

Learning for life!

Meridian Newsletter

Term 3

Monday 5th January – Friday 13th February

Term 4

Monday 23rd February to Friday 27th March

www.meridianschool.co.uk



Meridian Community Primary School and Nursery



@MeridianCPS

Friday 9th January 2026

HEADTEACHER UPDATE

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year! I hope you had good break over the Christmas holidays.

It was lovely to welcome the children back this week ready to start the spring terms.

Welcome Back!

Welcome back to Mrs. Middleton who has returned to work following maternity leave. For the spring terms Mrs. Middleton will be supporting children in Years 4 and 5 with booster sessions and in class. It's great to have her back!

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Nadia (Nursery Teacher and EYFS Lead) who got married in the Christmas holidays – a lovely winter wedding! Nadia's full name will now be Mrs. Nadia Pentland-Lee.

School closures due to extreme weather conditions

Hopefully we have been lucky enough to miss the extreme weather other parts of the country are experiencing, including snow. Wherever possible, we try to keep the school open but occasionally a decision will be made to close based on extreme conditions that impact on the safety of the children and staff. This also includes considering staff travelling to and from school. If we need to close the school, parents/carers would be informed as soon as possible via the school jotter and website. So please do make sure you have the most up to date version of our school jotter app so that you do not miss any important communications. Fingers crossed we won't need to close the school!

I hope you have a lovely weekend and look forward to another busy week in school next week!

Take care and best wishes



Miss. Claire Westcott
Headteacher

strength

respect



kindness

honesty

responsibility



TERM DATES 2025/2026

Term 3

Monday 5th January – Friday 13th February
INSET DAY – Monday 5th January
Children back to school on Tuesday 6th January

Term 4

Monday 23rd February – Friday 27th March

Term 5

Monday 13th April – Friday 22nd May

Term 6

Monday 1st June – Wednesday 22nd July
INSET DAY – Wednesday 22nd July

**Please note all INSET days have been set
for 2025/2026**

KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE Safeguarding at Meridian

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child that attends Meridian, please do contact one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs. Lucy Newth

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Ms. Claire Westcott, Mrs. Helen Mapp,
Mr. Jon Barcock, Miss. Ciara Smiles, Miss. Nadia
Pentland, Miss. Laura Miles

**During the school holidays, please contact:
Single Point of Advice (SPOA) on 01323 464222**

If you have an immediate or emergency concern about a child's safety, please call 999.

The NSPCC has advice about this on their website [here](#).

KEY DATES

05.01 School closed for INSET training for staff

06.01 Children back to school

23.01 Year 6 Parents Meeting about SATs

06.02 Valentine's Disco

10.02 Parents Evening 3.30pm – 6pm

12.02 Parents Evening 4.30pm – 7pm

13.02 End of term 3

23.02 Children back to school

05.03 World Book Day

27.03 End of term 4

School Jotter



If you know of any parents who have not yet downloaded the School Jotter app, please do encourage them to do this so that everyone can keep up to date with school events, news and notifications!

Thank you!

NHS
East Sussex
School Health Service

**The School Health Service takes over
from the Health Visiting Service
when a child is of school age.**

Our nurse-led friendly team can help with:

- sleeping problems
- emotional health and wellbeing
- wetting the bed and day wetting
- healthy eating and healthy weight
- worries and troubles – including changing schools
- self care and hygiene
- referrals to other services for more complex health needs.



Please contact 0300 123 4062 or visit www.eastsussexchildren.nhs.uk

(we care)

Service provided by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

MERIDIAN NOTICEBOARD

Contact details

Please can you make sure that you update the school with any new contact details that have changed. These may include new addresses, telephone/mobile telephone numbers as well as contacts that we would call if your child is unwell or needs collecting from School.

Emergency Contacts

Please ensure that we have details of **at least two emergency contacts**. Please pass all changes, in writing, to the School Office.

Thank you

Earrings

If your child wears earrings to school, please can you ensure that they are wearing studs only. This expectation is to support the safety of the children in school.



Punctuality

It is vitally important that children arrive at school in plenty of time. The school gates **open at 8.35am** and it is an expectation that **children are in the school building by 8.50am** at the latest. The register is taken at 8.55am when the gates close and any children arriving in their classroom after this time are marked as late.

We are noticing a few families that are arriving at school just before 8.55am which impacts on children's learning.

