



# MERRYLANDS

PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY  
SUMMER TERM – FRIDAY 22ND MAY 2026

## MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL – MRS PRYER

Dear Parents/Carers,

To mark National Numeracy Day this week, children across the school have participated in Maths workshops delivered by a company called 'Wild about Maths'. The children initially participated in an introductory assembly before taking part in a workshop relevant to their year group. The children thoroughly enjoyed their sessions and it was fantastic to see the children taking a keen interest in this subject.

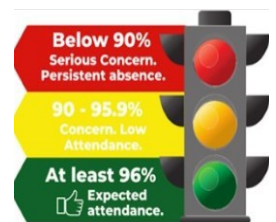
In celebration assembly this week, we announced this half term's team point winners. The winning teams were **blue** in Early Years / Key Stage 1 and **blue** in Key Stage 2. When we return after half term, all totals will be reset and we look forward to finding out which team will win next term.

After the half term break, we are looking forward to many events including sports day, Father's Day sale and our end of year celebration event. We also have the Fun Day on 3<sup>rd</sup> July organised by Friends of Merrylands. Please refer to the diary dates sent via Parentmail for further details.

I hope you and your family enjoy the half term holiday and I look forward to seeing you all on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026.



**School Attendance Target: 95.00 %**



**This week's attendance: 90.86%**

**The class with the best attendance in KS1 was Miss Milne's Class with 97.14%**

**The class with the best attendance in KS2 was Miss Miller's Class with 98.47%**

**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: RESPECT

Nursery: Alice M  
Reception, Mrs Anthony: Harper G  
Reception, Mrs Sullivan: Jordyn-S M  
Reception, Miss Bagridge: Albert P  
Year 1, Mrs King: Ruby T  
Year 1, Mrs Camoccio: Violet P  
Year 1, Mrs Andrade: Willow G  
Year 2, Mrs Didham: Zyana E  
Year 2, Miss Milne: Tife A  
Year 2, Mrs Christie/Mrs Cooper: Halle-M P  
Year 3, Mrs Almond: Ada T  
Year 3, Miss Gilmore: Anais I  
Year 3, Miss Medina: Arthur P  
Year 4, Miss Lee: Whole Class  
Year 4, Miss Miller: Ellis R  
Year 4, Miss Atkin: Teia S  
Year 5, Miss Day: Tyroon H  
Year 5, Mr Taylor: Sophie G  
Year 5, Miss Osborne: Zac A  
Year 6, Miss White: Olivia H  
Year 6, Mrs Thour: Teddy G

## 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	Lottie S
Year 1	Ariah C
Year 2	Tiago c
Year 3	Arthur P
Year 4	Heidi D-O
Year 5	Sofia S
Year 6	Harlee T

## UPCOMING DIARY DATES

### MAY

22.05.2026 - Inset Day  
25.05.2026 - 29.05.2026 - May Half Term  
01.06.2026—Back to School

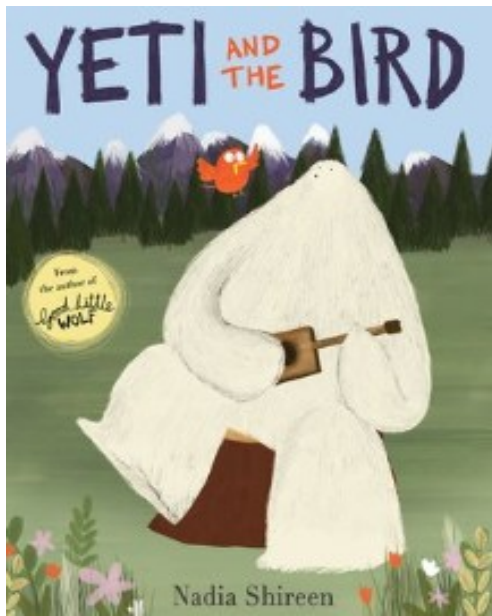


RESPECT

KINDNESS

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# BOOK OF THE WEEK



In Year 1, Mrs King's class have been reading the book, 'Yeti and the Bird' by Nadia Shireen. It tells the story of a lonely Yeti who lives in a snowy landscape where all the other animals are frightened of him because of his size and appearance.

One day, a small bird accidentally lands near him while travelling south for the winter. Unlike the other animals, the bird is not afraid of the Yeti and the two become friends.

Jaxon said, "I like it when Yeti gets lots of friends."

Santi thinks, "When Yeti and bird make friends it is good and kind."

# ACHIEVEMENTS



George C in Year 3 ran the Dunton Ford Test Track race at the weekend. George raised money for St Luke's Hospice.

Well done George!



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION



## 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.



## Family Fun Dance



#### How to play:

- Think of the typical gestures and movements some of your family members do all of the time.
- Decide on two or more typical movements for each person.
- Link these into a dance performance and add some music to your dance.
- Perform to your family.
- If you have a brother or sister, you could create the dance with them about your parents.

