



# MERTON COURT

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

CO-EDUCATIONAL DAY PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN AGED 3-11

*WHERE OPPORTUNITIES MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE*



Welcome back to a busy Spring Term 2022 made all the more interesting by the continuing saga of Covid...

Kindest regards

*Dominic King*

### ❖ SAFEGUARDING

We have been working with the children to have respect and tolerance for each other. The children understand that we adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach to bad behaviour, be it physical or emotional. Unkind words can do as much, if not more damage, than a fist. Please remind and encourage your child to seek the help and support of the member of staff on duty straight away so that we may deal with issues immediately.

### ❖ FOOD & MANNERS

Our hot topic this term for our food committee is table manners. It is so important that we sit at a table to eat our meals, as it helps with both posture and digestion. It should also be a sociable and enjoyable event.

Please help and support us by talking about the four statements that we are discussing in lunch this term;

*We remember our pleases and our thank yous.*

*We don't make a mess.*

*We don't talk with our mouths full.*

*We use our partner voices.*

Equally we are promoting and modelling the correct use of knives, forks and spoons and how we hold them correctly.

Your help with this at home would be very much appreciated.

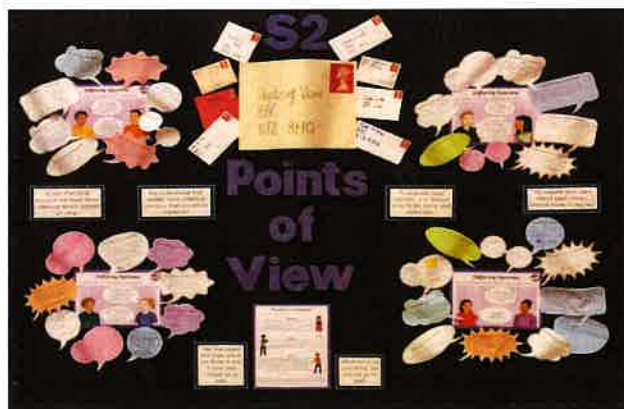
As part of our continuing Relationships & Health Education focus, we will be having a Parent Forum via 'zoom' on Snacks, Lunch, Food and Nutrition on **9 February 2022 at 7.30pm** which Mrs A Macdonald will be leading, with Cathy Cowburn, our school cook, on hand to discuss any questions you might have.

We will also be running another Parent Forum via 'zoom' on **Homework** routines (deferral of homework for co-curricular reasons eg clubs, swimming, gymnastics and the time being taken for homework) along with discussing supervised reading at home and strategies for parents on **23 February 2022 at 7.30pm**.

Mr Barley and Mrs Mephram will be leading this Forum.

### ❖ RELATIONSHIPS & HEALTH EDUCATION

Well done and thank you to everyone for the lovely assemblies and very interesting Hall displays, helping us all to understand more about our similarities and differences, how important friendship is, our uniqueness and the value of togetherness, why we should always try to put ourselves in 'other people's shoes', how we should respect each other's point of view, why developing resilience is so vital and how much community values matter.



## ❖ **SCHOOL COUNCIL**



We had our first school council meeting of the year. Well done to all those J3-S4 representatives who were voted in by their classmates for the year, for sharing their view on important School issues and being so eloquent.

## **IMPROVEMENTS IN SCHOOL SPRING 2022**

We are delighted to have refurbished our front of school Reception area. We have also wind proofed and glazed the outdoor J1 side canopies, to create a better outdoor learning space.

We are always open to new ideas for improvements to our facilities here. Should you have any suggestions for school improvements, please do not hesitate to have a chat with Mr Price or any member of staff.

## ❖ **STAFF NEWS**

Congratulations to Mrs C Jahaj (J3) who completed her in-service Masters degree in Primary Education.

We welcome our new children and their families to School and also welcome new staff joining us this term; Mrs L Smith as maternity cover (EY) and Mrs V Learmouth, who joins us as a Lunchtime Supervisor.

