.59 %**

**If your child is absent, contact must be made to the School Office EVERY school day that your child is absent.**

**Please report your child's absence by phone 01268 417893, ParentMail or by email: [admin@merrylands-pri.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@merrylands-pri.essex.sch.uk)**

RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE



## STAR OF THE WEEK

## CERTIFICATE FOCUS: PERSEVERANCE



Nest: Rex P

Nursery, Mrs Tobin: Mason H

Reception, Mrs Anthony: Russell H

Reception, Mrs Sullivan: Krystal M-Y

Reception, Miss Bagridge: Jaxon P

Year 1, Mrs Andrade: Jacob W

Year 1, Mrs Fairman/Mrs Christie: Georgie P

Year 1, Mrs Camoccio: Tiago C

Year 2, Mrs King: Freya T

Year 2, Miss Gilmore: Albert F

Year 2, Mrs Jarvis: Violet H

Year 3, Mrs Almond: Cody A

Year 3, Mr Taylor: Leon L

Year 3, Miss Medina: Oscar A

Year 4, Miss Lee: Nina-Florence A

Year 4, Miss Miller: Ameerah M

Year 4, Mrs Didham: Samantha E

Year 5, Miss Day: Scarlett D

Year 5, Miss Osborne: Olivia D

Year 6, Miss White: Cristian C

Year 6, Mr Hayward: Amelie A

## MERRYLANDS BADGE WINNERS

Our Merrylands badges are given to the pupils who demonstrate the school values at all times. They are good role models to other pupils and work hard to improve every single day. They try their best and persevere in all lessons, complete homework on time, have good school attendance and show respect and kindness to their peers.

Congratulations to this week's winners:

Reception	Jacob D
Year 1	Harper S
Year 2	Hollie W
Year 3	Ruby F
Year 4	Isla C
Year 5	Iulian P
Year 6	Ruby F

## YEAR 1 WORKSHOP

On Monday, Year 1 had a super time learning about two famous explorers, they even went on a time travelling adventure with them! They sailed for over 30 days aboard the ship with Christopher Columbus to discover new lands and zoomed into space with Neil Armstrong to land on the moon! The children were tired when they got back but had a fantastic time!

# RESPECT

# KINDNESS

# PERSEVERANCE

## FOREST SCHOOLS

Please ensure your child has warm clothes, lots of layers, spare socks and underwear, welly boots, hats, gloves and a coat with them on forest school days. Due to the weather, please note they will get extremely muddy.

As a reminder the following classes will be taking part in forest school this week:

Monday morning - Year 4 - Miss Lee's class.

Tuesday morning - Year 2 - Mrs King's class.

Tuesday afternoon - Reception - Miss Bagridge's class

Thursday morning - Nursery - Mrs Tobin.

If your child's session is in the morning, please ensure your child comes to school wearing their forest school clothes, please ensure they bring their full school uniform to school including school shoes.

## SPRING DISCO

Friends of Merrylands are looking to arrange a Spring Disco after the Easter break. In order for this to take place we require parent volunteers to help at the event - if you are able to volunteer, please email: [friendsofmerrylands@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmerrylands@gmail.com).

Further information will follow if there are enough volunteers to run this event.

The proposed dates are as follows:

Tuesday 22nd April  
Wednesday 23rd April  
Thursday 24th April



## FRIENDS OF MERRYLANDS LOTTERY

For just £3.00 per ticket, you have the chance to win BIG every month.

Sign up here: <https://www.fundingwall.org.uk/members/merrylands-monthly-lottery-ss156qs>

Share with friends and family - everyone can join in!

Monthly Draws: Each month, a winning number is drawn.

Fantastic Prizes: 40% of the total pot goes to the lucky winner.

Support our School: 40% of the total pot goes to supporting Merrylands Primary School.

You will be entered every month until you cancel. Join the fun, support our school and you could be the next big winner!



RESPECT

KINDNESS

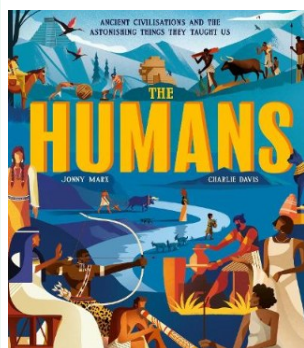
PERSEVERANCE

## UPCOMING DIARY DATES

06.03.2025	World Book Day
14.03.2025	Science Day
17.03.2025	St. Patrick's Day Special Dinner
21.03.2025	Red Nose Day—Comic Relief—Red non-uniform
28.03.2025	Mother's Day Sale
07.04.2025 - 21.04.2025	Easter Holidays
22.04.2025	Return to School



## BOOK OF THE WEEK



In our Shared Reading lessons, Year 4 Miss Miller's class, have just begun exploring *The Humans* by Jonny Marx, a fascinating non-fiction book that takes us on a journey through the most iconic figures, achievements, and features of ancient civilisations. As we dive into this engaging text, we are not only discovering incredible historical facts but also expanding our vocabulary with brand-new words and their meanings. Through discussions and activities, we are learning how different civilisations shaped the world we live in today, from their inventions and traditions to their myths and legends. Everyone is excited to uncover more about the past while sharpening our reading and comprehension skills along the way!



