



MERRYLANDS

PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

AUTUMN TERM – FRIDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL – MRS PRYER

Dear Parents/Carers,

This week we shared our new BoomReader reading record system, and reading books were sent home. Hopefully you have been able to activate your account and have started recording when your child has read at home. If you are having any difficulty setting up your account, please speak to your child's class teacher.

Thank you to all the parents/carers who attended the Mathletics workshop earlier this week. We are currently setting up logins for all the children from Reception to Year 6 and will send out further information in due course.

Please remember to ensure all items of your child's school uniform has their name on it. This helps to ensure your child's clothing is returned to them when they take jumpers or coats off at lunchtime or when getting changed for PE.

Please see below a brief reminder of our school uniform policy:

- white blouse, shirt, or polo shirt
- light grey skirt or pinafore dress
- light grey trousers or shorts (no leggings)
- navy blue sweatshirt or cardigan
- navy blue checked dress – summer term (no shorts/all in one outfits)
- plain white, grey, black or navy socks
- plain white, grey, black or navy tights
- plain black shoes (no white markings/logos)

I would also like to remind parents/carers that only small stud earrings and a watch can be worn at school. Earrings need to be removed for PE and no smart watches are allowed. In addition, long hair should be tied back with a small white, black, grey or navy-blue hair tie. Decorative hair pieces such as flowers and large bows should not be worn. For further information, please see the uniform policy on the school website.

One final reminder, we are all looking forward to our Pro-Strike fundraising event next Wednesday. Please remember to ask friends and family to sponsor your child for this event.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend!

RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE

BADGES

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 kindness to their peers.

Congratulations to this week's winners.

Reception	Leya L
Year 1	Ruby T
Year 2	Halle-Mae P
Year 3	Evie-Mae G
Year 4	Lillie S
Year 5	Matilda H
Year 6	Arianna M



STAR OF THE WEEK

CERTIFICATE FOCUS : KINDNESS



Nursery: Ryan K

Nest: Henry J

Reception, Mrs Anthony: Lyla P

Reception, Mrs Sullivan: Ayan C

Reception, Miss Bagridge: Taylor-Junior B

Year 1, Mrs King: Kai C

Year 1, Mrs Camoccio: Quinn H

Year 1, Mrs Andrade: Acasia P

Year 2, Mrs Didham: Erika G

Year 2, Miss Milne: Ollie L

Year 2, Mrs Cooper/Mrs Christie: Freddy E

Year 3, Mrs Almond: Rocco N

Year 3, Miss Gilmore: Harley W

Year 3, Miss Medina: Evie-Mae G

Year 4, Miss Lee: Dragos M

Year 4, Miss Miller: Alice B

Year 4, Miss Atkin: Evelyn R

Year 5, Miss Day: Megan P

Year 5, Mr Taylor: Sophia B

Year 5, Miss Osborne: Elliot S

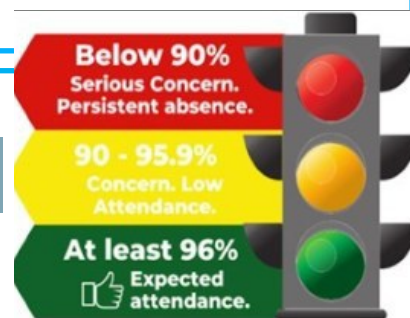
Year 6, Miss White: Aaron B

Year 6, Mrs Thour: Mia A



School Attendance Target: 95.00 %

This week's attendance: 94.75 %



The class with the best attendance in KS1 was Miss Sullivan's class with 98.75 %

The class with the best attendance in KS2 was Miss Medina's class with 100.00 %

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

RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE

PARKING OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Pick-up and drop-off times are busy outside all schools and if not approached sensibly this can cause an increased safety risk to both children and parents.

Parking restrictions outside schools **are there to keep you and your children safe**. Parking inconsiderately can put people in danger and also put you at risk of being fined. It's important that motorists follow the Highway Code.

Outside Merrylands, we are seeing dangerous and inconsiderate parking on a daily basis. This includes, parking on zig-zag lines, parking over the school entrance, stopping on the crossing and even stopping and letting children out directly into the road. We are deeply concerned about this, and as a result are seeking the support of Police and the council to improve matters. This may involve attendance of Civil Enforcement Officers to observe and take action where required.

We would much rather people make use of the numerous parking spaces that are fairly close within 100-200m and follow the safety tips from the Police which advise that when picking up or dropping off children at schools, you should do the following:

- Allow yourself plenty of time as the area is likely to be busy.
- Do not park on yellow zigzag lines and avoid parking opposite them.
- If you decide to park further away, please be considerate of local residents and avoid blocking driveways or accessways.

