



MERLEY FIRST SCHOOL

Newsletter 16 - 23rd January 2026

It has been a brilliant week across the school this week! Our Reception children embarked on a magical "flight" to the Arctic—or the "pretend Arctic," as they creatively called it—where they explored icy landscapes and sparked their imaginations. Thank you so much to Mrs Horn, one of our Year 3 parents, who brought her day job as a Flight Attendant to Merley First to help bring the experience to life for the children. Meanwhile, Year 4 have been showing fantastic dedication to their multiplication tables. We are particularly proud of the progress shown on their Times Table Rockstars heat maps; this daily practice is key to building the fluency they need as they prepare for their statutory multiplication test at the end of the year.

As a school, both staff and pupils have been discussing our use of the White Rose Maths resources and the positive impact they are having on our learning journey. The children have shared that they much prefer working in the booklets and it is wonderful to see how the White Rose strategies are helping them make clear connections to their prior learning. This week we welcomed another new pupil to our school in Year 2. We now have 293 wonderful children on roll at Merley. Wow!

Finally, please can I remind parents and carers not to park or walk through the staff car park without permission. Staff, visitors and deliveries arrive and leave the site at different times and this area is not for parental use. Thank you for your cooperation.

I hope everyone has a lovely and restful weekend - see you next week!

Rebecca Baldwin

This Week

Reception enjoyed learning about the Arctic.

Year 1 have been dancing to the theme of weather in PE.

Year 2 have explored scientific terms, *living, dead and never alive!*

Year 3 have been broadening their reasoning skills in maths using representations to support their thinking.

Year 4 have been producing their animations in Computing - they are amazing!



Merley PE Kit Expectations

We have noticed an increase in children whose PE kit does not adhere to our uniform expectations. All items of PE kit must be plain. Branded or logoed sportswear is not permitted.

Moving forward, if uniform expectations are not met, we will contact parents to make alternative arrangements. This may include requests to bring the correct items to school or children being provided with clean, loaned kit for the day.

Thank you for your continued support in maintaining our school standards.

Click [here](#) for the uniform expectations.

Safeguarding

10th February is Safer Internet Day and Merley First School will be delivering part of our Internet Safety Curriculum. The theme this year is: Smart tech - safe choices!

The UK Safer Internet Centre encourages you to join us in celebrating by discussing AI technology at home. Here are some helpful resources:

You can complete the [UK Safer Internet Centre's interactive quizzes](#) with your child and read the UK Safer Internet Centre's top tips for parents and carers [here](#).



Attendance

Whole School	97.4%
Reception	97%
Year 1	98.8%
Year 2	97.6%
Year 3	97.4%
Year 4	96.5%

Dates for the Diary

- **NEW** - 3rd February - School Nursing Team - Introduction to Healthy Eating talk for parents/carers 9-10am in school hall
- 9th-13th February - Children's Mental Health week
- **NEW** - 10th February - parental information event on child anxiety with [Rewellness](#) counselling and therapy - school hall - 6:30pm - 7:30pm - all welcome!
- **NEW** - 13th February - wear a scarf to school for World Mental Health Week. Click [here](#) for details
- 16th February - 20th February - Half Term holiday
- 23rd February - INSET Day - school closed to pupils
- 24th, 25th & 27th February - Reception Bikeability - Balance Bike Training
- **NEW** - 3rd & 5th March - Parent Consultations - school hall - more information to follow
- **NEW** - 19th March - Year 3 Birds of Poole Harbour trip
- 30th March - 10th April - School Holidays
- 13th April - INSET Day - school closed to pupils
- 14th April - Back to school for all pupils

A Quick Reminder Regarding Smartwatches

To help keep our classrooms focused and our children safe, we'd like to share a quick reminder regarding our school's policy on wearable technology. While we encourage children to learn to tell the time, smartwatches are not permitted in school. To ensure a distraction-free learning environment, please ensure your child's watch follows these guidelines:

- **Permitted:** Standard analogue or digital watches.
- **Not Permitted:** Any device with internet connectivity, games, messaging, or app features.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation!

Congratulations

The following pupils have been awarded Oak Leaves for demonstrating our values: **Respectful, Engaged and Ready**

YR: Mabel L, Monty R, Lana S, Elodie D, Natalie I & Arthur E

Y1: Millie M, Imrie P, Jamie H, Josie Y, Tobias L & Will P

Y2: Lexi B, Courtney H-C, Esme R, Ada RT, Quinn W & Jake S

Y3: Hollie C, Fred E, Henry S, Eloise K, Evie E & Asher B

Y4: Luke M, Jared S, Dolce W, Dillon E, Elizabeth G & Aurelia K

These children have a Headteacher's Award because they have been recognised for being ready:

YR: Rai S & George F

Y1: Mia H & Luca B

Y2: Reece M & Meredith H

Y3: Hunter L & Jenson D

Y4: Ben W & Sammy W

These pupils have been recognised for fantastic effort in a particular lesson or subject and are Star Learners:

YR: Theo G & Luca D

Y1: Oakley D & Hazel L

Y2: Eva C & Freya H

Y3: Amira L & Robbie W

Y4: Xander BS & Albie G

Off to the Arctic!

Reception had a cool adventure this week as they set off on a pretend trip to the Arctic! The children explored icy landscapes, learned about polar animals, and made sure to wrap up warm for the journey. We were lucky enough to have Sophie as our flight attendant, who even handed out a special treat on board! It was a fantastic way to spark the children's curiosity and imagination—filled with plenty of frosty fun including a story in our igloo!





Merley First School and ReWellness Counselling invite you to our information event to help parents/carers understand anxiety in children and provide practical tools to help at home.

Tuesday 10th Febuary 2026 at 6.30pm in the school hall.

Talk duration - 30 minutes followed by time to discuss and ask questions.

