

Newsletter 1

Friday 8th September 2023

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Welcome Back

I do hope you have all had a restful and relaxing Summer full of adventures and lots of excitement. It has been wonderful to welcome the children back to school for the start of the new academic year. The whole school has been filled with sunshine, the joyful sound of children's voices and a real buzz of positivity and excitement once again.

On Wednesday, we also welcomed our new Reception children as they begin their school careers with us at Monkfield Park. Mrs Sheldon and Mrs O'Rourke are enjoying getting to know the newest members of our school community, and it has been great to see how they are thriving with the care of our wonderful Reception team.

I would like to thank you all for ensuring the children have returned to school wearing the correct school uniform.; they all look so smart and ready to learn.

I would also like to extend a special welcome to all our new families who are joining the Monkfield Park family this week. I hope your journey with us is an exciting, fulfilling and memorable one. Mrs Howell



We do hope you will join us on **Monday 11th September** for our 'Meet the Teacher' event.

This is a great opportunity for you to meet your child's new teacher if you have a child in Years 1 to 6, to learn about the routines and expectations for their class. In their presentations, the teachers will give you important information about the curriculum, homework arrangements, new initiatives and forthcoming events. You will also be able to look around your child's new classroom and explore some of the resources we use in lessons.

We are aware that many of you have children in more than one year group and so each presentation will take place twice. The first presentation will take place immediately after school at 4.00 pm and the second, slightly later, at 5.30 pm.

We are able to provide a limited crèche for this event, for those parents who are unable to make childcare arrangements for school age children and siblings. Please e-mail the school office if you require a place in the crèche for your child. The last presentation will finish at approximately 6.30 pm. If you are unable to attend, we will upload the power-point presentations to our website and Seesaw so that you can enjoy them at your leisure.

Expectations for Attendance

**EVERY
SCHOOL DAY
COUNTS**

Being in school every day that it is open, is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and their wider development. If your child is registered at a school they must by law attend that school regularly and punctually. Your child should only miss school if he or she is ill or unable to attend for some other unavoidable reason. We know that if your child isn't in school for a very good reason, we cannot teach them all that the curriculum asks them to learn, and even small gaps in attendance can make a huge difference to children's understanding and development.

Consequently, the government now classifies persistent absenteeism as 10%, which means that any child with an attendance of less than 90% will be classed as a persistent absentee and will be monitored by our Local Authority Attendance Officer. In these instances the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice.

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These indicate when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't. It's fine to send your child to school with a minor ailment, a cough or common cold, but if they have a fever or high temperature, you should keep them off school until the fever goes. Children who have diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for 48 hours.

Schools are required to ensure that parents are informed of any attendance concerns at an early stage and therefore you will receive an initial communication from us if your child's attendance falls below 96%. This initial letter will be to simply make you aware of your child's attendance level. If concerns persist, then the school will contact you again. If your child's attendance level continues to fall we will contact you to meet with us to explore the reasons and discuss what help can be put in place to increase their attendance.

If your child is struggling to attend school, we will meet with you and your child, if they are old enough, so that we can try to understand the reasons for their absence and what support you or they need to overcome the barriers to attendance they are experiencing.

Last year we received an increasing numbers of requests from families who wished to take holidays or travel abroad in term time. Whilst we understand that holidays taken during the school holiday periods are becoming increasingly expensive, **the governing body is unable to authorise absences in term time other than in exceptional circumstances.** The term dates are available on the school's website and we would ask you to adhere to the school holiday dates when planning holidays and family events.

Parents who take a child out of school in term time for 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) or more over a 4 week period, which are not authorised by the school under the exceptional circumstances rule, may receive a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices will be issued for single event absences of at least 3 consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are deemed to be neither exceptional or unavoidable. Each term we analyse how each class is doing and how many children have been able to achieve 100% attendance.

As always, our expectations for children and families are high and we look forward to a well-attended year. Thank you for your co-operation.

Moving On with Therapeutic Thinking

For the past twelve months we have been implementing Therapeutic Thinking (known as STEPS), the preferred approach to behaviour management within Cambridgeshire which is based on the philosophy "You can't teach children to behave better by making them feel worse. When children feel better, they behave better." It is a relationships-based, therapeutic-thinking and trauma-responsive approach to learning about behaviour. Staff have now had further training so that we are using Therapeutic Thinking to understand what causes positive and helpful behaviour as well as disruptive, difficult or dangerous behaviours. We recognise that all behaviour is communication and work to unpick what each behaviour is telling us, rather than punishing children.

In school we now focus on using a restorative approach, with staff and children working together to re-build relationships and repair any harm done. Staff teach and model positive and helpful behaviour and have developed a consistent approach to managing situations and responding to incidents, using the same language and techniques with a focus on preventing and de-escalating incidents, rather than reacting to them.

Parents and carers can often struggle to understand why their child does the things that they do and why it might sometimes feel that they 'never seem to learn'. The key to understanding children's behaviours and therefore making life a bit easier for everyone, is to understand the 'why'. It's never straight forward but working together with us in school will help your child feel safe, understood and supported.

