



# Mercenfeld Primary School

*'Striving for Excellence'*



## Spring 2 2023 Newsletter

We hope that you all had a lovely half term break! We now start an extremely short second half of our spring term with only a few weeks until we break of Easter.

Thank you for your understanding and prompt response regarding the snow. We never make the decision to close or send children home lightly and we do seek the advice from BEP, our Trust, before we do. Any decision is always based on the safety of both children and staff getting to and from school. We always endeavour to inform you as quickly as we can so that you can make any necessary arrangements.

Please can I also thank everyone for their kind messages of support and good wishes in regard to my appointment as permanent Head here at Mercenfeld. Rest assured the process was very robust, with another two candidates being interviewed. Myself and all the staff at Mercenfeld now look forward to continued stability, focus and drive to ensure that Mercenfeld goes from strength to strength.

The half term started with excitement with the Leicester Riders Basketball media day! The children have gained so much from our involvement with their Development Programme and it was an honour to be chosen, out of all the schools that the Riders work with, as the face of their promotional video. It was rather a shock to Mr Perkins and myself when we were told that BBC Radio Leicester and ITV news were also attending! If you missed it Mr Perkins has put a link on Twitter for you to follow. As always, our children were amazing and a credit to the school.

Our World Book Day was a fantastic success, with children being able to talk and share their favourite books. Thank you to all of you that came to read with your children. It was a joy to walk round and see so many of you in the classrooms. Thank you too to Mrs Weatherill for organising the day. Following on from the success of the event Mrs Weatherill will be producing a regular 'Reading Newsletter' that will contain lots of supportive information about our reading in school.

Thank you to those parents who attended the very important parents' session on Phonics for EYFS and Year 1 led expertly by Mrs York and Mrs Pendleton. We will ensure that the links to the scheme will be on the website for you to access.

I do hope you continue to find these newsletters informative. This edition sees some opportunities around how you can become involved in the life of the school, a spotlight on our Deputy Head and, as always, 'standing items' about Commando Joe, sport and our PTA.

Looking forward to seeing you in the mornings!

Mrs K Randle

(Head)



### Spring Term Parents Evenings

Please note our **re-scheduled** meeting on

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 3.30pm to 7pm**

Do pop into the hall to taste some of the menu items from our dinner provider, Caterlink.

## Lost Property

We had over **50 items** of lost property last half term!

Please do ensure that your child's name is in items such as jumpers, cardigans, sweatshirts, and coats. If your child has lost an item, we do have lost property boxes outside most classrooms.

The Library has set up times where you can go and get nearly new and pre-loved items of uniform. The first one was held this week so please look out for future emails, via Arbor, for forthcoming dates and times. A huge thank you to Clare for organising this for us all.



## Parent Year Group Representatives

Following on from our last LAB (Local Advisory Board) meeting we are looking into re-launching the parent year group representative. This would involve a parent becoming the 'mouth piece' for the parents of the children in that year group, and feeding back at meetings with Mrs Randle/Senior Leadership Team. We feel that this would enable parents to have another way to share information to and from school.

The office have sent out an email about this, with the link to an electronic form. However here is the link should you wish to show your interest.

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=33\\_wzdLTyk2HVK3vxmXhiNb\\_eCPft1IBrr-b\\_RSV3UBURV4k4NExNNj3WDJQUjhDSEXTTjJUSUZLOC4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=33_wzdLTyk2HVK3vxmXhiNb_eCPft1IBrr-b_RSV3UBURV4k4NExNNj3WDJQUjhDSEXTTjJUSUZLOC4u)



## Welcome to Miss Higgins and Mr Parsons



A warm Mercenfeld welcome to our two new staff members.

Miss Higgins has become our new Office Administrator. Many of you will have already met her at the front desk in the office or spoken to her on the phone. Miss Higgins will become Mrs Clarke as she will be getting married during the Easter holidays!

Mr Parsons is mainly supporting in Yr 3 (Seahorses and Honeybees) and has settled really quickly into school. Mr Parsons has also joined our fabulous dinner supervisor team.

## Spotlight on.....

### Mrs Weatherill – Deputy Head, English Lead and Yr 6 Teacher (Panthers)



Mrs Weatherill has been at Mercenfeld for 11 years. She has seen many children come and go through the school.

A very experienced and influential class teacher Mrs Weatherill became Deputy Head in 2021. She currently job shares with Mrs Farley, which allows her time to undertake her school management responsibilities.

