



MERTON COURT NEWS

Welcome back!

Improvements in School - Spring 2021

❖ Newly Refurbished Library

Our School library now has a lovely fresh new look with all new bookshelves and seating, along with exciting new fiction and non-fiction, including some great titles inspired by our BLM-related Parent Zoom discussion last term.



❖ Remote Learning

Congratulations to everyone for doing so well and learning new skills during our programme of 'Lockdown Learning'. We are very proud of the way pupils and staff adapted to our virtual-school 'new-normal'.

It is important that as we move out of our remote learning programme, we continue to monitor any potential gaps in the children's learning. This might be due to non-attendance because of medical appointments, illness or interruptions to network services. Teachers will continue to keep clear records of assessment and these will be used over the new term to identify and plan appropriate intervention for any child identified as requiring it.

Now the children are settled back into school, feeling safe and comfortable, we will, shortly, begin our regular formal assessments. Data collected will be extremely useful in enabling us to further implement personalised and targeted learning programmes, should they be required, however results at present suggest that there has been no major falling away of learning during 'zoom-based' lockdown learning. If anything, English results seem slightly improved, which may be due to more opportunities for talking and discussion at home.

❖ **Swimming Update!**

We are delighted that we are now venturing back into the swimming pool, albeit with baby steps! Changed Government guidelines now state that pool load can be increased to 30 children. We will, however, only be swimming one class at a time. To mitigate safety when changing, we have created two additional changing rooms at either end of the J1 corridor, ensuring further space and also privacy for the children.

We appreciate some parents may feel apprehensive about a full restart to swimming, and we fully understand your feelings. Please be assured that you should not feel pressured into making your child/ren swim should you feel uncomfortable with the school's decision to re-commence swimming in this way. Do come and speak to us if you need any clarification or reassurance.

❖ **Sporting achievements - Spring 2021**

S2 SPORTS BADGES:

FOOTBALL	Isaac Fitzsimmons & Noah Grecula
NETBALL	Latika Chandran & Layla Lawrence
SWIMMING	Ayla Rahij & Danny Gannon
HOCKEY	Ashley Michelli & Evie Flashman
CROSS COUNTRY	Gretchen Cheung & Rafi Smith

❖ **Well done also...**

'Most improved swimmer' last term was awarded to Chinweoke Emezie and Kavan Rana in S1 and Olivialove Nwaonuma and Dominic Davies in S2.

'Most Improved Hockey Player' was Yusuf Shariff, Hannah Da Costa won Hockey Player of the Season and the 'Passmore' Hockey Shield was awarded to Leonard Chandran.

'Most promising Sports person' in the Junior School was awarded to Eva Lawrence (J3L/W) and Alexander Greenslade (J3L/W).

Past events - Spring 2021

❖ **House Event Winners:**

English	-	MERTON
Hockey	-	MERTON
Netball	-	SCHOOL
Football	-	MERTON
Merit Shield	-	SCHOOL

❖ **Headmaster's Award Winners**

Junior J1A and J1H and Senior S3S.

❖ **Charities**

'Whitecode Wishes' will be the school's nominated charity for this term. This local charity, with direct links to school, raises funds to provide underprivileged children and their families with toys and gift hampers, which is particularly important at the present time.

During the last Lockdown, Daisy and Poppy baked cakes to sell to raise money for the NHS.

They made 24 cupcakes and sold all but two that landed on the floor! They went to neighbours asking if they would like a cupcake by making a donation. As a result of their hard work, they made £43.80.

Here they are looking very proud with the donation money and cakes – well done, girls!



❖ **Festival of Dance**

We were so glad that our annual Festival of Dance went ahead, despite the pandemic. Congratulations to all of those who took part, for some fantastic performances, particularly the category winners.

'Best of Festival' was awarded to Summer Cambden (S4). 'Best Form Dance' went to J3L/W in the Juniors and S4P in the Seniors. Well done everyone!

❖ **Spelling Bee**

Congratulations to our English Spelling Bee champions last term which was part of our English initiative, Aariya Raichura (J2), Zachary Obasohan (J3), Kavan Rana (S1), Lucas Young (S2), Aidan Chan (S3) and Lenny Shortt (S4).