UPCOMING DIARY DATES

SEPTEMBER

24.09.2025 Pro-Strike Event

29.09.2025 - 03.10.2025 - Year 6 Isle of Wight

OCTOBER

Black History Month

Oracy Month

Harvest Festival Collection- Date TBC

02.10.2025 National Poetry Day

15.10.2025 Reception - Year 6 Autumn Term Parents Evening - 3.40pm-7.30pm

16.10.2025 Reception - Year 6 Autumn Term Parents Evening - 3.40pm-5.30pm

21.10.2025 Nursery Parents Evening (Morning)

22.10.2025 Nursery Parents Evening (Afternoon)

27.10.2025 October Half Term

03.11.2025 Inset Day - School Closed

04.11.2025 Back to School



RESPECT

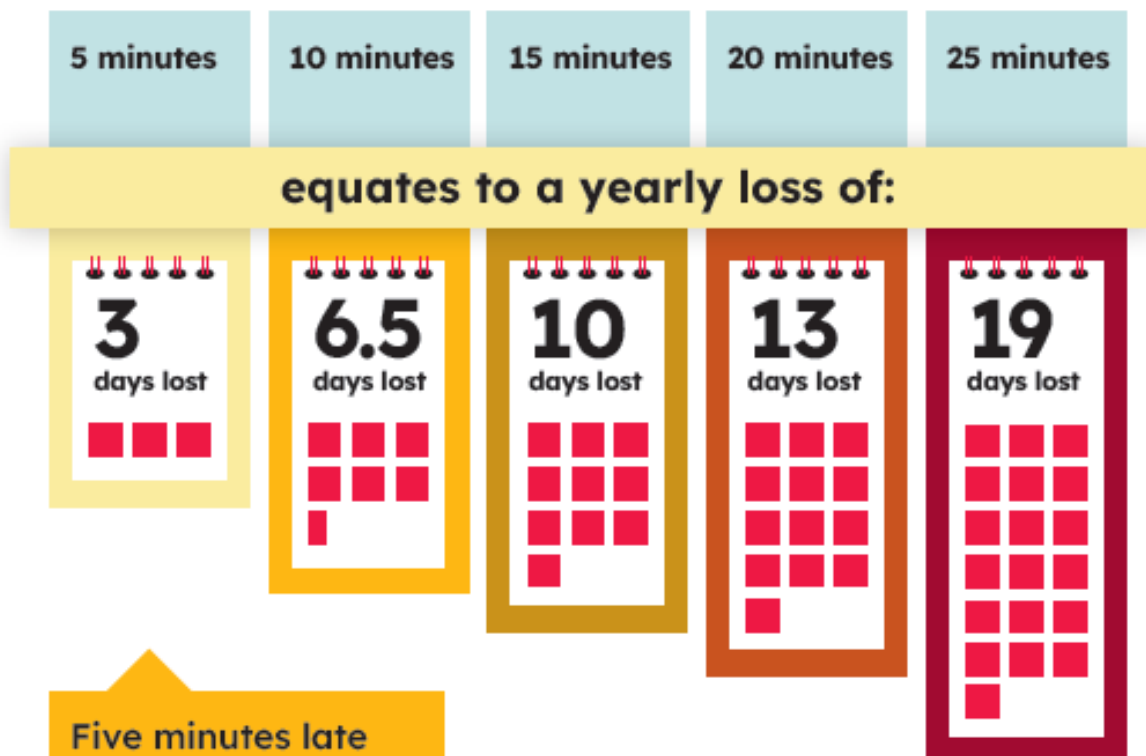
KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE

HERO

Here, every day, ready and on time

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!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Sportsperson of the Half Term...

Lauren James

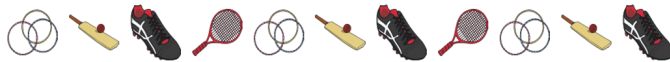


Who is Lauren James?

Lauren James is a professional women's football player who is currently signed to Chelsea and has represented England and the Women's Euros and Women's World Cup as a forward. She was born on the 29th September 2001 and started playing football from a young age, playing with her brother's in the park behind their house.

What has Lauren achieved?