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION



### Sportsperson of the Half Term...

#### Ashley Facey

##### Who is Ashley Facey?

Ashley Facey was born on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 1995 in London. He is a Paralympian who plays table tennis for team GB. Ashley was born with a condition called Erbs palsy which has affected the nerves in the right side of his body. This has mainly impacted his arm and his shoulder.

He has always been a keen sports fan and in Year 7, started playing table tennis. Ashley impressed his coaches with his talent and they suggested he try for the Paralympic GB team. He has said his disability does not hold him back.

##### What has Ashley achieved?

In 2009, Ashley joined the Great Britain performance squad. He just missed out on selection for the London 2012 Paralympic Games but was selected for the Inspiration Programme and competed at Rio 2016. Ashley has won a number of medals including a silver at the China Open (2019) and team bronze medal at the European Championships in the same year.



## Transporter



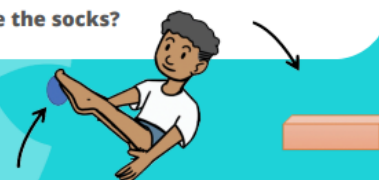
Get Set 4 Education

**What you need:** an empty box, 8 x pairs of rolled up socks, one player, one person to time.

### How to play:

- The player begins lying on their back with the box at their head and the socks at their feet.
- They need to transport the rolled up socks, one at a time from their feet to the box behind their head.
- They can only use their feet to transport the socks.

### How quickly can you move the socks?



[www.getset4education.co.uk](http://www.getset4education.co.uk)

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# Lunch at a glance...

The option of Jacket Potato with Cheese or Beans, Ham Baguette and Cheese Baguette are available each day

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Monday	Sticky BBQ Chicken or Sticky BBQ Quorn with Steamed Rice and Sweetcorn Dessert – Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Chicken Curry or Vegetable Curry with Steamed Rice and Peas / Sweetcorn Dessert – Fresh Fruit or Yogurt	Cheesy Chicken Pasta Bake or Vegetable Pasta Bake with Sweetcorn Dessert – Homemade Flapjack
Tuesday	Butchers Chicken Nuggets or Vegetable Nuggets with Chips and Peas / Spaghetti Hoops Dessert – American Pancakes and Syrup	Sausage Roll or Vegan Roll with Smiley Faces and Baked Beans Dessert – Chocolate Cake and Chocolate Custard	Butchers Pork Sausages or Vegan Sausages with Mashed Potato, Peas, Yorkshire Pudding and Gravy Dessert – Fresh Fruit or Yogurt
Wednesday	Homemade Mince Beef Pie or Homemade Vegetable Pie with Mashed Potato, Seasonal Vegetables and Gravy Dessert – Fruit Flavour Jelly	Butchers Roast Chicken or Vegan Fillet with Roast Potatoes, Peas / Carrots, Yorkshire Pudding and Gravy Dessert – Fruit Flavour Jelly	Homemade Chicken Pie or Quorn and Vegetable Pie with Roast Potatoes, Carrots and Gravy Dessert – Fruit Flavour Jelly
Thursday	Cheese & Tomato Pizza and Fusilli Pasta with Homemade Tomato Sauce Dessert – Homemade Flapjack	Beef Bolognese or Vegetable Bolognese with Fusilli Pasta and Mixed Vegetables Dessert – American Pancakes and Syrup	Chicken Fajita Wrap or Quorn Fajita Wrap with Diced Potatoes and Salad Bar Dessert – Homemade Lemon Drizzle Cake
Friday	Fish Fingers or Homemade Cheddar Whirl with Wedges and Baked Beans Dessert – Fresh Fruit or Yoghurt	Battered Fish or Omelette with Chips and Peas Dessert – Fresh Fruit or Yoghurt	Fish Fingers or Homemade Cheddar Whirl with Smiley Faces and Spaghetti Hoops Dessert – Fresh Fruit or Yoghurt

Salad Bar is available Daily

On Monday 3rd March 2025, we will be returning on Week 3.

Please ensure all school lunches are paid for in advance on ScoPay.

Please let the office staff know if there are any changes to your child's dietary needs.



## INFORMATION

**ACL** ZONES OF REGULATION SESSIONS

**Help Your Child Master Their Emotions**

Join our transformative Zones of Regulation sessions, designed to provide you with information to support your child to understand their emotions, & to self regulate.

