

Thursday 16th January 2025



Newsletter 3 - January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are delighted to welcome everyone back to the Spring term! Though last week's snow and ice didn't quite match the season's name, the children adapted wonderfully and understood the need to stay indoors to ensure everyone's safety. A big thank you to Mr Pritchard for being so amazing during the bad weather and single-handedly clearing the pathways in and around school.

It was certainly a shock to the system for me after the relaxed mornings of the Christmas break—an early rise to check on the school site quickly brought me back into term-time mode! That said, it was a delight to witness the beauty of the early morning sky, so I thought I'd share it with you.



Despite the weather, the children were all happy to see each other after the Christmas break and it was lovely to hear them sharing stories of their holiday.



A Spotlight on Reading

I make no apology for beginning this newsletter by highlighting the importance of reading—it's absolutely essential that all our children develop a love of books and strong reading skills before they leave our school. To become confident readers, children need regular practice, both in school and at home.

That is why I encourage you to make reading with your child one of your New Year's resolutions for 2025. While reading every evening is ideal, we recommend our "Strive for 5" goal—five reading sessions a week. Every time your child reads at home, be sure to log it in their reading diary. Each entry earns them a ticket for our reading raffle at the end of the half-term! There is a notable difference between the progress children make in their reading if they read at home as well as at school.

In school, the children read four times a week. These sessions are prioritised and each reading session has a different focus:

Day 1 – Decoding and Prediction

Day 2- Fluency

Day 3 – Prosody (reading with expression)

Day 4- Comprehension

If you'd like support or advice about reading with your child, please don't hesitate to reach out to their class teacher. This can be done by contacting the school office. Additionally, the link below provides helpful guidance and videos connected to the accredited phonics and reading scheme we use in school:

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

Don't forget to check out our school website under the curriculum section to find out what learning will take place this term for your child.

Online Safety

With many children receiving devices or games as gifts over the holidays, it's more important than ever to ensure their digital experiences are safe and age-appropriate. Limit screen time to support healthy communication skills and prevent technology from overshadowing valuable family moments. Set clear boundaries and only allow access to games designed for their age group. Games rated for older children often include inappropriate language and content that can confuse or even distress young minds. Occasionally children use swear words in school and parents are surprised by this. When explored, the use of these words can be traced back to games they are playing when using technology. Be proactive by enabling parental restrictions to block unsuitable content and checking your child's online activities. For more guidance on managing online safety risks, visit trusted resources like [Internet Matters](#) or [Childnet](#).



See attached guidance



Place2Be Children's Mental Health Week 3rd-7th February

This year we will once again be participating in Children's Mental Health Week. This year's theme is Know Yourself, Grow Yourself. The focus is about children being self-aware, knowing what they are good at, what they find difficult, what makes them feel happy and what causes them sadness. Primarily, we will be sharing with the children the importance of talking about knowing ourselves, recognising when we don't feel right and talking about our feelings.

On **Monday 3rd February**, to kick off this meaningful week, we invite all children to come to school dressed in something that celebrates their uniqueness. This could be their favourite outfit, something that represents a special talent, or simply attire that reflects their individuality. Whether it's a passion for sports, music, art, or any other interest, this is a wonderful opportunity for our children to express themselves and showcase what makes them special. We will have a special assembly and children will be exploring this topic in their classes.

There are lots of practical resources for parents that can be found on the Place2Be website. The parenting tips have been written by child mental health experts.

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/>

On a similar theme, I wanted to highlight to you a new resource for parents/carers which is called Branch. Branch is an online mental wellbeing hub for children and young people in Wirral, from 0 all the way to 18 (and up to 25 with additional needs). It doesn't deliver services directly – it's more of a guide, helping people to find the best tools and local support.

It can be used for any child or young person, no matter how big or small their worries feel. It's packed with tips to help them feel better and, when they need a bit of extra support, gives simple routes into local services.

Branch doesn't offer crisis support but has information on where to get help in an emergency. **The website is branch-wirral.co.uk**

Mental Health Support Team

Please join us on Monday 10th February for our parents/carers workshop. The focus of the workshop is "Helping your child with their worries". The session will be led by a Mental Health Support worker and will begin at 9am in the annexe. If you would like to join the workshop then please email the school office and register your interest.