When we talk to each other regularly about positive behaviours, as well as those that we are wanting to reduce, we start to appreciate all that a child can be. Supporting children to become independent in their positive and helpful behaviours is important. We can do this by helping a child to understand why they are being asked to do something rather than bribing or punishing them with consequences.

Checking Medication Held in School



If your child has an asthma inhaler, epi pen, jext-pen or other medication in school, please can we ask you to contact the school office to check that their medication is still in date and is stored in a clearly named box or bag? All out of date medication will need to be removed and taken to a pharmacy for safe disposal. Please note that we will not be able to administer out of date medication to your child.

Name That Uniform!

Please can you ensure that all items of school uniform and equipment that your child needs for school are clearly named. This does not have to be a sewn in name tape but can simply be your child's name written in pen on the label. It makes it almost impossible to reunite lost/misplaced items with their owners without this. We already have a growing pile of lost property for which we cannot identify the owners. Thank you in anticipation.



Headteacher Roll of Honour

Each week this space will provide a celebration of those classes who may be especially noticed for demonstrating learning or behaviour that we feel should be recognised and commended. This week I would like to congratulate:

Orange and Yellow Classes: Well done to all our new Reception children who have settled in school so well this week. We are so delighted that you have started your learning journey with us.

All the new children who have joined Monkfield Park this week. We are delighted that you have chosen our school and hope you feel welcomed and a part of the Monkfield Park family already. You all seem to be settling in beautifully.



Sentence starters

Ask your Reception child to tell you the name of a new friend they have made at school this week.

Ask your Year 1 child to describe their new classroom for you.

Ask your Year 2 child to explain the difference between the three different types of farm.

Ask your Year 3 child to tell you who the lion man is and what they know about him.

Ask your Year 4 child to explain the difference between an 'invasion' and a 'settlement' in ancient Rome.

Ask your Year 5 child to write today's date in Roman numerals.

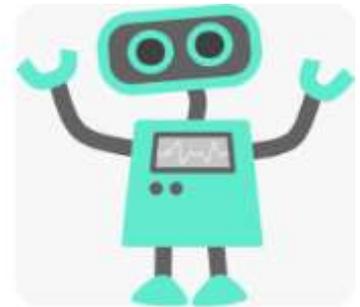
Ask your Year 6 child to tell you some facts they have already learnt about Japan.

Coding Competition

Week beginning 18th September is National Coding Week when we will be thinking about all things to do with computers and coding!

The main theme for this year will be Artificial Intelligence (AI). We will be exploring some key aspects of AI and will look at the benefits, the concerns and the implications for it in our futures. We will also cover other important topics such as digital skills, cyber security and, of course, coding!

Discovery Education is running a competition and it would be great if we could get a few entries for it. Why not start to practise your coding skills at home using Purple Mash in preparation? The Digital Leaders will be sharing more information in school next week.



FORTHCOMING DATES Autumn Term 2023

11th September—Meet the Teacher Event at 4.00pm and 5.30pm

18th September—RWInc evening for new Reception children at 5.30pm

w/c 25th September—Year 6 Bikeability

27th September—Meet the Teacher Evening for Reception parents

29th September—Tour for prospective parents at 10am

29th September—Year 4 Bikeability

4th October—Year 5 and Year 6 Careers' Convention

5th October—Tour for prospective parents at 2.00pm

9th October—Individual school photographs

10th October—5.00pm -7.30pm—Parent consultation evening

11th October—Tour for prospective parents at 9.30am

13th October at 9:15am— Phoenix Class Assembly

16th October—Art Week

18th October—Tour for prospective parents at 2pm

19th October 4pm —7pm—Parent consultation evening

23rd—27th October—HALF TERM

30th October—Children return to school

30th October to 3rd November—Children's Art Gallery

9th November—Open Evening and Tour for prospective parents at 6pm

w/c 13th November—Anti bullying week

17th November—Children in Need Day

17th November at 9.15am—Indigo Class assembly

22nd November—Flu vaccinations for all children

24th November—Tour for prospective parents at 9.30am

4th December —Tour for prospective parents at 2.00pm

12th December at 2pm—Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Carol Concert

13th December at 2pm—Year 1 Nativity Play

13th December at 6pm—Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Carol Concert

14th December at 2pm—Year 1 Nativity Play

14th December at 6pm—Year 3 and Year 4 Carol Concert

20th December—LAST DAY OF AUTUMN TERM

21st December—5th January 2024—CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

For general queries regarding the Care and Learning Centre, please contact the school office by e-mail on: clcoffice@monkfieldpark.cambs.sch.uk or by telephoning 01954 273377.

To speak with a member of the Care and Learning Centre staff please telephone 01954 273301

Welcome Back Everyone!

It has been wonderful to see the children back at pre-school again after the Summer Holidays. They have all settled back so well and have been very busy exploring their new environments and getting to know their new routines. A special, warm welcome to our 13 new children and families who are starting with us over the next week.

We are looking forward to an exciting term of playing and learning together.

Mrs Turner