You could even use your pets for ideas.



RESPECT

KINDNESS

PERSEVERANCE

On Monday 1st June 2026 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.



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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

### WEEK 2

### WEEK 3

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

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

**BREADED CHICKEN BURGER**  
**QUORN BURGER**  
WITH CHIPS & SPAGHETTI HOOP  
DESSERT - STRAWBERRY MOUSS  
FRESH FRUIT + YOGURT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# THE BIG FUTURE SURVEY



The Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza, has a statutory and independent role to promote and protect the rights of children and to make sure that their voices are heard by those who make decisions about their lives.

To help her do this, Dame Rachel is launching her biggest survey yet. The Big Future will ask a million children about childhood today. About the things that worry them, the things they love, the ways they have fun and the changes they want for a better future.

At a time when there is a mood of doubt across the nation at large about how we raise our children today – from screen time to schooling, from future jobs to AI – we will be granting many of those same children the right to vote for the first time.

The Big Future will offer a new and comprehensive look at what children have to say about childhood today, and what they think needs to change for a better future.

Have your say in The Big Future survey.



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## ESSENTIAL ONLINE SAFETY

Children and young people use the internet every day to learn, play, and connect, but the online world is not always safe. For adults, it can be hard to keep up with the risks, including harmful content, cyberbullying and scams. These 10 tips provide clear and practical advice to support safer and healthier digital habits, helping young people to make informed, secure choices when using technology.

### 1 START EARLY CONVERSATIONS

Begin talking about online behaviour from the moment children start using devices. Use age-appropriate language and revisit topics regularly, making it clear they can speak to you about anything that upsets or confuses them. Keeping these chats open helps build trust, so children are more likely to come to you when needed.

### 2 PROMOTE SAFER SHARING

Children can overshare without understanding the risks. Remind them that photos, locations, or messages can be copied or shared beyond their intended audience. Explain how even private messages or group chats can be saved and/or misused. Talk about what is appropriate to post, message, and who it's safe to share with.

### 3 ENCOURAGE DIGITAL BALANCE

Many apps and games are designed to keep users engaged through rewards, likes, or constant updates. These features can make it hard for children to switch off. Talk openly about how these systems work and help children recognise when it's time to take a break. Building in tech-free routines supports a healthier balance and awareness of their screen time.

### 4 CREATE A SAFE SPACE FOR CONCERNS

When children come to you with a concern, respond with interest and care, rather than with alarm. Keeping your reaction measured helps them feel safe and supported. This doesn't mean ignoring serious issues; it means showing that you're there to help. When children trust that they can speak openly, they're more likely to feel supported through unpleasant online experiences, and to ask for help in future.

### 5 STAY INFORMED AND CURRENT

With emerging technologies like AI moving and changing so quickly, it's important to stay updated on how children are using new platforms, apps and games. Ask them to show you what they use and let them take the lead as you explore together. This opens up valuable conversations and helps you stay ahead of emerging risks and trends.

### 6 TEACH CRITICAL THINKING

Talk to children about how to recognise unreliable information or scams online. With AI-generated videos, photos, and stories becoming harder to spot, help children question what they see and encourage them to look for evidence, check sources, and ask questions. These skills will help them avoid risks, make smart choices, and develop healthy habits for the future.

### 7 SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Involve children in conversations about device usage so they feel included. Agree on digital rules such as screen-time limits, age-appropriate apps, and no devices in bedrooms overnight. Use parental controls to block or filter harmful content and explain that rules are there to protect and support them, not to spoil their fun.

### 8 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children often copy the behaviour of adults around them. Show them what balanced, respectful, and mindful use of technology looks like, such as avoiding scrolling during family time and speaking kindly in messages. If you expect certain behaviour from them online, make sure your own habits reflect the same standards.

### 9 EXPLORE PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER

Show children how to use privacy tools on apps, games, and websites. Teach them to use strong passwords, block or report others in response to problems, and avoid sharing personal details. Explore settings together so they feel confident and in control, and explain that these features are there to help them stay safe online.

### 10 KNOW WHERE TO GET HELP

Familiarise yourself with tools and organisations that support online safety. The National College offers online safety guides and webinars which provide tips on staying safe. Websites like Report Harmful Content and CEOP can be used to report when something goes wrong. Show children how to report or block users, and where to go if they feel unsafe. Make sure they know that asking for help is always the right thing to do, and be prepared to support them.

## Meet Our Expert

Home to the world's largest CPD library for educators, The National College has transformed the way education establishments go about developing their workforces and managing compliance. Our three memberships help all phases and types of setting raise standards, save time, reduce risk, and build a culture of improvement.

See full reference list on our website

PTA

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