**Sign Up!**

- Scan the QR code, OR
- Visit our website [aclessex.com](http://aclessex.com) and type the word 'Zones' in to the 'Find a course...' box, OR
- Click [here](#) and type the word 'Zones'

**SCAN ME**

**COMMUNITY & FAMILY LEARNING**

Essex County Council

RESPECT

KINDNESS

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# ATTENDANCE

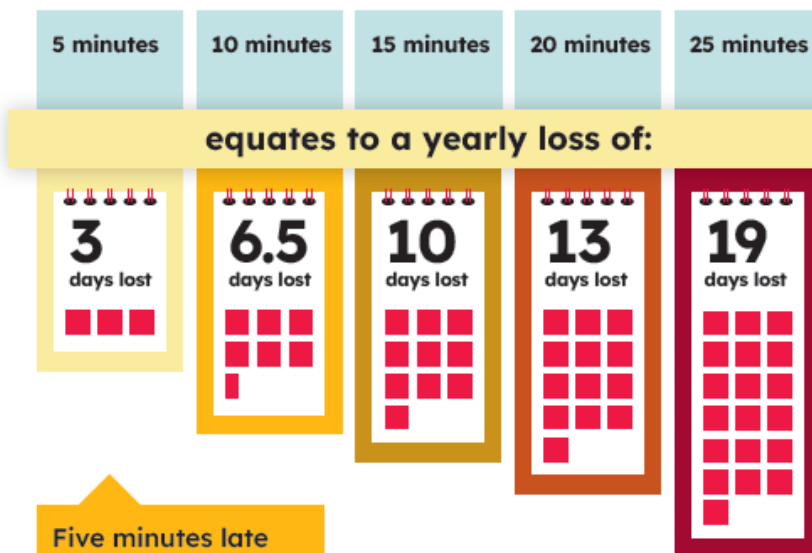


**Here, every day, ready and on time**



**Expected attendance means having no more than seven days off this school year!**

## Minutes lost per day



Five minutes late per day adds up to three learning days lost in a school year

If 15 minutes late each day you will miss two full weeks of school in one year

**Poor timekeeping means less chance of success!**

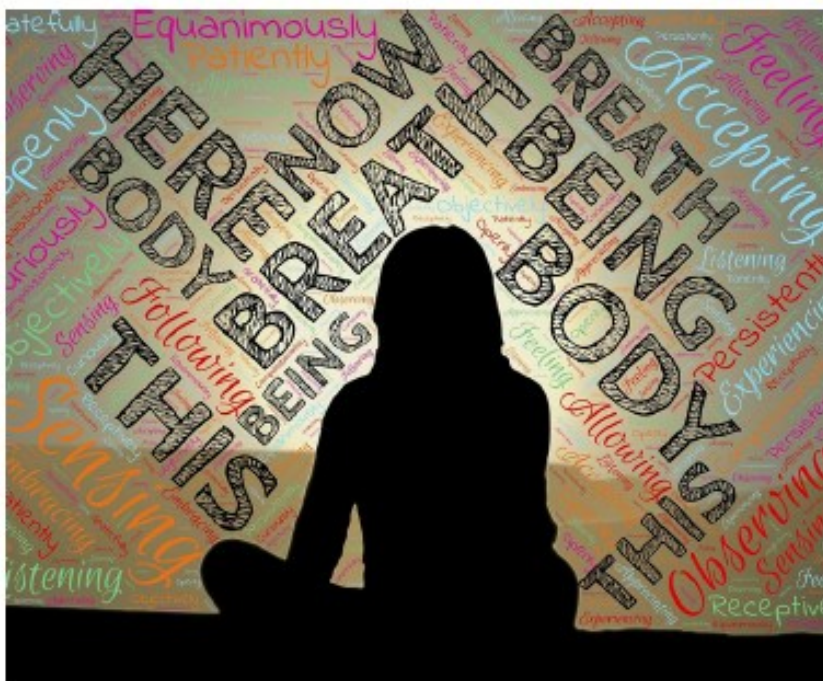
## IMPORTANT INFORMATION - TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

Improving school attendance is a key priority for all schools across Essex. Where families choose to take a family holiday during term time, this can detrimentally impact a pupil's progress and can prevent them from fulfilling their true academic potential. Applications should only be made, if you feel that there are exceptional circumstances meaning the leave cannot be taken during the school holidays. We ask that all parents note that where families choose to go on holiday during term time and the absence is coded as unauthorised, Essex County Council may not issue penalty notices and may instead proceed straight to prosecution and place the case directly before the Magistrates for their consideration in court. If found guilty by the Magistrates, parents could face a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.



Supporting Families  
in our Community

# TIME4YOU... HEALTH & WELLBEING



We are delighted to host David Aaron who invites you to to experience powerful transformational healing with breathwork, introduction to Mudra, and simple vagus nerve reset. This practice helps to eliminate stress, anxiety and supports physical and emotional wellbeing

Wed 5th March 2025  
12.30 - 2.30pm  
Beech Community Hub  
8 Austen Road, SS14 3RZ

Please bring something comfortable and warm to help relax on the floor

We have 3 ways to book:  
CLICK HERE to book via Eventbrite!  
Call/Text/Whatsapp - 07923 426502  
Email - basildonp4p@outlook.com



At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **WHATSAPP**



### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

### EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency' – plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

### CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

### FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a 'Forwarded many times' label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original ... and might not be entirely factual, either.

### CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID. There is an additional feature – 'Secret Code' – where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

### VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't reopen them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing protection of privacy.

### VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's Live Location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

### ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to My Contacts or My Contacts Except.... Additionally, if a child needs to use Live Location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

### CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a Locked Chats folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they've stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any View Once content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

### DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a good impression, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

### THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content that a user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/whatsapp-2025>



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