Mrs Weatherill is passionate about English and all its aspects – be that reading writing, punctuation, or grammar. She is also one of the school's Designated Safeguarding Leads, is the Teaching and Learning Lead and is a mentor to one of our ECTS (Early Career Teachers)

Mrs Weatherill has five grown up children and a golden Labrador called Audrey. She enjoys going to the theatre and travelling to far flung places!

## Let's Connect



Improving children's  
mental health

In February, we celebrated Children's Mental Health Week. The theme this year was 'Let's Connect.' We talked about and considered the healthy connections we have with family, friends and others and how these connections support our mental health and sense of wellbeing.

Lots of resources and advice regarding children's mental health can be found on the Place2be website.

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



Pupils with **no absence** are 2.2 times more likely to **achieve 5 GCSEs**

## Why Attendance Matters...

**17 missed school days** a year = **1 GCSE grade drop** in achievement

**90% attendance** for 1 school year = **4 weeks** of lessons missed.

## Good Attendance means...

Being in school at least **97%** of the time or **184 to 190 days**

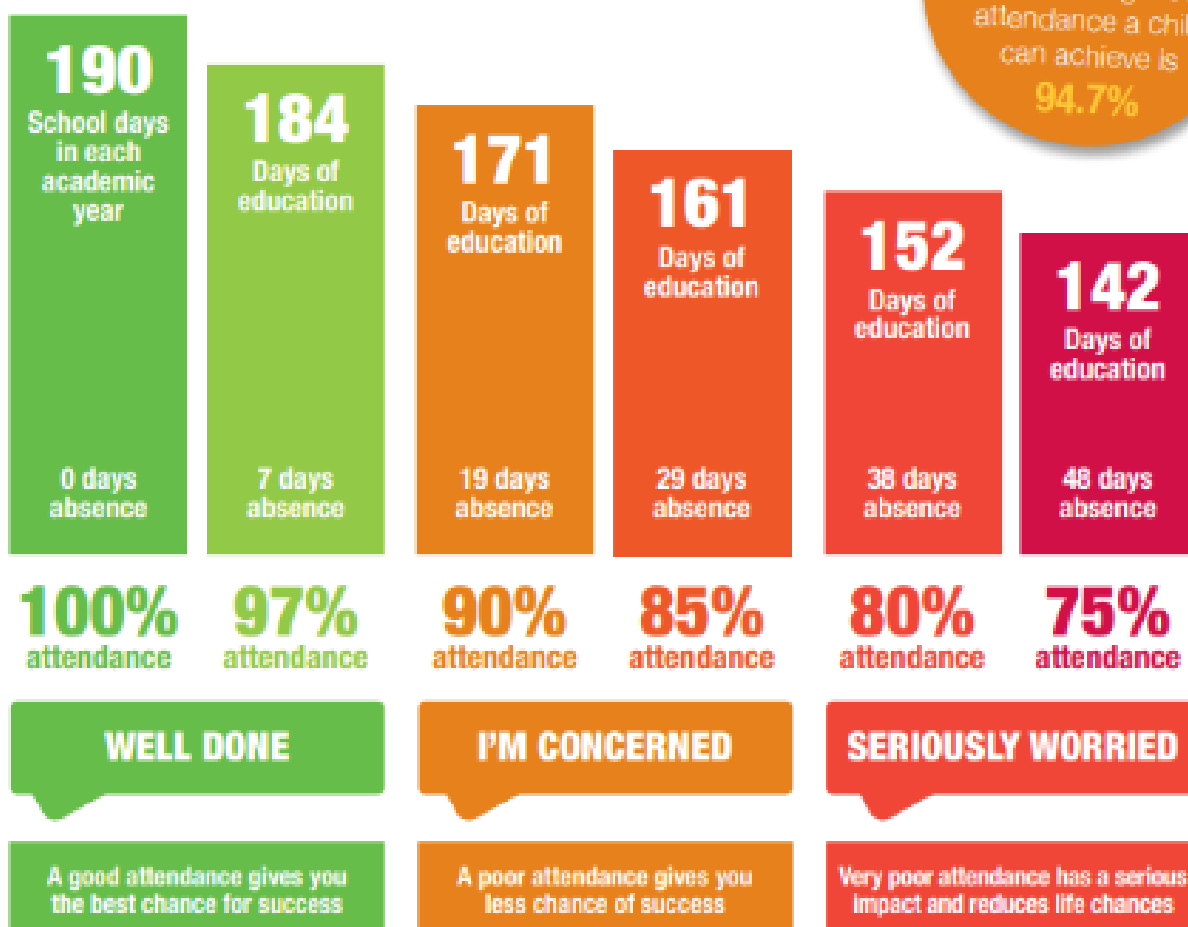
### Remember

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%**



## Trips and Visits



Here at Mercenfeld we are passionate about giving children opportunities to enhance their learning through educational visits.

