

November 2020 Newsletter



The Merton Primary School
To be the best we can be.

Email: admin@merton.leics.sch.uk

Website: www.merton.leics.sch.uk

Dear Parents, Carers and Members of the Community,

I hope you are well and that your child/children are managing to remain positive and happy with everything that is going on around us right now. We are certainly committed to keeping school open wherever possible and continuing to provide a safe, happy environment where children can be educated and have a little piece of normality. One of the key differences to this second National Lockdown is that children are expected to continue to attend school. Whilst many of our systems and routines will remain the same, there are a handful of important changes that we will be making—these are outlined further down this newsletter. I really hope that you can support us with these and wherever possible be understanding.

One large change is the way you will access home learning (see pages 3 & 4). Our new Satchel One platform will allow you to submit work from home whilst enabling teachers to feedback in a much more effective way. In order to access this, please look out for your child's new email details which will be sent to you shortly. Whilst this email has no functionality in terms of children emailing, it will allow you to access both the learning platform and our new live check-ins and feedback sessions (note the latter will only happen if the entire class are at home).

We are saddened that many of our immediate trips and events have had to be cancelled for this term but we are constantly looking at ways of doing things virtually—Children In Need and some of our Christmas ideas will hopefully keep some of the joy alive even if we may not be able to run the usual nativities and concerts! Please stay safe, look after each other and contact us whenever you need us. **Mr Lee**

Key Changes In Response to The Government Lockdown:

- All parents who are not exempt, will be expected to wear a face mask/covering when on school grounds. You will be challenged and/or asked to leave site if you do not follow this rule (from Monday 9th November)
- All non essential clubs will be postponed however Breakfast Club and 5 Star/After School Club will remain open as this is deemed essential child-care
- All school trips up to Christmas have been cancelled
- Remote Learning will be provided for your child within 24 hours of them being off (if they are well). It is essential that you engage with this learning on a daily basis

EYFS Update

As you are aware, Mrs Edwards and Miss Yorke are both due to go on maternity at Christmas. With this in mind we will be introducing you to the new staff over the next few weeks to help both you and the children with this change.

From January, Mrs Edwards class will be taught by Miss Lisa DeBlassio who will be coming into school and meeting parents and children within the next two weeks.

Miss Yorke's and Miss O'Callaghan's class will be taught by Miss O'Callaghan and Mrs Sophia Warren. Miss O'Callaghan will obviously be a familiar face and Mrs Warren will be coming into school for several days over the next term—we will let you know when they are.

Finally, our new TA Mrs Anna Copley who will be working alongside Mrs Hewson, will be starting within the next two weeks so our children will be familiar with the team before we break up for Christmas.

I am confident that the quality of education and your child's experience will remain of the highest quality and that the transition will be smooth and effective.

Children In Need

To support Children In Need this year, on Friday 13th November we will be asking children to come in non-school uniform. There will be a challenge designed by the class relating to the Children In Need theme of 'Act Your Age'. This will take the age of the children in each class and some form of challenge related to this number! Once each class has come up with their idea in school, we'll let you know what it is!! Parent Pay will be set-up from Monday for donations.

Christmas

Whilst we won't be able to run many of our usual communal events this year, we are busy thinking of ways to have fun and bring children and families together in other ways. So far these include Leicestershire Celebrate School's Music and a virtual singing Christmas card!

Remote Learning Reminders

- Ready yourself for a bubble closure or a situation where your child is self-isolating at home by looking at this checklist
- Make sure you can access the Satchel One Learning Platform by following the steps on the next page.
- Keep your log-in details safe and handy
- Inform us of any ICT hardware issues that would prevent you from accessing the platform or our live Teams Check-Ins and Feedback sessions
- Understand that there is a clear expectation for children to engage in live sessions and work set whilst off unless they are unwell
- You do not need to already have Microsoft Teams, you can access any live sessions through the email address sent out to you
- Any Safeguarding concerns should continue to be reported to school even if children are learning from home.

Oxford Owl Online Reading

Should children be forced to stay out of school one of the exciting new platforms we have invested in is the Oxford Owl Reading On-line Platform. You will be sent log-in details which will allow your child/children to access a range of exciting books.

