



MERRYLANDS

PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

SUMMER TERM – FRIDAY 8TH MAY 2026

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL – MRS PRYER

Dear Parents/Carers,

It may have been a shorter week but that hasn't stopped the children working incredibly hard in all their lessons. Across the school, the children have continued to remember the school's core values of respect, kindness and perseverance and displayed these values in their learning as well as during breaktimes and lunchtimes.

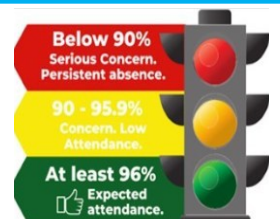
This week, the children in Nursery have been counting objects with one-to-one correspondence while the children in Reception have been learning the doubles to 10. Year 1 have been identifying parts of a plant, Year 2 have been comparing the seaside now and in the past while Year 3 have been designing a clay sculpture. In Year 4, the children have been learning how materials change when heated or cooled, Year 5 have been identifying faces, edges and vertices on 3D shapes while Year 6 have been finding out what happened in the Blitz. The children in the ASC have been finding out how to stay safe when crossing the road and the children in the Nest have been creating pictures by printing with potatoes.

After lots of preparation, learning and revision, Year 6 will be taking their SAT tests next week. I am sure you will join me in wishing them the very best of luck. They deserve every success after all their hard work this year.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend!



School Attendance Target: 95.00 %



This week's attendance: 94.01%.

The class with the best attendance in KS1 was Mrs Anthony's Class with 98.57%.

The class with the best attendance in KS2 was Miss White's Class with 97.62%.

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

RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE

STAR OF THE WEEK CERTIFICATE

FOCUS: KINDNESS

Nursery: Bella A

Nest: Henry H

Reception, Mrs Anthony: Dave J

Reception, Mrs Sullivan: Heesha S

Reception, Miss Bagridge: Rares P

Year 1, Mrs King: Jaxon L

Year 1, Mrs Camoccio: Nicole S

Year 1, Mrs Andrade: Acasia P

Year 2, Mrs Didham: Leo B

Year 2, Miss Milne: Belle D

Year 2, Mrs Christie/Mrs Cooper:

Scarlett B

Year 3, Mrs Almond: Jenna P-C

Year 3, Miss Gilmore: Freya T

Year 3, Miss Medina: Ayan H

Year 4, Miss Lee: Teodor B

Year 4, Miss Miller: Oscar D

Year 4, Miss Atkin: Harry M

Year 5, Miss Day: Nina F-A

Year 5, Mr Taylor: Louie G

Year 5, Miss Osborne: Zaki K

Year 6, Miss White: Dominic A

Year 6, Mrs Thour: Jacob S

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	Ruby J
Year 1	Ocean S
Year 2	Erin P
Year 3	Aria G
Year 4	Ava H
Year 5	Isla C
Year 6	Samuel S

UPCOMING DIARY DATES

MAY

11.05.2026 - Year 6 SATS Week

20.05.2026 - National Numeracy Day

25.05.2026 - May Half Term



RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE

BOOK OF THE WEEK



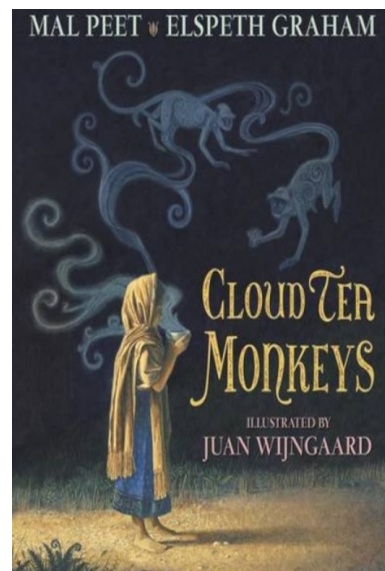
In Year 3, Miss Gilmore's class have been reading 'Cloud Tea Monkeys' by Mal Peet and Elspeth Graham.

This book is about a young girl called Tashi whose mother falls ill. Tashi's mother is not able to pick tea due to her illness, her daughter Tashi steps up, determined to help raise the funds needed for a doctor to help her mother get better.

Tashi attempts to pick the tea but the plantation overseer is a cruel man and makes it difficult for Tashi to achieve her goal.

Isaac said, "I like how this book makes you feel all different feelings as the story develops."

Stella said, "The book tells an important story about the different struggles people face."