## **PAST EVENTS AUTUMN 2021**

## ❖ **ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

We are very proud of our Yr 6 (S4) children for their effort and hard work, with very strong academic results so far this year, and who continue to sit assessments for secondary transfer. This year was exceptional, to date, with five of our children gaining a 'Top 180' score in the Bexley Test, so a particular well done to them!



At the end of last term, Olivya Isaac and Lilia White were awarded a Drama Scholarship and a Sports Exhibition respectively from Radnor House, Sevenoaks. This brings the current number of scholars ties awarded in Year 6 to seventeen in recognition of success in Independent school assessments and exceptionally high scores in the Bexley & Kent Selective and Bromley Super-selective procedures.

## ❖ SPORTS ACTIVITIES AND SWIMMING

Great to see us back playing fixtures against other schools last term. Sadly, due to the Covid situation, we are unable to play against other schools at this present time, but are hopeful that fixtures will be back after February half term.



Well done to everyone who took part in the Merton Court Swimming Championships, which were exceptionally well attended with 270 entries and including 256 Personal Bests.

Trophies were awarded to:

Senior Boys Champion- Tommaso Etemi

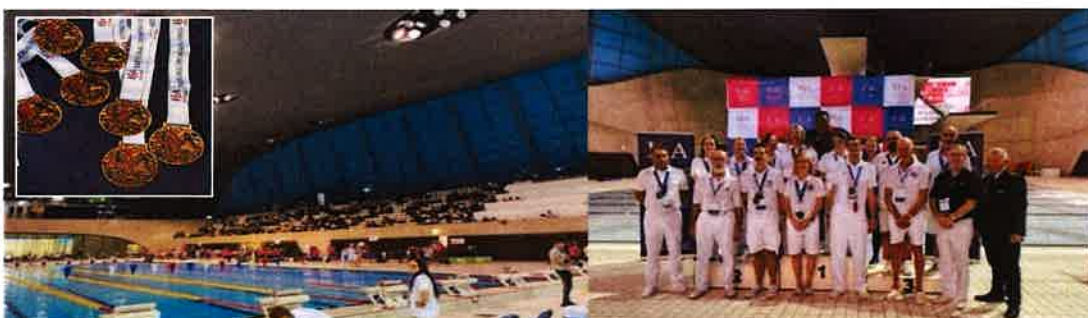
Senior Girls Champion- Lilia White

Junior Champion- Amrit Lalli

Most Improved swimmer – Safia Shiraz

At the Independent Schools Association National Swimming Finals at The Olympic Park Aquatics Centre Callum White (S2) (representing ISA London South) was awarded a bronze medal in the Yr4 Boys breaststroke.

Well done also, to Ella Mott (S2), James Mott (S2), Amrit Lalli (S2), Louis Pompei (S3), Tommaso Etemi (S4), Lilia White (S4) & Charlie Wilson (S4), who all represented London South in the ISA National finals.



On Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> November Merton Court hosted an Inter-schools Cross Country Relay Competition for Yr 5 (S3) & Yr 6 (S4), with eight prep schools competing. Well done to Louie Aletta, Isaac Fitzsimmons, Ashley Michelli & Rafi Smith, our Yr 5 boys' team, for winning their event.



Well done also, to House Cross Country winners in school:

- S1 Alexander Greenslade, Georgia Collings
- S2 James Mott, Jessie Gayler
- S3 Isaac Fitzsimmons, Gretchen Cheung
- S4 Charlie Wilson (Pochin Cup Winner) and Lilia White (Pochin Plate Winner)

The St Ledger Most Improved Rugby Award went to Ethan Pearce.

