



Merry Hill Matters

Issue 16 - 10th September 2004

Dear Parents

www.merryhill.org.uk

The Merry Hill website is now up and running. Please visit it and let me have your comments, but remember, it is still 'Under Construction!'

The one with the jam and sardine sandwich
Assemblies this week have focused on 'The Golden Rules' (see the outside notice board). Ask your child about the assembly with the jam and sardine sandwich!

New to Year 1

Some parents of Year 1 children have asked whether their children need to keep Wellington boots at school all the time - and the answer is no. If the children are going to take part in an outdoor activity which requires Wellington boots, the class teacher will let you know.

After School Activity Clubs

With this Newsletter you will find another letter designed to assess parental interest in After School Activity Clubs. Please could I have your replies by the 17th September?

eLCs - We spent them!

eLearning credits (eLCs) are ring fenced funds from Government which can only be spent on educational software, CD-ROMs etc from approved suppliers. The allocation for this year had to be spent by August 31st. Schools that did not spend their eLCs lost them!

As a staff we decided to buy a range of software including *Handwriting for Windows*, *Thomas the Clown*, *Arthur's Thinking Games*, *Arthur's Reading Games*, *Issy's Island*, *Milly's Maths House*, *Word Shark*, *Number Shark*, *Garden Wildlife*, *Seashore Wildlife*, *Scalley's World of Problems*, *Granny's Garden*, *Storybook Weaver*, *Literacy Box*, *Black Cat Compose* and *Rainbow Fish*. We are looking forward to starting to use this software with your children

Top Table

Friday's are going to see an interesting innovation. I am going to set up a 'Top Table' to reward those children who have been especially well-behaved and shown good manners whilst eating their lunch for the rest of the week and I will eat school dinners with those children.

Say It With Flowers

Are you green fingered? If you are then perhaps you can help. I would like to put a small vase of flowers or pretty pot plant on each table at lunchtime and I need someone to provide the flowers and plants! If you think you can help please let me know.

Merry Hill Charities for 2004/5

At Merry Hill we encourage the children to think of others. As part of this we would like to choose three charities for the children to support during this academic year - one international, one national and one local.

An international charity

During Harvest Festival this year we would like to support the *Seeds for Africa* charity. *Seeds for Africa* aims to help needy African families by the provision of vegetable seeds, agricultural equipment and relevant technical advice. Alan Titchmarsh is the patron. You can find more information about *Seeds for Africa* on their website <http://www.seedsforafrica.org>

A National Charity and a Local Charity

I would like to invite parents to help us choose a national and a local charity for the children to support. This could be one you feel is particularly deserving, or may be one that you work for. Please send nominations, on the attached form, direct to me, by the end of September. I will inform parents of the outcome as soon as possible after that.

Medicines in School

Most children will at some time have a medical condition that may affect their participation in school activities. However, please note that there is no legal duty which requires school staff to administer medication; this is a voluntary role.

Short-Term Medical Needs

Where possible, medication should be prescribed in dose frequencies which enable it to be taken outside of school hours. You are encouraged to ask the prescribing doctor or dentist about this. Please note that we cannot give non-prescribed medication (for example Calpol) to children.

Long-Term Medical Needs

It is important for us to have sufficient information about the medical condition of any child with long term medical needs. If it is absolutely essential that your child has medication we must have your written consent before we can administer it. Forms for this are available from Mrs Eells in the school office.

Community News

Mobile Phone Masts

Several parents have expressed anxiety over proposals to site two telecommunication masts at Bushey Golf Club. If you want to object to these masts there is further information and a petition in Bushey Post Office. The O2 Plan Number is 2004-0871 and the deadline for objections is 16th September. The T Mobile Plan Number is 2004-0959 and the deadline is 17th October.

Are You on a Low Income?

If your family has a low income Children, Schools and Families (CSF) may be able to give you financial assistance while your children are learning. Details are available either from Mrs Eells in the school office, by phoning the CSF Helpline on 01923 471500 or at www.hertsdirect.org/csf

Netmums

www.netmums.com is a local network for mums set up, on a voluntary basis, by local mums to provide information and support in our area and to encourage a sense of community spirit. It is part of the national network of more than 60 netmums sites with 30,000+ registered users. Whether you're desperate for somewhere new to take the kids or would like to make some new friends in your area, netmums may have the answer.

Parenting Programmes

Do you have children aged 0-6? If you have, and would like to meet with other parents and share parenting skills, then courses being held at Bushey Grove Leisure Centre on Friday afternoons from 12.45-2.45 could be for you! For further details contact Sue Leader on 01923 243568.

A Free Introduction to T'ai Chi

For several years there have been regular evening T'ai Chi classes for adults at Merry Hill. Robert King, Senior Instructor of the Golden Flower T'ai Chi Association (UK) will be giving a Free Demonstration and Talk on Mon 4th Oct at 7.45pm in the school hall. A 9 week introductory course begins the following Mon 11th Oct. Classes at 6.15pm & 8pm. For further details contact Robert on 020 8950 9131 or at robert@goldenflower.co.uk

FREE Medieval Moatfield Event Saturday 18th September

10.00 - 3.00pm

Go along to The Moatfield in Bournehall Lane and learn about local history on your doorstep. Activities include pottery making, music and dance, mock jousting, alchemy, dressing up, archaeology and more. For further information please contact Fiona Leadley, Hertsmere Borough Council, on Freephone 0800 731 1810.

A Sad Final Note

Staff were saddened this week to discover that the children's outdoor playhouse had been broken into and the toys vandalised. Matches were used, which in a wooden playhouse is obviously a potential fire hazard.

The result of the vandalism is that a number of dolls and some play equipment will need to be replaced at the school's expense.

The vandalism appears to be the work of a handful of local youths. Therefore please could we ask you to be vigilant after school hours and at weekends and contact the police on our behalf if you see or hear anything suspicious?

Finally, if you have any dolls or dolls clothes which are surplus to requirements please would you pass them to Miss Cooper.

Pauline Hannibal
Headteacher