Learning starts at 8.35am as soon as the doors open, so it is important that your children are in school no later than 8.50am. Thank you for your support with this.

School Uniform

Thank you to everyone for ensuring that children are in the right school uniform every day – it creates such a sense of **belonging** and shows that we are part of the **Meridian community**.

Please can I remind everyone that **leggings and white socks** are **not** part of our school uniform – tights or socks only please.

Please can you also make sure that you **name all your children's clothes** (including hats, gloves and scarves so that we can return them if they get lost! Thank you.

Water Only Please!

Please can we remind everyone that children's water bottles should contain water. If your child struggles to drink water, you could try flavoured water or putting pieces of fruit in the water to help them, such as orange slices.

No squash please.

Water really is the best form of hydration.



Healthy snacks in school

For Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children, the school is part of a free fruit and vegetable scheme so we provide a healthy snack for break time.

For Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, if you would like to send in a healthy snack for your child, please make sure it is a **piece of fruit or a portion of vegetables**. No cereal bars, chocolate or other types of snack.

Forest School and P.E.

The website has the most up to date information about days when children will have Forest School and P.E. in terms 3 and 4.

We will try our best to not change the timetable but there may be times, due to staff absence, when we have to make last minute changes. We will inform you of any changes as soon as we can but within the working hours of 8am – 6pm, Monday to Friday.

Thank you for your support and understanding!

LEARNING AT MERIDIAN

Curriculum learning "Environmental Issues and Citizenship"

The teachers have been busy planning and getting everything ready for the spring term topics that the children will enjoy starting in a couple of weeks.

Nursery and Reception Plants and Animals		
Years 1 and 2 Woodlands		
Years 3 and 4 Amazon Rainforest		
Years 5 and 6 Polar Regions		

Very Important People

We have started the term with our mini-study all about important people.

Nursery – all about me

Reception – David Attenborough

Year 1 – Mae Jemison

Year 2 – Amilia Earhart

Year 3 – Mahatma Ghandi

Year 4 – Stephen Hawking

Year 5 – Frida Kahlo

Year 6 – Emmeline Pankhurst



We will share some of the children's work very soon!

Early Morning Reading

As soon as the gates open at 8.35am, learning starts in the classrooms with all children reading, either independently or with their teacher. It is an expectation that **all children** bring their **reading book and reading diary** to school **every day** so that we can establish and celebrate how often the children are reading both in school and at home. So please make sure your children arrive promptly every morning to support their reading learning.

Thank you!



Maths at Meridian!

We have been working hard introducing a new maths curriculum at Meridian this academic year. The children have their usual hour maths lessons in the morning 4 times a week and now in addition to this, they have a "maths meeting" in the afternoons to build up their number skills and knowledge. We will be updating our website in the Spring Term to reflect this and you will be able to find out more there.

Home Learning

One of the best ways to support your child's learning in school is to help with learning at home too!

We have updated our Home Learning Policy and will be sharing this with you very soon.

Reading

Please make sure you continue to support your child to read as often as possible at home (ideally every day) and their reading diary is completed.

Phonics

For children learning their phonics, please practise these too.

Maths

Please allow time for your child to developing their maths knowledge by practising either Numbots or TimesTable Rockstars at home.

If you have any questions, please do speak with your child's class teacher

Music at Meridian



Welcome to Mrs. Humphreys, our new music teacher, who started this week. She has met nearly all the children already this week and I know she is excited about developing our music curriculum further. Mrs. Humphreys will be pausing the weekly music newsletter whilst she establishes herself into this role.

PLAY AT MERIDIAN

Loose Parts

Keep those donations coming in for our OPAL playtimes! **All donations will be safety checked by the staff to ensure suitability for the children to use.** Here are suggestions of what we will be asking for:

Cuddly Toys



Fabrics - all shapes and sizes

Metal pots, pans, trays etc.

Old clothes, jackets, overalls, hats, bags

Old household appliances, hoovers, microwaves etc

Phones

Small Children's Bike Wheels



Suitcases - all sizes

Tubes of all kinds



Guttering

Brief cases

Buggies, push chairs



Dressing up clothes

Small world toys



So if you are having a clear out, please think of us! The donation areas are by the entrances to the school gates – please put your items in there ready for our safety inspection.

Our wonderful OPAL playtimes!



Every other week on our Friday assemblies, we share photographs with the children showing them all the wonderful play activities the children are involved in at break times.