At the age of just 17, Lauren signed for Manchester United and helped the team to gain promotion to the Women's Super League – she scored 14 goals in 18 appearances. In 2021, she rejoined Chelsea and has continued to have a successful career. Some of her achievements include: FA Women's Super League Winner (2021/22), Women's FA Cup (2021/22), Arnold Clark Cup Player of the Tournament (2023) and London Football Awards: Young Player of the Year (2023). In addition to this, she helped England to win the Women's Euros (2025).



Alphabet Walk



Play: Outside



How to play:

- Head out for a walk.
- On the way, try to spot something beginning with the letter 'A', the Z the letter 'B' and so on until you get to 'Z'.
- Make this easier if there are some letters that are difficult to find by finding something that contains the letter instead of 'starts with the letter...'

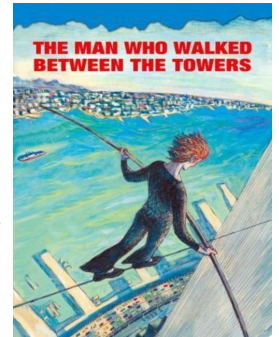
www.getset4education.co.uk



BOOK OF THE WEEK

Miss Day's class have been reading 'The Man Who Walked Between the Towers' by Mordicai Gerstein.

Miss Day's class have been enjoying this book in their English lessons. They love the illustrations and the fact that it is based on real life events.



WORRY WORM



Thank you to King Edward Community Centre for providing our Reception pupils with knitted worry worms.

The KECC in Laindon have been running a Knit and Natter Group for anyone who wants to visit for a knit and natter whilst creating wonderful knitted creations!

CLOTHES DONATION

There is a clothes bank located by the main office. The clothes bank accepts all that is listed on the front of it. All items must be placed in a bag.

The clothes bank accepts:

- Clothes
- Blankets
- Belts
- Paired Shoes
- Handbags
- Towels



RESPECT

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PERSEVERANCE

Snacks

As part of the National School Fruit Scheme all children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 are provided with free fruit each day. They can also bring in their own fruit or a healthy snack as set out below. In KS2 children can bring their own snack for break time. Below is a list of suitable options that you could provide for your child:

- fruit
- vegetables
- plain rice cakes
- plain crackers
- bread sticks
- nut free granola bar or oat bar



Snacks should not contain chocolate chips, chocolate coating, nuts, artificial sugars and colourings or have a high sugar, fat or salt content eg crisps, fruit winders, pretzels, mini cheddars etc.

L U N C H T I M E

Lighter Bites



OUR LIGHTER LUNCH OPTIONS OF JACKET POTATO & HAM OR CHEESE BAGUETTE ARE AVAILABLE TO ALL PUPILS EVERYDAY



MONDAY
TUESDAY
WEDNESDAY
THURSDAY
FRIDAY

WEEK 1

SWEET & SOUR CHICKEN
SWEET & SOUR VEGETABLES
WITH STEAMED RICE & SWEETCORN
DESSERT - HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE SPRINKLE CAKE
FRUIT & YOGHURT

FISH FINGERS
CHEDDAR WHIRL
WITH SMILEY FACES AND SPAGHETTI HOOPS
DESSERT - AMERICAN PANCAKES WITH SYRUP
FRUIT & YOGHURT

BUTCHERS PORK SAUSAGES
VEGAN SAUSAGES
WITH MASH, YORKSHIRE PUDDING, PEAS & GRAVY
DESSERT - JELLY & FRUIT

BEEF BOLOGNESE
VEGETABLE BOLOGNESE
WITH PENNE PASTA & MIXED VEGETABLES
DESSERT - HOMEMADE FLAPJACK
FRUIT & YOGHURT

PEPPERONI PIZZA
CHEESE & TOMATO PIZZA
WITH PASTA IN HOMEMADE TOMATO SAUCE
DESSERT - ICE CREAM
FRUIT & YOGHURT

WEEK 2

CHICKEN NUGGETS
VEGETABLE NUGGETS
WITH CHIPS & BAKED BEANS
DESSERT - STRAWBERRY SWIRL MOUSSE
FRUIT & YOGHURT

BEEF CHILLI
QUORN & VEGETABLE CHILLI
WITH RICE & MIXED VEGETABLES
DESSERT - HOMEMADE LEMON DRIZZLE CAKE
FRUIT & YOGHURT

BACON MACARONI CHEESE
MACARONI CHEESE
WITH PEAS & SWEETCORN
DESSERT - FRUIT JELLY & FRUIT

CHICKEN CURRY
VEGETABLE CURRY
WITH SAVOURY RICE
DESSERT - HOMEMADE FLAPJACK
FRUIT & YOGHURT

BATTERED FISH
VEGETABLE FINGERS
WITH POTATO WEDGES & PEAS
DESSERT - ICE CREAM
FRUIT & YOGHURT

WEEK 3

CHICKEN FAJITA WRAP
QUORN FAJITA WRAP
WITH SQUARE POTATOES & SALAD BAR
DESSERT - HOMEMADE ICED SPRINKLE CAKE
FRUIT & YOGHURT