❖ **Groves Public Speaking Award**

S4 Finalists: Summer Cambden, Daniel Inwang, Neev Manek, Zahra Sameen and Yusuf Shariff presented and debated some very interesting topics including Togo the sled dog, The French Revolution, Austin Russell, Everest and Paricutin. The overall winner of the trophy was Naiya who delivered an excellent talk on Chichen Itza.

❖ **S4 Successes**

Well done to S4 (Yr 6) for their particular successes at Secondary transfer this year and their continued hard work. Seventeen School Scholars' ties have now been awarded in recognition of outstanding academic, dramatic and sporting achievement in external Secondary Transfer examinations and Independent School entrance procedures.

A particular well done to...

Summer in S4, who not only achieved a Scholarship to Tring Park School for Performing Arts, but was equally successful in gaining a coveted and prestigious place at the Royal Ballet school for September 2021.



❖ **Easter Bonnets**

What a lovely end to the Spring term with the children making some fantastic Easter Bonnets for a parade in Yeargroups with Easter eggs for prizes - yum! Well done to all entrants, for their egg-cellent efforts!



School events - Summer 2021

❖ **New Responsibilities in School Summer Term 2021**

Athletics Captain:	Darcey Cross Riyen Pindoria
Cricket Captain:	Gian Sahota
Rounders Captain:	Naiya Patel Ashley Hamad
Dance Captain:	Summer Cambden Joseph FitzGerald

❖ **Science Week– Tuesday 4 - Friday 7 May**

We really are looking forward to Science Term...

‘Necessity is the mother of all inventions.’

- ❖ Science Week will be the week beginning 4th May with the theme of '*Innovating for the Future*'. This theme encourages us to think about the incredible inventions that people have made in the past, which can inspire young people everywhere to innovate for the future!

British people have a long history of innovation and invention. Just how inventive they are, and have been, might surprise you. Many items today were either directly invented by Brits or are derived from previous British invention. According to a Japanese survey, in the last 50 years only, 40% of inventions in the world have come from Great Britain. Just looking back over the past year, the leading role of British scientists and their incredible contribution towards the discovery of a new vaccine against COVID-19, is highly commendable. No better time then for us to celebrate British Inventors and make them the focus of our Science Week.

Each Yeargroup has chosen a British inventor to find out about and they will share their findings with their peers during Science Week. The work will be displayed in the hall and all information will be shared over the term.

The children in KS2 will also participate in online *Enviro-Education Training* to learn what they can do to protect the environment and inspire them to be the leaders of the future.

We are organising a Sunflower Growing Competition to encourage the children to show off their 'green fingers' and grow their own sunflowers. They will be judged, then planted around the school to provide an amazing display and later used for bird feeding.

We have also launched a new 'Sector 4' in our Forest School - an exciting new place of exploration and discoveries for our young Nature enthusiasts.

❖ **S4 Cycling Proficiency - Monday 10 -14 May**

A great opportunity for S4 in preparation for Secondary School and gain cycling confidence.

❖ **S2 Information Evening – Tuesday 11 May (7pm)**

A useful opportunity for S2 Parents to discuss their child's move into Year 5 and Year 6 and also to talk about Secondary School admission procedures with Mr Price and our teaching team.

❖ **Festival of Music (Individual) - Thursday 27 May**

❖ **Festival of Music (Individual & Forms) – Friday 28 May**

Children will have the chance to perform solo or duet in their chosen category to show off their musical skills. Information is available from Mr Reece. Categories and further details will be given out later this term.

❖ **S2/S3/S4 Residential Trips to Norfolk**

Following the disappointment of S4 not being able to go to Spain, S3 not being able to go to France and S2 not going to Downe Activity Centre, due to its closure, we are delighted to announce that S3 and S4 will spend three days and two nights at Hilltop Outdoor Centre. They will be enjoying all the amazing activities that are on offer there, including a giant swing, zip wires, high and low ropes, stunt crash mat, climbing walls and mountain biking.

S2 will also have two days and an overnight stay at the centre with access to all the activities on offer. How exciting! You can even see the sea from the top of the pirate climbing frame! Should be fantastic!