Chess Winners were:

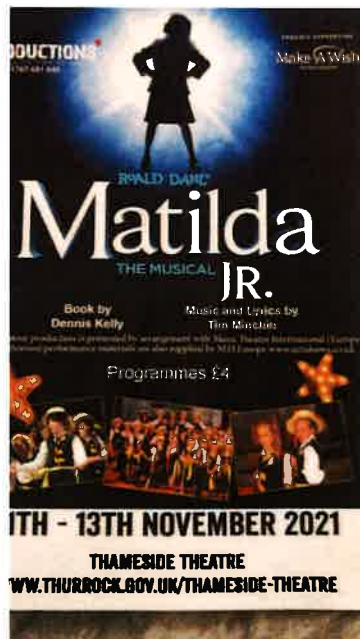
- J3 Maksim Agapov
- S1 Charlie Darsey
- S2 Shaylan Amin
- S3 Rafi Smith
- S4 Ryan Yuan (King's Trophy Winner)

### **HOUSE EVENTS WINNERS:**

Maths:	Merton
Cross Country:	School
Rugby:	School
Merit Shield:	School
Chess:	School

### **❖ THE ARTS**

A big well done goes to Isabella (S2T) who was in the chorus in 'Matilda the Musical' at Thameside Theatre and also to Ava (S2C) who achieved two gold medals for piano at the Beckenham Festival in November and also passed her Grade 7 piano exam.



### **New Responsibilities in school:**

Head boy is Oliver & Head girl is Daisy  
Senior prefects are Luke & Nininola  
Football Captains are Rishi Khosla and Fleur  
Humphreys, Hockey Captains are Lilia  
White and Charlie Wilson.



S2 Badges for sporting excellence were awarded to:

Jessie Gayler, James Mott - Cross Country  
Isabella Costello, Emily Stupart - Netball  
William Chislett, Lucas Sukevicius - Rugby  
Ella Mott, Callum White - Swimming

### ❖ **CHARITIES**

Our charity for the Autumn Term was the British Divers Marine Life Rescue. BDMLR's mission is to provide assistance to any aquatic (marine and fresh water) animals in need of help (24hrs-seven days a week). Seal rescue is a major component of their work with medics rescuing animals in all seasons around the UK.

With the proceeds from the Junior Production, Christmas Jumper Day and S4's stall selling knitted seals, mermaids and bracelets, the grand total was an amazing £1,920.91.

Thank you so much for your continued generosity!

### ❖ **REMEMBRANCE**

Our Annual Remembrance Service was led by S3 (Yr 5), in a thoughtful and poignant way (in the rain too!) in order to help our school community better understand why we wear our poppies on Armistice Day.

Following the service, Layla Lawrence was awarded the 'Shipmates' Remembrance Cup for her contribution to the Remembrance Service and Isaac Fitzsimmons was awarded the British Legion Diamond Jubilee Poppy Project Award for his beautiful poppy project.

Thank you once again for your donations to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal with donations totalling a fantastic £633.68.



### ❖ POETRY & POPPIES WORKSHOP for S2, S3 & S4



On Monday 11th October S2, S3 and S4 enjoyed a drama & poetry workshop entitled 'Poetry and Poppies', which enriched their learning experience of history, performance and literature. It was of particular benefit to S3, who led our Remembrance

service last term so well. The six workshops were delivered by Jessica Aquilina of the 'West End in Schools' theatre group. Jessica recently appeared in the Netflix series 'The Crown' as The Duchess of York, Sarah Ferguson.

### ❖ HARVEST FESTIVAL

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to our lovely Harvest Festival with donations going to the Manna Project and our local foodbank. S4 led our service in St. John's Church, Sidcup, that showcased really beautiful singing by everyone.



### ❖ EY FOREST SCHOOL PARENTS' WORKSHOP



It was lovely to see so many Early Years parents joining their children in Forest School Week. The children had enormous fun showing everyone our three exciting Forest School areas and particularly enjoyed encouraging their mums and dads to try the mudslide!

### ❖ S3 HILLTOP OUTWARD BOUND TRIP

A big well done to S3 who thoroughly enjoyed their residential trip to Norfolk. The high swing was a particular favourite amongst the many other activities.

