



MERLEY FIRST SCHOOL

Newsletter 24 - 27th March 2026

It has been a wonderful final week of the Spring term here at Merley! We've enjoyed a fantastic atmosphere across the school but we are all ready for the Easter break. We have some bittersweet news to share regarding our Year 1 team. Mrs. Colton, our wonderful Teaching Assistant, has decided to leave Merley First School to spend more time enjoying her garden and being with her family. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her for the incredible help, support, and kindness she has shown our pupils and staff over the last few years. She will be greatly missed, and we wish her a very happy and relaxing future.

I would like to provide an update regarding the BCP CIL funding bids we submitted earlier this year. Unfortunately, the school was not successful in securing funding this time around however, the PTA was successful in their bid! This funding will be used to make much-needed repairs to our Play Trail. A massive thank you to the PTA for their hard work in submitting this bid. As we look ahead to the new term, please remember that if you plan on taking your child out of school during term time, an absence form must be completed. These are available from the school office or via the Attendance tab on the school website. Have a super Easter holiday, everyone! We look forward to seeing you all refreshed and ready for the Summer term.

Rebecca Baldwin

This Week

Reception have made Easter nests.

Year 1 have been measuring length and height in maths.

Year 2 have been playing shops in maths, practising using money and giving change.

Year 3 have produced some amazing writing about birds found in our local coastal area. They are - and should be - very proud!

Year 4 have been writing brilliant free verse poems about the rainforest.



Attendance

Whole School	95%
Reception	97.6%
Year 1	92.3%
Year 2	94.6%
Year 3	95.6%
Year 4	95%

Our school attendance still remains above the national average so thank you to everyone!

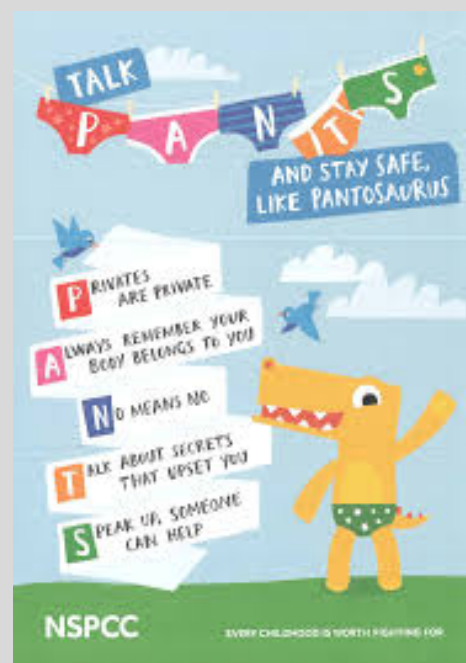


Safeguarding

This term we have been engaging in important conversations regarding appropriate and respectful touch. Using the NSPCC resources, the children have heard the "Pantosaurus" song, which introduces the PANTS rules:

- Privates are private.
- Always remember your body belongs to you.
- No means no.
- Talk about secrets that upset you.
- Speak up, someone can help.

In assembly we have explored, the difference between an appropriate touch (like a high-five or a hug from a loved one) and a touch that makes them feel uncomfortable. Children have been told that they have the right to say "no" to unwanted touch, even from people they know. They have also been encouraged to think about their "trusted adults" are both at school and at home.



Dates for the Diary

- 30th March - 10th April - School Holidays
- 13th April - INSET Day - school closed to pupils
- 14th April - Back to school for all pupils
- **NEW** - 14th April - Reception height and weight checks
- **NEW** - 20th -24th April - Bikeability Level 2 for Year 4
- 20th April - Wheels Playground Opens
- **NEW** - 11th May Class Photographs
- **NEW** - 20th May PTA Disco

Raising funds through Recycling

We've officially installed an Astra Textile recycling bin in the school car park, making it easier than ever to clear out your cupboards while supporting a great cause.

Clothes, shoes, bed linen and accessories can be bagged up and put in the bin. Textiles are then shipped to Eastern Europe and Africa to be used again. Anything we cannot use is sent to companies that can convert the textiles into industrial cleaning wipes or insulation material.

The 1% we can't recycle is collected by Biffa waste. The school receives 10p for every kilo which can be used to purchase resources and materials.



Congratulations

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

YR: Florence S, Natalie I, Blake R, Ida B, Alyssa M & Lana S

Y1: Oakley A Oakley D Josh B, Alex B, Arlo K & Will P

Y2: Arlo H, Quinn W, Bukhosi M, Skylar M, Rex P & Charlotte A

Y3: Fletcher V, Sophie P, Sarah H, Elwyn H, Emilia E & George P

Y4: Bella P, Cici R, Jack W, Remington W, Eliana G & Niamh G

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

YR: Darcey D & Alana G

Y1: River H & Daisy W

Y2: Connie H & Isla T

Y3: Arthur RR & Irelia H

Y4: Ethan N & Micah H

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

YR: Alfie H & Liliana H

Y1: Kieran F & Florence LB

Y2: Ada RT & Courtney HC

Y3: Ruby K & Ellie H

Y4: Tilly H & Samuel W

Merley Local School Committee

I wanted to share a little about my experience as a parent committee member at Merley First School. When the opportunity came up, I was genuinely curious and excited to learn more. I decided to apply and was thrilled to be selected. Now, after being involved for over a year, I can honestly say it's been a rewarding experience.

The termly meetings are fantastic—they give you a real insight into the amazing work the teachers and staff are doing for the children. As a parent, being part of these discussions not only helps you understand what's happening behind the scenes but also gives you a platform to share your perspective and suggest positive changes that can make a difference for the school community.

One thing I really appreciate is that it doesn't require a huge time commitment. It's such a lovely way to stay connected with the school, contribute to helping the children thrive, and really showcase how wonderful Merley First School is. If you've ever thought about getting more involved, I'd encourage you to give it a go—it's a fulfilling way to support the school and your child's journey.

*Best wishes,
Jennie Tofts*

If you are interested in being part of the Local School Committee, please click [here](#) or email the school office asking to be put in touch with the chair, James Tyler.





Pupil Premium Funding

**Improving Educational Outcomes
for all.**

**Are you in receipt of one of the following
benefits?**

Income Support

Income Based Job Seekers Allowance.

**Income related Employment and Support
Allowance**

Universal Credit

**If you are, you can apply for Free School Meals and
Pupil Premium funding for the school. Click [here](#).**

We can then help you by providing:

***50% off the cost of school trips**

*** reduced fee for Early Bird Club**

***free attendance at one other extra-curricular activity
(eg after school clubs)**

***one free school sweatshirt or cardigan per year**

***free milk**