❖ **S4 Leadership and Teamwork Challenge – (Week 1) Monday 7 June – Friday 11 June and (Week 2) Monday 14 June - Friday 18 June.**

One of our most popular and inspiring series of events in Year 6, is our Leadership and Challenge weeks. A global pandemic presented the organisation of this with some fresh challenges – which we have overcome! As well as spending three days outward bounding, S4 will be undertaking appropriately adjusted challenges which this year include; our 'Dragon's Den' Business/Charity Challenge; a DT Challenge; a robotic LEGO Challenge; an Environmental Challenge; a Performing Arts Challenge; a Rifle/Pistol Shooting Challenge; cooking; First-aid and finally our ever popular 'I'm a Yr6 – Get Me Out of Here!'.

❖ **J3 to S1 Transition Talk – Thursday 10 June**

J3 Parents will be able to have a 'zoom' talk about transition between phases. Information will be sent home by Mr Price for parents, via their children. Should parents need to discuss anything further, they are most welcome to make a Covid-safe appointment to talk face to face with any of the school leadership team, using the grey tented area at the front of school.

❖ **EY, J1 & J2 Parents' Evening – Monday 21 June**

❖ **J3 & S1 Parents' Evening – Tuesday 22 June**

These will be on 'zoom', with details sent out prior to the event.

❖ **EY – J1 Transition Meeting – Wednesday 23 June (7pm)**

We pride ourselves on strong transition from our Early Years to Reception, so please listen in to ensure you are ready for the 'next step' in your child/ren's learning journey. This may be a 'zoom' or a live event. TBC

❖ **S2 Parents' Evening – Monday 28 & Tuesday 29 June**

A chance to discuss progress over 'zoom' with form teachers.

❖ **Sports Day – Juniors & S1 – Friday, 2 July (EY, J1 & J2/J3/S1)**

❖ **Sports Day – Seniors (S2-S4) – Saturday 3 July (10am)**

Please note that this is a compulsory event for all children. Children should be addressed appropriately for this event in their athletic kit, including a school baseball cap and white trainers.

All parents are welcome to these Sports Day events that will take place in Yeargroups on Merton and Modern fields.

❖ **S3 Parents' Evening – Monday 5 & Tuesday 6 July**

A chance to discuss progress over 'zoom' with form teachers.

❖ **Whole School Enrichment Week – Monday 12 – Thursday 15 July**

Children will experience working with others to develop trust, communication and teambuilding skills.

❖ **Breaktime Football League Finals – Monday 12 July**

❖ **Breaktime Netball League Finals – Tuesday 13 July**

We are running the breaktime leagues differently this year due to Covid, keeping Yeargroups in their respective 'bubbles'.

We are running our football league for S1 on Mondays and for S2 on Tuesdays. Netball league for S3 will be on Wednesdays and for S4 on Thursdays. Both girls and boys will be involved in all leagues. There are fewer teams, this means there are more matches to play, so more playing time for each pupil. Each team should have a unique alliterative name such as 'Blazing Birds' or 'Creepy Cookies'.

Team work, communication, support for each other and ball skills will be key.

The best four teams in each league will take part in the Play-offs and finals at the end of this term.

❖ **EY New Parents' Induction – Tuesday 13 July**

This is an opportunity for parents of children joining Early Years in September 2021 to come and meet, outside, with Mrs Langton and the Early Years teachers. It's a fabulous opportunity to meet new parents and also to ask any last-minute questions over a cup of coffee.

❖ **'Moving Up' Day – Tuesday 13 July**

This will be an ideal opportunity in the last week of term, for all pupils to meet their new teacher in preparation for the forthcoming academic year 2021-22.

❖ **Final week of Term**

Junior and Senior Prize-givings will hopefully be taking place outdoors during the day, in yeargroups, on Wednesday, 14 July. With the promised relaxing of Covid-19 restrictions all parents are welcome to attend. **FOMC Prom on the Pitch – Thursday 15 July** will have a 'Beach Party' theme with performances by all classes, along with a live band and DJ Tony, so dig out that Hawaiian shirt or skirt!!!

Term will end at 12noon on Friday 16 July.

❖ **Prospective Parents' Open Opportunities**

Open Morning – Saturday 25 September 2021 (9.15am-12noon)

Open Day - Wednesday 17 November 2021 (9.15am-2.30pm)

A reminder that any new parents wishing to look around the school with a view to sending their child here will be able to do so - shown round by members of School staff. Anyone wishing to look around the school is welcome to make an individual appointment to talk with Mr Price (our Headmaster), via the Admissions Team.