CHEESE PASTA BAKE
VEGETABLE PASTA BAKE
WITH SWEETCORN
DESSERT - CHOCOLATE SWIRL MOUSSE
FRUIT & YOGHURT

BUTCHERS ROAST CHICKEN
VEGAN FILLET
WITH ROAST POTATOES, YORKSHIRE PUDDING, VEGETABLES & GRAVY
DESSERT - FRUIT JELLY & FRUIT

FISH FINGERS
CHEDDAR WHIRL
SMILEY FACES & BAKED BEANS
DESSERT - HOMEMADE FLAPJACK
FRUIT & YOGHURT

BEEF BURGERS
QUORN BURGER
WITH CHIPS & SPAGHETTI HOOPS
DESSERT - ICE CREAM
FRUIT & YOGHURT

On Monday 22nd September 2025 children will return to school on Week 2.



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.

RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE



Be a superhero

and come to school every day!

If you miss school, you miss out.

HERO

Here, every day, ready and on time

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

GROUP CHATS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

On messaging apps, social media and online games, group chats are one of the most popular ways that children connect. Group chats allow messages, images and videos to be shared in one place and help friendships flourish; however, they also come with a number of risks.

TEASING AND BULLYING

Children of all ages are keen to fit in socially, and group chats can sometimes complicate that process. While group chats can foster connection, they can also give way to mean comments or jokes at someone's expense, especially when others join in for laughs. When bullying happens publicly, in front of friends and classmates, it can intensify the emotional impact – adding to embarrassment, anxiety and feelings of isolation for the child being targeted.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Children often can't control who is added to a group, which can lead to privacy concerns. Sharing personal details in group chats can be dangerous, and children have no control over what others do with the material they send. Some members of the chat might even decide to use such information maliciously.

PEER PRESSURE

Children may feel they have to constantly stay engaged just to be included and keep up with the conversation. In some cases, they might partake in inappropriate behaviours – like sharing explicit photos, jokes or teasing – just to fit in. Group settings can also encourage children to act in ways they normally wouldn't, or stay silent when they know something is wrong, out of fear of being excluded. Some children may find it difficult to leave toxic group chats.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some group chats may include inappropriate language or imagery. Even if a child isn't actively participating in the conversation, they may still be exposed to this content simply by being part of the group. Some apps have disappearing messaging features, where content is only available once or for a few seconds, which makes it harder for children to report something they've seen.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

Exclusion in group chats is common and can take several forms. Sometimes a new group is created specifically to leave one child out on purpose. In other cases, the chat may happen on an app that a child doesn't have access to, making it impossible for them to join in. This can cause feelings of being left out – even unintentionally.

VIDEO AND LIVE CHATS

Many popular apps allow children to engage in live streaming with interactive chats or have group video chats. Anyone can be added to these streams, and often children tag peers in the comments and have conversations which are unmoderated. There's a risk of being exposed to inappropriate or violent content and offensive language, either in the group videos or via the group chats.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats can become an arena for children to compete for social status. Help children consider how people might feel if they behave unkindly. If a child does upset someone, encourage them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

SET SOME GROUP CHAT RULES

Discuss safe group chat practices, such as asking a peer for consent before adding them to a group chat, or leaving a group chat if a stranger is added. Tell children that if they're added to a group they didn't agree to beforehand, it's OK for them to leave immediately.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If a child encounters inappropriate content or feels uncomfortable in a group chat, encourage them to block and report the sender and leave the group. Make sure children know it's OK to leave a group chat if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Group chats are an excellent way for children to connect and feel like they belong. However, remind them that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their feelings and empower them by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. You can also encourage children to speak up if they witness others being bullied.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

It's vital for children to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Ensure they understand the importance of not revealing personal details – like their address, their school, or photos they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they can't be certain where it might end up or how it might be used.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Being bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be an irritating distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to children that they can still be part of a group chat while disabling notifications. In fact, it would be healthier for them to do so, helping them avoid the pressure to respond immediately.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at B CyberAware, who has developed anti-bullying and cyber-safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government, comparing the internet use and online behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College