Our staff will support you in using this platform effectively as and when the need arises. It is our intention to use this platform to support reading effectively alongside our new books on a regular basis too!

Open Evening for New Parents

Sadly, we are unable to run any kind of event like this on the school site. We had been waiting to see whether the national picture would improve but this has not been the case. We will however be producing a video presentation and tour which will be on our website in the next two weeks. We will alert you to this and try to communicate details to prospective new parents. Please support us by flagging the video to anyone you know who might be considering the school for their new-starters.

Remote Learning

As we enter another period of National Lockdown, I wanted to clarify that as it stands school will remain open and children will be expected to attend school as normal. We are however looking to make sure that our Home Learning offer is of the highest quality should we be forced to send any year groups home or close as a school.

During lockdown, the school provided Home Learning via the school website. We are writing to you to communicate our new way of sharing Home Learning, via an online platform called Satchel One. There is a clear expectation that children not attending school access high quality Home Learning and so it is essential that you follow the steps in this letter.

Should the whole school or your child's year group go off then there will also be the expectation that you access our Live Daily Check In's and Feedback Sessions via Microsoft Teams – all parents will receive an email address and password sent out 9/11/20. Please log on to this each day if your child is off before 9am and click on the link in the calendar to join the meeting.

Should you not have the ICT resources to support the actions in this letter then please contact the school office to discuss how we can support you. It is essential that ALL children can access this learning if they find themselves at home and well enough to work.

The Satchel One Learning Platform will allow you to see the details of the work your child has been set and enable you to submit work that can be fed back on by the teacher. In order to access this platform you will need to do the following:

- Access the Satchel One log-in screen by Googling Satchel One (www.satchelone.com), clicking on the icon on the school website (once this is live) or downloading the app for phones and tablets
- When asked to log on, choose student and make sure the button 'I already have an account' is checked
- Search for 'The Merton Primary School'
- Click sign in with Office 365, enter your child's login details (these will be sent to you separately via email) and click 'accept' when prompted
- You should now be able to access the platform and any work set

To access any live check in and feedback sessions should the whole class be off, you need to do the following:

- Check the email address that you supplied the school with for the details of your child's email address which gives access to their Teams account
- Make sure you have access to hardware that has a microphone and camera
- Click on the link in the calendar to join the meetings
- Anyone not able to access these sessions will receive a phone call but please join us wherever possible

The platform will go live on Tuesday 10/11/2020. Please remember that this will initially only be used for children who need to access home learning due to self-isolation or bubble closure not for those attending school as normal.

If you or your child have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the school or the team at Show My Homework, who are always happy to help. Just contact the school office or visit help.showmyhomework.co.uk or call 0207 197 9550.

Remote Learning

Home Learning and Satchel One Learning Platform reminders:

- Make sure children are dressed, supervised and not in bedrooms
- Structure your child's day to support both success and mental well-being
- Support your child with their work but don't do it for them!
- Set clear time periods for you child to 'do their best', the teacher will have given an indication of how long each task should take.
- Your teacher will provide 3-4 pieces of work a day, usually Maths, English and another
- This work may be supported by videos and written instructions
- Daily Reading is expected
- The work will be ready by 9am each day
- Feedback will be provided for certain tasks, this may take the form of: Online answers, written feedback, verbal feedback on live sessions, celebration sessions where work is shared.
- For whole class closures there will be a live daily check in time between 8:45am and 10:30am and a live feedback session between 2pm and 3:35pm—all exact times will be communicated to you as and when necessary
- Where the expectation is that work is submitted back to the teacher via the Satchel One platform, this will be made clear
- Written feedback and email communication will only be provided between 9am and 5pm
- We will require daily contact with pupils who aren't in school. If this is not possible through the check-ins described above, there will be phone calls home
- The class emails will remain open for general school and work related issues
- More general questions and concerns should be directed to the admin email address as usual
- Safeguarding issues must be reported to a DSL via telephone. If this is out of hours then you should follow the link on the school's website
- It is expected that you are contactable during the school day
- We ask that work set is completed to the best of your child's ability
- Please communicate with us if your child is struggling to complete any work
- Remember we are here to help and recognise that educating your child from home is not easy! We want to work in partnership to try and get it right for you.

Please get in touch with any questions or queries.