The Teaching Assistants also write postcards for children who have demonstrate positive behaviour – following our school rules and school values.

ATTENDANCE AT MERIDIAN

Good attendance at school is so important so that children do not miss out on their learning. Did you know that when teachers plan their lessons, each lesson builds on the previous one? So if a child misses 1 or 2 lessons a week, they will find the work much harder as they will be developing gaps in their knowledge.

If you are worried about your child's attendance or would like some support with this, please do make an appointment with Mrs. Newth to discuss this

Whole School Attendance

93.4% (our target is 96%) – hopefully this attendance will go up over the year once all the winter coughs and colds have gone.

Best Attendance this term

Week 1: 4SPS% - 100% 😊

Good Attendance means...
Being in school at least 97% of the time or 184 to 190 days

Remember
Your education is important - don't miss out!

Did you know?
A two week holiday in term time means that the highest attendance a child can achieve is 94.7%



Well done

I'm concerned

Seriously worried

A good attendance gives you the best chance for success

A poor attendance gives you less chance of success

Very poor attendance has a serious impact and reduces life chances



Did you know?
When pupils attend school they:

- ✓ Can achieve their full potential
- ✓ Have better career prospects
- ✓ Learn how to look after themselves and be healthy
- ✓ Grow in confidence
- ✓ Keep up with work and homework
- ✓ Make new friends

The class with the best attendance so far this term is 4SPS with 100% - congratulations!

Please do not forget: If your child is off ill, you must call the absence line or speak to a member of the office team – please do not email the school.

The absence line is available 24/7. It is important that you contact the school every day that your child is off sick

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

YOUTUBE

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows YouTube. The Google-owned site lets anyone upload videos to be shared around the world, and as a result, it's an incredible resource with instant free access to material covering every conceivable topic. But with over 500 hours of video uploaded every minute, not all of it will be appropriate for young eyes.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate content. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but it can also lead to binge-watching and screen addiction – especially if 'auto-play' is active. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

RADICALISATION

YouTube's algorithm tends to promote content that's getting the most traffic – a lot of which can be quite extreme. This can be fine for harmless topics, but YouTube isn't regulated like television, and that means that conspiracy theories, fake news and hateful ideologies can occasionally surface to warp impressionable minds all too easily. Remember – the more they watch, the more they'll be recommended.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as message other users directly. Connecting with strangers online can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, cyberbullying and – in the worst cases – online predators. If a child is creating content themselves, this can increase the likelihood of them becoming a target.

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends and challenges, some of which are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may cause physical or emotional harm to children who watch or copy them. The painful 'salt and ice challenge' – where people use these two ingredients to burn their skin – is just one of many examples.

SNEAKY SCAMMERS

The comments sections of popular content creators regularly have scammers posing as influencers, attempting to lure users into clicking on their phishing links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and often offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users aren't who they claim to be.

Advice for Parents & Educators

APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

For older children, Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate material (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence, and sexual content) to underage viewers. To prevent children from changing across age-inappropriate content on the site, it's worth enabling Restricted Mode on each device that has access to YouTube. It's worth also turning the auto-play feature off, to prevent YouTube's algorithm automatically recommending something inappropriate.



TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows parents and carers to monitor what their child is watching, uploading, and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches, and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives a parent or carer oversight of how their child uses sites like YouTube and helps to ensure that they are only accessing appropriate content.



MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them under 18. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course. You may want to keep an eye on how children interact with this material – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand what they're interested in. Remember that creators often share content outside of YouTube, so don't ignore their web presence elsewhere!



CONSIDER YOUTUBE KIDS

It's possible to sidestep most inappropriate content completely via Google's own YouTube Kids app for Android handsets and iPhone. This lets you filter content by 'preschool' (4 and under), 'younger' (ages 5 to 8) and 'older' (ages 9 to 12). This isn't a perfect substitute for personal supervision, as the app's filtering system is automated, and Google can't manually review all videos.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that a child is subscribed to can be hidden. If the child is only uploading videos set as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.

LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases. For example, users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch. If you'd like to avoid children purchasing content online, limit their access to online payment methods. Many parents have discovered the hard way that a child happily consuming a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!



Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of *Wired*, *TechRadar*, *Tom's Guide*, *The Evening Standard* and *The New Statesman*.



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