We always endeavour to ensure that the cost of this is kept to a minimum. However, we are finding that costs are continuing to rise, especially for transport.

Unfortunately, we have had to take the difficult decision that if not all pay for a trip/visit then we will have to cancel, as the school cannot continue to subsidise to make up the shortfall.

We do appreciate that if you have several children at school, the combined cost of trips over a year can be prohibitive. Please do speak to us if you are experiencing difficulties in being able to pay for trips.



### Twitter

Please do follow us!

**@Mercenfeld\_Sch**



**YOUR  
SCHOOL  
NEEDS  
YOU**

### Mercenfeld Needs You!

We are looking to recruit a small army of volunteers who can come into school to help with such things as hearing readers, supporting for visits and trips and helping with art and craft.

We will require you to provide us with a reference, (from a current/recent place of work) and we, in turn will need to undertake an enhanced DBS, a right to work check and a very informal chat with Mrs Randle

If this is something you would be interested in please look out for an email in Arbor with an easy application form.

We look forward to your application!

## **5 top tips on keeping your child safe online.**

### **1. Talk openly with your child about online safety.**

- As your child starts to access the internet, talk to them about what they are reading, watching and who they are communicating with online.
- Make sure these conversations continue as they grow older.
- Ask them to write down a list of apps they use/ want to use and look at them together. Talk about what is appropriate and remind them that this is different for every family.
- There will come a time when your child will access the internet outside the safety of home and you want to prepare them for that.
- Talk about being a digital citizen and their online reputation (how they behave, interact and represent themselves) and know who your child's online friends are.

### **2. Keep screens and devices where you can see them and keep track of online time.**

- Try your best to monitor your child's time online (in particular younger children)
- Keep the devices in a central spot where it is easy for you to keep an eye on.
- Maybe try and have an agreement where there are no tablets, laptops or gaming devices in the bedroom.
- It is recommended that children should have no more than 2 hours of screen time a day.
- Try and set timers and set a non-negotiable finish time.

### **3. Know about parental controls (<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>)**

- Innocent searches can lead to not – so – innocent results.
- Parental controls and search restrictions can help with this.
- For example SafeSearch filters can block sites with inappropriate material. Although not 100% accurate, it can help prevent your child from seeing things you don't want them to see.
- The link above allows you to search the different controls for smartphones and devices, apps, networks social media, gaming consoles and search engines.

### **4. Be social network savvy**

- Look at the apps your child uses and want to use and sign up to them. This allows you to find out how to use the privacy settings and reporting mechanisms.
- By signing up to them allows you to give the best advice to your child.
- Talk to your child about how to stay safe online.
  - Talking to a trusted person when they are worried.
  - Being aware of online bullying, both as a perpetrator and a victim.
- Make sure your child knows how to
  - Report inappropriate/ offensive posts
  - Block someone
  - Keep information private



### **5. Lead by example**

- Always model the kind of positive behaviours you would like your child to use.
- If you limit your screen time, only use devices in designated spots, be open about talking about online then your child is more likely to follow in your footsteps.

Ultimately, we don't want to instil fear or prevent children from experiencing technology and being online. There are tons of benefits from being online and with technology ever growing and they will inevitably go online. However, we want to give them the skills and knowledge they need to make the most of it and avoid the dangers that it poses.

## Mercenfeld Houses

Congratulations to Isla Lockwood in Year 4 (Turtles) who won the prize for naming the four houses that are now in place. Well done Isla!



**Centaur**

**House Captain – Ewan Hossack**



**Griffin**

**House Captain – Louise Ashley (Tigers)**



**Phoenix**

**House Captain – Neve Manning (Panthers)**



**Pegasus**

**House Captain – Bertie Wakefield**

All our children have been allocated their house, with siblings being in the same one.

We have started to do our sports tournaments at dinner times and as the weeks progress we will be adding more elements.

### **A reminder we are a nut free school!**

If your child has a pack up for lunch, please may we ask that you ensure that all products are **free from nuts**.

We also ask for you not to send hummus in packed lunches as some of our children do have a chickpea allergy

Thank you





## **Mercenfeld PTA**

Our informal Coffee Mornings are in full swing! We have enjoyed seeing some new faces, chatting about fundraising ideas and upcoming events. They are held every first Friday of the month at the school from 9 till 10. Pop in for a free tea or coffee and a natter. It's a chance to see what the PTA is all about and how you can help. Our next one will be 21.04.23 due to the half term holidays. All are welcome!

