



Merrow Schools Federation Bulletin - Autumn 2022

2nd December 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Here we are in December already! Things are getting very festive at our schools and the children are very excited for the events of the next couple of weeks. I must start by mentioning the Christmas Fair that took place last Saturday. It was such a fantastic event and we welcomed so many families from our schools and the community. A huge thank you to the PTA who put in so much time and effort to ensure its success. Thanks also to all the staff for their help, the Bushy choir and all the parents/pupils who ran the stalls. Early indications suggest we raised nearly £3,000 - absolutely amazing!

This term is fast coming to a close, although much excitement to come over the next couple of weeks. Thank you to everyone who entered the schools in the Christmas Tree competition - both schools won a real tree and they are proudly displayed! A huge thank you to Miss Cobbett for crocheting some wonderful decorations.

The schools have enjoyed working more closely together and our staff training and shared staff is allowing for policies and procedures to be aligned for consistency. I have thoroughly enjoyed working at Merrow and getting to know all the children and families - thank you for making me feel so welcome. Going forward, I will be based at Merrow on Mondays and Thursdays, with meetings etc in between.

Christmas is a time for giving, and quite often staff are given very generous gifts from parents. There is absolutely no obligation to do this - and we are conscious of the financial situation, so please do not feel you need to give donations etc.

Safety First

Two areas of concern to raise with you this week.

1. Road Safety on Merrow Street: we have had reports of children not walking safely down the road. Please remember it is a road, albeit a quiet one, so expect cars and behave accordingly.
2. Please do not let other people into the school if you have been let in (i.e. if you are waiting in the office). This is a Safeguarding matter and the schools should know who is in the buildings at all times.
3. At Merrow, until gates are locked, you must use these to exit - please do not go through the office.

Books - reading scheme

Please take time this weekend to look for any school books that may be at home, particularly any Little Wandle books. These are very expensive and are crucial to the teaching of phonics/reading so we would appreciate they are respected and returned in a timely manner.

Books - a plea

If you have any Russian, Mandarin or Cantonese books at home that you no longer need, please can you donate these to school for our children. Also, if any of our EAL families would like to recommend books for us to buy, that would be appreciated.

Communication Friendly school

I am delighted to announce that after a couple of years of hard work, Bushy Hill has been successful in gaining Elklan Communication Friendly Status! Thank you to all the staff for their dedication and commitment to making the setting a better place for children with Speech Language and Communication Needs to learn and develop.



These strategies will support children across both of our schools. A huge thank you to Mrs Aldridge for leading on this initiative.

Disco time!

The junior children had a brilliant time last Thursday in the (incredibly hot and loud!) hall. Great dancing and competitions kept the children entertained. Thank you to the PTA for organising this - the children loved it!

English workshop

Thank you to those who attended the informative English workshop last week. If you were not able to attend, please follow the link to our website, where you can access the presentations:

<https://www.bushy-hill.surrey.sch.uk/curriculum-parent-support/reading>

Thank you to Mrs Friend-Smith, Mrs Dawson and Mrs Bowyer for organising the workshop.

Fantastic Friday

What a fantastic day Bushy children (and staff!) had last Friday. There was glitter galore, delicious cheesecakes (thank you for making me a 'spare'!!), lots of sport and Christmas Craft to name but a few.

Thank you for all the help from staff, governors and parents - we couldn't organise this without you. Particular thanks to Mrs Mazur and Mrs Thomson for co-ordinating the day's events.

Financial crisis

As I am sure you are aware, we are experiencing a cost of living crisis. Many of you will be facing difficult financial decisions of your own, with rising energy bills and food prices. I regret to inform you that the school's budget is also affected by these economic circumstances, and our funding has not been increased to cover the additional expense. As a consequence, we must make savings in our budget to avoid a shortfall.

I would like to assure you that our first priority when making these difficult decisions is to provide your child with the best possible education. We will also ensure that our pupils continue to be comfortable, healthy and safe in school.

Our governing board and senior leadership team will be working hard to minimise the impact on our pupils and make fair and appropriate decisions.

If you are able, please consider helping us through this challenging time by continuing to supplement the cost of school trips and extra-curricular activities. If you have financial management experience, we would be particularly interested in you joining our board of governors. You might also consider writing to your MP to express your concern.