LA Review of our Early Years Provision

This week we had a Local Authority Early Years review. This involved an evaluation of planning, teaching, learning, children's progress and provision. The review was very positive and went exceptionally well. The next steps for our Early Years is to continue to improve our outdoor provision for the children which I am pleased to say we were working on already.

If you have a child who is due to begin school in F1 in September 2025 then please pop in and sign them up as soon as you can.

World Book Week (3rd-7th March)



Our World Book Week this year is starting in a slightly different way. We are having a live theatre performance of the story Rumpelstiltskin. This will be a great way to bring stories alive for the children.

We also invite children to come dressed up on **Thursday 6th March** as their favourite book character and we will have our annual World Book Day parade.

Another new idea for World Book Week is having a "Masked Reader" who will read a story to the children each day and the children will have to guess who the reader is. If you would like to be one of our masked readers then we'd love to hear from you!

Attendance and Punctuality

Securing good school attendance for all children continues to be a priority for us as a school. You will have received your child's attendance certificate for the Autumn Term. As a Local Authority school we work closely with an attendance officer who monitors our whole school attendance and the attendance of individual children.

Absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances and unfortunately some fines have had to be issued to parents/carers because of the new guidelines which we shared with you last term.

Here is a reminder of school opening and closing times. Doors open **for all classes at 8:40am** (except F1 which is 8:45am). The doors will remain open until 8:55am and then the doors will be closed. Registers will be taken at 8:55am and any child arriving after 9am will be marked as late (L) in the register. In line with recommendations from the Department for Education (DfE), registers will close at 9:30 a.m. If children arrive after this time, they will be recorded as having arrived after closure of registers (code U). This counts as an unauthorised absence for that session. If children are late on ten or more occasions then a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued.

School finishes for all children at 3:10pm (F1 3pm). If you are going to be late collecting your child from school then please let us know so that we can provide reassurance to your child.

Learning does begin for children from 8:40am. If your child is in early they will receive more learning! Do try and get your children into school as early as possible so that they can benefit from our morning activities.

PE days for this half-term

Friday is PE day for everyone in school. On PE days children should come to school dressed in PE kit. Our school PE kit is a white, plain t-shirt, navy or black shorts/joggers/leggings and a dark coloured hoody/zip up or school sweatshirt. Football kits should not be worn.

Lost Property

Please continue to label all items of your children's clothing including any clothing worn for PE clearly with their name, so if found then the item can be easily returned to the rightful owner. Please remind your child that they must take responsibility for their property too.

Trophies

In our weekly celebration assembly we give out trophies to children. Unfortunately, many of our trophies have not been returned and we are now missing some. I would be grateful if you could check at home whether you have any of our trophies and return them to school as soon as possible so other children can experience the delight of receiving one.

Rainy Day bags

A rainy day bag is used in school when the weather is too bad to play outside. It contains a small number of toys/resources that your child brings in from home that they can play with during playtimes. If your child hasn't got their own rainy day bag in school please can you send one in. Ask your child's class teacher if you are unsure about the contents. You may also want to ask your child to bring their bag home to replenish or replace some of the toys.

Stay and Play

If you have a younger child then please come to the Stay and Play sessions that are happening in our Annexe (Out of School Club building). The sessions are organised by School Readiness workers and they take place on a Wednesday at 10:30-11:30am.

Diary dates

January

- Monday 27th January Chinese New Year assembly (visitor)

February

- w/c Monday 3rd February - Children's Mental Health Week
- Monday 3rd February - Non uniform (See information above)

- Monday 10th February MHST - 9:00am Parent coffee morning- Helping my child with worries
- Tuesday 11th February - F2-Yr2 Visit to St Michael's church.
- Tuesday 11th February - Safer Internet Day
- Friday 14th February - Non Uniform Day (£1 donation to school fund)
Children finish for half-term
- Monday 24th February - Children return to school

March

- Monday 3rd March - Live theatre performance
- Thursday 6th March World Book Day (Children dress up as story book characters)
- w/c 24th March Parent/Teacher Week

April

- Wednesday 2nd April - Rock Steady Concert @ 2:15pm (Invited parents/carers only)
- Friday 4th April - Easter Bonnet Parade and finish for Easter holidays
- Tuesday 22nd April - Children return to school after the Easter holidays

May

- Friday 23rd May - Staff Development Day

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Morris
Headteacher