As this newsletter goes out we will have run our popular Mother's Day Pop Up Shop! Hopefully your children will surprise a loved one with a special gift.

Stay tuned for details of our Easter Bonnet Competition (to include an Easter drawing option). Entries to be in school on Thursday 30th March with winners to be announced and prizes given out at assembly on the Friday.

This term we have given a donation to subsidise the year 6 school trip to The Warning Zone. Hopefully this will be a trip that subsequent year 6s will go. The Warning Zone specialises in teaching valuable life skills and safeguarding.

Last term's 'Sweet Treats Friday' raised £46. This end of term 'Sweet Treats Friday' will be on Friday 31st March after school. We would really like some volunteers to help sell some of the items, if you are able to help from 2.30 till 3.45 please let us know, email [PTFA.CHAIR@mercenfeld.bepschools.org](mailto:PTFA.CHAIR@mercenfeld.bepschools.org)

If you don't already, give us a follow on Facebook to keep up to date with all things Mercenfeld PTA. Search 'Friends of Mercenfeld'.

Thank you for your continued support!

Adla (PTA Joint Secretary)  
On behalf of Mercenfeld PTA

## **Commando Joe**

The children have been very much enjoying carrying out their character missions in school this term. There has also been an increase in children completing their Commando Joe's Pupil Passport which has been great to see. The evidence that has been sent in is wonderful and shows they are truly striving for excellence. Due to this, Mr Noon will be hosting an awards assembly before the Easter holiday giving out certificates and badges for those that have completed full sections of their passport.

**Parents will be invited in to hear about the hard work that has been going on and to see the awards given out. This will be taking place on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March at 2:45pm**





## Safeguarding

Here at Mercenfeld, we take safeguarding and child protection seriously.

Please do access our newly updates Safeguarding and Child Protection policy via our website.

[https://www.mercenfeld.bepschools.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2022/09/Mercenfeld-Primary-BEP-Child-Protection-Policy-2022\\_23.pdf](https://www.mercenfeld.bepschools.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2022/09/Mercenfeld-Primary-BEP-Child-Protection-Policy-2022_23.pdf)

**Safeguarding is  
Everyone's  
Responsibility**



# Look out for our Reading Newsletter.



## Coming soon!



## Our Mercenfeld Code of Conduct

Here at school all adults and children follow our Code of Conduct. These have been based around our vision and values and include the Commando Joe Character Traits.

At **Mercenfeld** we always use our manners to show our appreciation.

At **Mercenfeld** we greet everyone and reply if someone greets us.

At **Mercenfeld** we respect our own and others belongings.

At **Mercenfeld** we respect our school and the environment.

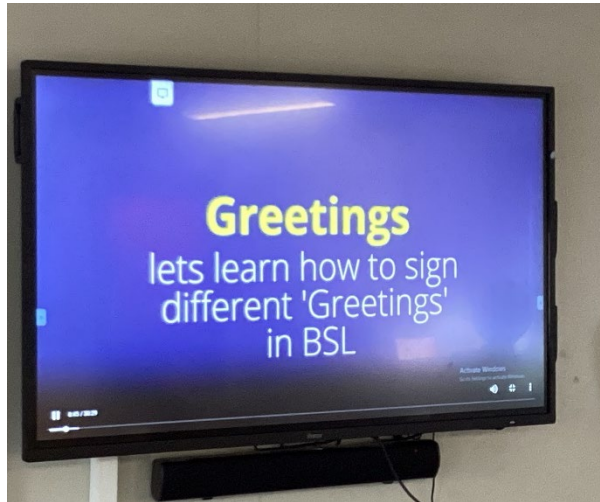
At **Mercenfeld** we strive for excellence.

At **Mercenfeld** we show RESPECT



## British Sign Language Week

This week is British Sign Language week. The children have really enjoyed the online lesson where they have learnt a range of different signs. Many of them have also risen to the challenge set in assembly on Monday and learnt to finger spell their name.



# Merchenfeld Sports

## Leicester Riders Media Day



On Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February, we were really lucky to have coaches and players from Leicester Riders in school to film a video to promote the amazing work they do in the community. The video will be released soon on the BBL's (British Basketball League) Youtube channel and we will send the link out when this is published.

As part of this, our school also appeared on ITV Central News and on BBC Radio Leicester. The children were so excited by the whole day!

## Cross Country

Huge congratulations to **Albie, Gracie, Lola, Alfie** and **Emily** who were selected to represent Hinckley and Bosworth for cross country.

Well done for running at the County Finals at Market Harborough last week.