These children were rewarded with medals at prizegiving for their efforts; Pravit Agrawal, Adrian Barch, Olivia Byrne, Latika Chandran, Noah Grecula, Honor Hastings, Ekam Kaur, Isaac



Fitzsimmons, Ashley Michelli, Layla Lawrence, Arya Owen, Aryan Shaikh, Ethan Truong, Zara Pala and Yunshu Yang.  
Adam Nolan received the S3 Outward Bound Award.

#### ❖ **SPELLING BEE**

In the Maths spelling bee competition last term children were tested on maths vocabulary used in their everyday work and the winners were:

J2 Oliver Cranston  
J3 Anushree Kominek  
S1 Olivia Uba  
S2 Safia Shiraaz  
S3 Prisha Benadikar  
S4 Joachim Wong

#### ❖ **FESTIVAL OF SPEECH, DRAMA AND MIME**

Well done and thank you to all of the children who took part in the first of our termly festivals for the year. As usual, this term will be the Festival of Dance, and Summer term will be the festival of Music. It was really great that parents and family were able join us for individual categories (which is what we also plan for this term). Particular commendations to the winners of the Form Poem Sections – S3B and J2H.

Ryan Yuan won the Price Silver Jubilee Cup for Original Verse and Onali Jayawardhena and Alisa Habarova were joint winners of the Massey Mime Cup. Olivya Isaac was awarded 'Best of Festival'.

#### ❖ **PRIMARY MATHS CHALLENGE**

As usual all children in S4 entered the National Primary Maths Challenge, organised by The Mathematical Association, with excellent results. Gold Award winners were Vishal Nagasundhar & Ryan Yuan. Joachim Wong, Charlie Wilson Onali Jayawardhena & Elinor Micklefield all gained Silver



Awards. Aidan Chan, Dilan Mehmet, Nininola Aiyeola, Elijah Mwenya, Joslyn Tang, Marcel Stepien, Rishi Khosla & Satara Dhesi achieved Bronze. All Gold Medal winners go through to the Primary Maths Challenge Bonus Round next month, we wish them the best of luck! Thanks goes to Mr Patnell for organising a fun Maths Hat Day, during our Maths week last term.

#### **SCHOOL EVENTS SPRING 2022**

##### ❖ **English Week Monday 21 – Friday 25 February**

The twin focuses for English term are **reading** and **etymology**. We will be encouraging the children to read far and wide. Also, each yeargroup will be looking at where in the world our words have come from and presenting an assembly on this.

The events of our forthcoming English Week, Monday 21 – Friday 25 February 2022 are;



Monday 21 February – House English Quiz. S1/2/3/4 (am)  
Tuesday 22 February – Spelling Bee; a mega spelling test to establish a year group spelling champion.  
Thursday 24 February – Readathon  
Friday 25 February - Book character dressing up day – the children should come to school dressed as one of their favourite book characters, with a copy of the book too.

**Thursday 3 March is World Book Day.**

We had hoped to welcome parents/carers to coffee mornings this term to watch children's assembly presentations. Unfortunately, due to Covid, we are not able to allow visitors into school until 24 January 2022, therefore S4 and J3 will be closed events which can be class watched on class Google Drives.

Other coffee morning dates, where we hope to welcome visitors to watch are as follows:

<b>S2</b>	<b>Friday, 28 January</b>
<b>J1</b>	<b>Friday, 4 February</b>
<b>J2</b>	<b>Friday, 11 February</b>
<b>S1</b>	<b>Friday, 4 March</b>
<b>S3</b>	<b>Friday, 11 March</b>

❖ **PROSPECTIVE PARENTS' OPEN OPPORTUNITIES 2022**

**Open Morning: Saturday, 22 January 9.15am – 12 noon**

**Open Evening: Wednesday, 27 April 5.00pm – 8.00pm**

**Open Morning: Saturday, 24 September 9.15am-12 noon**

**Open Day: Wednesday, 16 November 9.15am – 2.30pm**

A reminder that any parents wishing to look round the school with a view to sending their child here should contact the Admissions Team.