Thank you for your understanding and support. I will keep you informed with regular updates via the school newsletter.

Lunches at Bushy

A reminder that if you wish your child to move from packed lunch to school dinners or vice versa, you must give the office at least one week's notice. There is quite a lot of admin etc involved, so we ask that your child remains on their choice for a period of time.

Open Classrooms

Thank you to all those who were able to visit Bushy yesterday to see your child's work - it was lovely to welcome so many. We will repeat this at a different time of the day next term, and if you have any other suggestions, I would be interested to hear your feedback.

A note about taking photos. It was observed that some photos were taken of displays - please check that you only have records of your own child's work.

Merrow's Open Classroom will be next Thursday after school.

Open the Book



On Wednesday, Merrow welcomed Hannah and her friends from St John's for the first ever 'Open the Book'. These assemblies are the opportunity for the children to learn about stories from the Bible. This week we heard about 'the special one sent from God' and how Jesus was baptised by John. We learnt that this is the reason Christians celebrate Christmas - a time to remember that Jesus is special.

We also found out that John enjoyed eating locusts for his lunch! The children weren't keen on that! The visitors were very impressed by the children's singing!

Poppy Appeal

Thank you for your generous donations this year - the schools raised around £641.00 towards this worthy cause.

Rabbi visit - Year 5

Last Thursday we had Rabbi Alex Goldberg come in to talk to year 5 about Judaism. He spoke to the children about the synagogue, Shabbat, the Torah and some other practices that Jewish people have and the laws they follow. The children asked lots of really good questions and were able to write a lot about what they had learnt in their books afterwards. The Rabbi commented on the 'nice atmosphere' in the school.



Roadworks

We really are spoiled at the moment with roadworks and am sure you are fed up with the horrendous traffic! There is more to come I'm afraid ... Please click on the link to find out about planned roadworks in the new year:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/roadworks/london-road,-burpham-active-travel-scheme2#programme>

Tretower Development

We met with Joe Jelley this week who updated us with his plans for construction. He has assured us that he has considered the schools and safety, as well as the sustainability of the project. He is very keen to ensure we have clear communication throughout the project, which is due to start in mid to late January. We will keep you updated with any developments.

Volunteers

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to help out at lunch, with readers etc. Please let us know if you are able to help - any time would be really appreciated.

Safeguarding, Child Protection and Wellbeing

[Tik Tok bans live streaming](#)

[Reducing conflict between parents](#)

Community News

Surrey County Council's 'Ally and supporter' sessions are predominately aimed at the parents and carers of LGBTQ+ young people and young adults. We strive to provide a safe, welcoming and judgement-free space for them to explore their journey whilst providing them with the tools and knowledge to support an LGBTQ+ person. Sessions run on a fortnightly basis with a topic decided by the identified needs of LGBTQ+ people, either from young people accessing Twister youth services and alongside questions raised by parents and carers in the community.

Whilst professionals guide the session, this is primarily a space for parents and carers to ask questions, share their experiences and meet other people navigating similar journeys. For more information contact Molly White, LGBT Youth worker and lead on the group at molly.white@surreycc.gov.uk.

Encore Drama Classes

Session Info

Due to the success and of positive feedback from the parents and carers of previous participants regarding our sessions earlier this year, we are extremely excited to present to you this fresh and new Encore! offering. The sessions will be running from 10:00-11:15am in our Bellerby Studio.


Meet The Team!

Our fabulous new teacher Jessica will be leading this brand-new and exciting 10-week term as part of our ongoing delivery of the Encore! programme. Jess has run a variety of successful workshop programmes for schools, such as devising and directing Roald Dahl adaptations for children to perform on a professional stage and leading Wellbeing Warriors to aid students' mental health. Like us, Jess is passionate about making theatre accessible to all and firmly believes in the positive power of the Arts in promoting joy, well-being, and life skills. Please feel free to read more about Jess and the Creative Learning team in the attached document.

<https://glive.co.uk/online/tickets-encore-drama-classes-guildford-spring2023>

Please [Click here for Twelve15's Parent/Carer December Newsletter](#)

Thank you for your support - have a great weekend!



Mrs L. Dormer
Executive Head Teacher