❖ **Summer Playscheme 2021 – Monday 19 July - Friday 13 August**

Booking forms will be sent out this half-term. Please try and book in good time, since it is often over-subscribed and places are limited. Our Playscheme Team will be ready to provide an exciting variety of themed activities over the summer holidays.

❖ **Merton Court 'Tiny Tots & Toddlers' Club'**

Mrs Langton will be restarting this fun opportunity for two sessions, once Government guidance relaxes, on Wednesday 23 June and Wednesday 30 June from 1.30 until 2.30pm. This is a great, informal opportunity for new-borns to pre-schoolers and their parents/carers, to experience the school and ask staff any particular questions.

❖ **Merton Court Family Ski Trip 2022**

We have pleasure in confirming the details for the Merton Court School Family Ski Trip 2022, which will be to Maria Alm, Austria, a small, pretty resort in Salzburgerland. We'll be staying (half-board) at the *Hotel Eberlalm*, which is literally on the slopes and is a short ski down to a chair lift!

There's 120km of linked slopes and an impressive lift system at the resort.

There are some brilliant cross-country ski trails in the vicinity and lots of walking, ensuring the resort is a great place for non-skiers too. The transfer from Salzburg is short, taking about an hour. Evening events will include bingo, Easter egg-hunt, quiz, disco, bum-boarding, night-skiing, ski demo-show, movie and games night. The response has already been very good and places may still be available. Details are available from Mr Brady (S3) or via the School Office.

❖ **Staff News**

A truly fond farewell, to Mrs Saunders who leaves us after 34 years of teaching Dance & Drama here at Merton Court. We wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement in North Norfolk. Her enduring legacy is the 'DS', our dedicated dance studio, bearing her initials!



And here's her thank you letter to you all:

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,

I just wanted to say a huge and heartfelt thank you to you all for your very generous gift and kind words on my retirement from school.

I shall miss life at Merton Court and teaching you all very much and once we have finished renovating our cottage in Norfolk, I will buy something to remind me of you and the happy times we've shared.

It is unfortunate that I could not say goodbye to parents in person and I have missed our conversations and interactions during the past year.

I wish you and your families the very best in these challenging times. Stay healthy and happy and I hope to be able to pop in to Merton Court to see everyone in the Summer.

With love and kindest regards

Debbie Saunders

Huge congratulations to Miss Amphlett who had a beautiful baby girl during the Easter holidays – mother and baby are doing well.

We are delighted to welcome back Ms Charlotte Woollard to re-join J3L/W, working alongside Mrs Lord, following her maternity leave.

We also welcome our new staff this term - Mrs Barbara Hammond (B.Ed) as maternity leave cover for Miss Amphlett, Mrs Bonnie Roots (RAD) as our new Ballet, Tap and Dance teacher and Mrs Amy Clarke as a playground supervisor.

❖ **Old Mertonian News**

Louie James (OM '13 -'20), was spotted during lockdown at local cricket nets by a Surrey Coach who wanted to work with him. After a couple of months, Louie was recommended for a sports scholarship at Trinity School, part of the Whitgift Foundation. We are delighted to report that Louie was successful in the application process and will be starting his Sports Scholarship in September 2021. Well done!



Great to hear from the Sullivan family - **Jade (OM '04-'09)** has a degree in Fashion Buying and Brand Management and currently works within the Creative Direction Team at Selfridges as a stylist for the digital photo studio. **Kallum (OM '04-'07)** studied Economics at the University of Kent and now works as the Business Development Manager for Capital Economics, **Brandon (OM '04-'11)** is studying a degree apprenticeship for Quantity Surveying at London Southbank University and **Mason (OM '05-'13)** is an Economics student at Bournemouth University.

Huw Pritchard, who attended Merton Court from September 1969 - July 1971, along with his brother Robert, emailed to say he remembers his first form teacher, Mrs Reid and the then Headmaster, Mr Buckley as well as Mr Terry – whose football shorts he says seemed to be straight out of the photos of 1950s football teams! He still has his copy of *The Ship That Flew* by Hilda Lewis which he received as a prize for Effort in the Upper 3rd, he also won the gym prize. Sure enough, we found pictures of Huw playing chess and his brother, Robert in the cricket team, in our Centenary Book!

Don't forget to log on and have a good look at our up-to-date website on www.mertoncourtprep.co.uk