❖ **EXPLORERS DRAMA WORKSHOPS (EY, J1, J2 & J3) - Thursday, 10 February**

Our Junior children will take part in an interactive drama workshop where they will navigate the African Jungle! Using drama, dance and singing, the children will embark on an exciting expedition as they become *Jungle Explorers*.

❖ **S4 BRING AND BUY SALE – Friday, 11 February**

Do you have any unwanted Christmas presents or have you had a spring clean over the holidays? If so S4 would welcome your donations. We suggest all children bring in no more than £10 (in change) to spend at the Sale (Juniors especially, please keep it safe in a named purse or wallet).

This is a S4 'Fundraiser' in preparation for their Spanish residential trip to Tossa de Mar in June.

❖ **BOOK CHARACTER DRESSING UP DAY – Friday, 25 February**

Please support our chosen charity this term. 'Beams' is a local charity in Kent that supports disabled children and their families.

Please bring a donation of £2 and come dressed as a character from one of your favourite books - with a copy of the book too!

- ❖ **S4 CYCLING PROFICIENCY WEEK – Monday, 7-11 March**  
A great opportunity for S4 to prepare for Secondary school and gain cycle confidence.
- ❖ **FESTIVAL OF DANCE (Individual & Choreographic) - Thursday, 17 March – 9.00am onwards**  
Why not enter this very popular event?  
Children will have the chance to perform solos, duets, trios or in groups in their chosen category to show off their skills. Categories will be given out later this term.  
**FESTIVAL OF DANCE (Form) – Friday, 18 March (Juniors - 1.40pm & Seniors - 2.15pm)**
- ❖ **GROVES PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION - Tuesday, 22 March**  
S4 battle it out for the coveted Groves Public Speaking Trophy, with a wide variety of chosen topics that they will present to S3.
- ❖ **BREAKTIME HOCKEY LEAGUE**  
It is hoped that following the return of two yeargroup bubbles after halfterm, we will be able to organise some form of Breaktime hockey League. The finals will be on **Wednesday, 23 March at 11am**. It is not essential for children to buy their own sticks unless they wish to, as we have spares in school. Personal sticks should be clearly named, and may be kept in school. Our uniform suppliers 'OZ' also stock hockey sticks. Please remember to wear appropriate footwear. Here's to a great competition!
- ❖ **PRIZEGIVINGS**  
**Thursday 24 March - Juniors (J1 -2pm & J2, J3 - 2.30pm)**  
**Friday 25 March - Seniors (S1,S2 - 9.30am & S3,S4 - 11am)**
- ❖ **PLAYSCHEME 2022**  
**Easter Playscheme 2022 – Monday 28 March - Friday 1 April**  
**Summer Playscheme 2022 – Monday 18 July - Friday 12 August.**  
Booking forms will be sent out the week after February half-term for Easter playscheme and the week after May halfterm for the Summer playscheme. Please try and book in good time, since it is often over-subscribed. The playscheme team will be ready to provide an exciting variety of themed activities over Easter and also in the Summer holidays.
- ❖ **FUTURE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:**  
**S3 Information Evening** Tuesday 25 January  
**S4 SATS Prediction Evening** Tuesday 8 February  
**EY/S3 Parents' Evenings** Monday 7 & Wednesday 9 March  
**S2 Parents' Evening** Monday 14 & Wednesday 15 March  
**S2 Hill Top Residential Trip** Friday 22 & Saturday 23 April  
**Open Evening for prospective parents** Wednesday 27 April  
**S3 Parents Information Evening** Tuesday 3 May  
**S2 Information Evening** Tuesday 10 May  
**S4 SATS Week** Monday 9 – Thursday 12 May  
**The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and School Founders Day – Friday 27 May**