YEAR 5 LAYER MARNEY TOWER

On Wednesday 7th May, Year 5 visited Layer Marney Tower in Colchester. The building is the creation of Henry 1st Lord Marney, who died in 1523. The project was never finished. Layer Marney has always been a staple family home housing 11 families over the span of 500 years.

The children created Viking pots that they decorated with runes, took part in an archery session and started to make models of Viking long ships. They had a wonderful day!

Well done Year 5, you were very respectful and showed a keen interest in this period of History!



RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



We have completed the Sports Games Mark and have achieved the silver award this year.

Merrylands Primary School

has achieved the Silver School Games Mark award for their commitment, engagement in the School Games for 2025/26.

QUAD KIDS EVENT

Year 5 and 6 children attended a Quad Kids event at James Hornsby School on Thursday 7th May 2026. All children participated amazingly, Logan won Gold for Howler Throw and Teddy won Silver for 600 metres.

Well done everyone!



Dance by Chance



What you need: random objects



How to play:

- Choose 10 objects that can be safely thrown e.g. feather, sponge, towel.
- In a safe area, throw the object into the air and observe the way it travels in space and the dynamics of the movement to create your own actions inspired by the object.
- Number each object 0-10.
- Use the first 10 numbers from a familiar phone number to give you the order for your actions.

Add music to your dance if you would like.



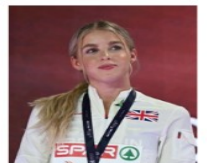
Sportsperson of the Half Term... Keely Hodgkinson

Who is Keely Hodgkinson?

Keely Hodgkinson is a British professional athlete who competes in athletics. She was born on the 3rd March 2002 in Wigan, England and was a keen swimmer when she was younger - nervous to compete in running events. Her father promised to buy her a new pair of running shoes if she gave running a try. She is a resilient athlete who, at 13 years old, Hodgkinson had an operation to remove a tumour on the side of her head. After the operation, she became deaf in one ear and temporarily struggled to walk or run. She now competes in the 800m event.

What has Keely achieved?

In her career so far, Keely has achieved many things. In 2021, she became the youngest British person in history to win a European indoor gold medal. In the same year, she also broke the record for the under-20 indoor 800m as well as the Women's 800m British record set by another of her idols, Dame Kelly Holmes. She has won Olympic gold and Olympic silver medals too.



RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE



On Monday 11th May 2026 children will return to school 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.

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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

BUTCHERS CHICKEN NUGGETS
VEGETABLE NUGGETS
WITH CHIPS & BAKED BEANS
DESSERT -
WAFFLES & GOLDEN SYRUP

BEEF MEATBALLS
QUORN MEATBALLS
WITH FUSILLI PASTA IN A
HOMEMADE TOMATO SAUCE
DESSERT - HOMEMADE GOLDEN OAT
FLAPJACK

BUTCHERS ROAST CHICKEN
ROAST VEGAN FILLET
WITH ROAST POTATOES, YORKSHIRE
PUDDINGS, PEAS, CARROTS AND GRAVY
DESSERT - FRUIT JELLY & FRUIT
YOGURT

BEEF CHILLI
VEGETABLE CHILLI
WITH RICE AND SWEETCORN
DESSERT - HOMEMADE LEMON
DRIZZLE CAKE

FISH FINGERS
CHEESE OMELETTE
WITH POTATO WAFFLES & PEAS
DESSERT - ICE CREAM
FRESH FRUIT & YOGURT

WEEK 2

PEPPERONI PIZZA
CHEESE & TOMATO PIZZA
WITH PASTA IN HOMEMADE TOMATO SAUCE
& SALAD BAR
DESSERT - CHOCOLATE SWIRL MOUSSE
FRESH FRUIT & YOGURT

BATTERED CHICKEN PIECES
QUORN DIPPERS
IN SWEET & SOUR SAUCE WITH RICE &
SWEETCORN
DESSERT - HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE CHIP
CAKE

BUTCHERS PORK SAUSAGES
VEGAN SAUSAGES
WITH MASH POTATO, YORKSHIRE
PUDDING, SEASONAL VEGETABLES &
GRAVY
DESSERT - FRUIT JELLY & FRUIT YOGURT