**S4 Leadership and Challenge weeks** 6-10 June & 20-24 June  
**J3 to S1 Transition Evening** Wednesday 8 June  
**Festival of Music (Indiv)** Thursday 9 June and **(Form)** Friday 10 June  
**EY/J1/J2 Parents' Evenings** Monday 13 June  
**EY/J3/S1 Parents' Evenings** Tuesday 14 June  
**S4 Spanish Trip** Monday 13 - Saturday 18 June  
**EY to J1 Transition Talk** Wednesday 22 June  
**S2 Parents Evening** Monday 27 & Tuesday 28 June  
**Junior Sports Day** Thursday 30 June (EY, J1 9.15am) & (J2, J3 11am)  
**Senior Sports Day** Friday 1 July – (S1, S2 10.45am) & (S3, S4 1.45pm)  
**Science Week** 4-8 July  
**S3 Parents' Evening** Monday 4 & Tuesday 5 July  
**School Enrichment Week** 11-14 July  
**EY New Parents Coffee Morning** Tuesday 12 July (9am)  
**Summer Prizegiving** Wednesday 13 July Junior (2pm) & Senior (7pm)  
**'Prom on the Pitch'(5.30-9pm), including a whole school Summer Musical Review** Thursday 14 July (from 6.30pm.)

Please do check our up-to-date website [www.mertoncourtprep.co.uk](http://www.mertoncourtprep.co.uk) for any dates and future events throughout 2022 and beyond. If you wish to access additional information and some great form photos, visit the secure 'Parents' section. Please email [office@mertoncourtprep.co.uk](mailto:office@mertoncourtprep.co.uk) or telephone the school office if you require the password.

#### ❖ **FRIENDS OF MERTON COURT**

Sincere thanks to FOMC for bringing the whole school community together for a wonderful evening of fun and fireworks at our annual Bonfire Night.

Equally, our FOMC Christmas Bazaar (in year group bubbles) was thoroughly enjoyed by the children and a great success.



#### ❖ **ODDBALL BOBBLE HATS**



We still have a few Merton Court Oddball bobble hats for sale (Medium & Large) at £10 each. Please call the School Office if you would like to purchase one.

❖ **SCHOOL POLICIES**

Our statutory policies and a list of all our policies are on our school website - should you require a copy of any of these, please contact the School Office.

❖ **OLD MERTONIAN NEWS**

Mr Price received a lovely letter and photo of Merton Court in 1899 from the Pillman family, showing founding Headmaster JWE Pearce and his first pupils. Joseph Pillman aged 10 is standing behind the left shoulder of Mr. Pearce. Charles and Robert Pillman are number 2 and 3 on the back row and their cousin, Charles Bearblock is kneeling, front row. Tragically, both Robert Pillman and Charles Bearblock were killed in action in the First World War. You will notice the red caps and boaters haven't changed!



**An-Nhi Huynh (OM '13 - '16)** sent us her news in a Christmas card, telling us of great GSCE results - achieving 11 grade 9's - how fantastic! She is continuing with her A Levels at Colfe's School studying Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Art and hopes to study Medicine at University. She also recently trained and qualified to become a Covid vaccinator.

We wish **Stephanie Affleck OM ('96-'98)** the very best of luck as a contestant in this current series of The Apprentice 2022.

Great to see **Billy Mitchell (OM '03-12)** in action against Crystal Palace last week playing for Millwall. Here is a picture of Mrs Richardson's daughter, Rosie, getting her Millwall shirt autographed by Billy. **Zack Mitchell (OM '08 - '16)** continues to do well in his football career too, playing in the England under 17s team and he is currently playing for the Charlton Athletic Youth Team.



It was fantastic to catch up with **George Davies (OM '11 - '15)** who has been completing basic training before being assigned to a new regiment in the British Army-he is particularly interested in pursuing Mechanical Engineering (especially tanks!). Here he is with his platoon, looking very proud (Top row -3<sup>rd</sup> from left).



It really is great receiving news from past pupils!