CHICKEN FAJITA WRAP
VEGAN FAJITA WRAP
WITH CRISPY CUBE POTATOES AND
SALAD BAR
DESSERT - HOMEMADE OAT FLAPJACK

FISH FINGERS
VEGETABLE FINGERS
WITH CHIPS & BAKED BEANS
DESSERT - HOMEMADE SPONGE CAKE
FRESH FRUIT & YOGURT

WEEK 3

BREADED CHICKEN BURGER
QUORN BURGER
WITH CHIPS & SPAGHETTI HOOPS
DESSERT - STRAWBERRY MOUSSE
FRESH FRUIT + YOGURT

**SPAGHETTI CARBONARA WITH
CHEESE SAUCE & BACON PIECES**
VEGETABLE PASTA BAKE
WITH PEAS
DESSERT - HOMEMADE
FLAPJACK

ALL DAY COOKED BREAKFAST
ALL DAY QUORN BREAKFAST
WITH HASH BROWNS AND
BAKED BEANS
DESSERT - FRUIT JELLY & FRUIT
YOGURT

STICKY BBQ CHICKEN
STICKY BBQ VEGAN PIECES
WITH RICE & SWEETCORN
DESSERT - AMERICAN PANCAKES
WITH GOLDEN SYRUP
FRESH FRUIT + YOGURT

FISH FINGERS
CHEDDAR WHIRL
WITH SMILEY FACES & PEAS
DESSERT - HOMEMADE ICED SPONGE
CAKE WITH SPRINKLES
FRUIT & YOGURT



MERRYLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Golden Cup

13-15 May

After school in the playground

Come and make an iced drink to impress you and your friends – add sweets, candy floss and boba to your flavoured ice drink.

FIND THE GOLDEN STICKER and WIN A PRIZE!

Prizes Include:

- **Immersive Gamebox**
Family experience for 2-6 players
- **Rock Hub Climbing Wall**
Two children's taster sessions
- **Two Tickets to Colchester Zoo**
- **Kumon Billericay**
Two weeks of lessons
- **Wallace Kitchen**
Paint your own biscuit set
- **Asda £20 voucher**
- **Partyman Lakesite**
Family of four entry.

£2
a drink

GLYCEROL FREE!



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about IMAGE-ALTERING FILTERS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

From playful puppy ears on Snapchat to 'beauty mode' on TikTok, image-altering filters are now a routine part of how young people communicate online. While many are harmless, others subtly reshape people's faces and bodies. This can blur the line between reality and edited content, potentially influencing how children and young people see themselves and others.

ALTERED BEAUTY STANDARDS

Many 'beauty' filters smooth skin, reshape facial features, or adjust body proportions. Over time, repeated exposure to these filters can shift a child's idea of what is 'normal' or attractive, creating unrealistic expectations about their own and others' appearances.

PRESSURE TO LOOK PERFECT

Filtered images can often attract more 'likes' and positive comments. This can encourage children and young people to rely on editing tools to gain others' approval, rather than feeling confident in their natural appearance.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Regularly viewing heavily filtered content can lead to comparisons with unrealistic images. This is linked to body dissatisfaction and reduced self-esteem, particularly among children and teenagers.

HIDDEN ADVERTISING

Some filters are linked to beauty products or trends, subtly promoting third-party brands. Children and young people may not recognise this as advertising, while also sharing personal data – such as facial images and usage habits – with apps and third parties.

BLURRED REALITY

As filters become more advanced and natural-looking, it can be difficult for children and young people to distinguish edited content from real life, especially when filters are used in everyday photos and videos.

SEXUALISED EDITS

Certain tools can make users appear older or more sexualised. This may attract unwanted attention, increase the risk of images being shared without consent, and expose young people to unsafe interactions.

Advice for Parents & Educators

START OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Talk regularly about filters, such as how they work and why people use them. Ask the children and young people in your care how filtered images make them feel and encourage honest discussion without judgement.

REINFORCE WHAT'S REAL

Help children and young people understand that filtered images are digitally altered and are not an accurate reflection of real life. Emphasise that they don't need to meet these artificial standards.

CHALLENGE 'PERFECT' POSTS

When viewing content together, gently point out the signs of editing, filters, or posing techniques. This builds critical thinking and helps children and young people question unrealistic images.

PROMOTE OFFLINE CONFIDENCE

Encourage activities that build self-worth beyond appearance, such as sports, hobbies, friendships, and creative interests, so that confidence isn't tied solely to online validation.

Meet Our Expert

Parven Kaur is a digital parenting expert and founder of Kids N Clicks, a platform dedicated to helping parents navigate the online world alongside their children. She is an expert contributor for Internet Matters, offering practical guidance on emerging online safety issues. Her insights have been featured by the BBC, The Telegraph, TalkTV, and other major media outlets, supporting families across the UK.



The National College®

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