



Monks Risborough

Church of England Primary School

A learning community- encouraging success, celebrating achievement, strengthened by God.

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I would like to start by thanking our children for their contributions to a beautiful Harvest service at St Dunstan's Church today. It was creative and vibrant; firmly putting into action the Christian Value of generosity which the children explored throughout last week, in their Daily Worship. Within our last Ofsted Inspection, our report stated that Monks Risborough is a school in which their values are lived. Our church services are another example of how this takes place: on this occasion through joyful celebration as a community, as well as the generosity of donated gifts for people less fortunate.

School Council - An improved lunchtime experience for our children

Once a month, we hold a School Council meeting to enable the children to share their views about how the school could be improved, as well as what is working well. Children on the School Council are voted for by their peers in class and contribute to sharing the views of the children as a whole. Through this process, children learn about democracy at a basic level and have the opportunity to instigate change within the school. As well as the children, each meeting is also attended by me, a Teaching Assistant and a School Governor.

Last week we held our first meeting of the academic year. Within the meeting we discussed the children's opinions of our new daily timetable (which has been staggered for KS1 and 2, as well as Worship being moved to the afternoon), the new hot meals service as well as having more equipment on the playground.

I am pleased to say that the views of the School Council were overwhelmingly positive about the changes that have been implemented, they felt:

- Lunchtimes (and playtimes) are calmer with far more supervision and incidents are dealt with – stating that they felt safer
- First Aid is now administered more promptly, as minor incidents are dealt with on the playground and not indoors by one adult
- Having equipment makes playtime more interesting (there are things to do and Mr Leslie is fun!)
- The lunches are tastier (a couple of children felt that the portions for the eldest children could be larger, although this has improved throughout the term and the jacket potatoes are very big)
- With lunches being staggered, the hot meals experience is better as the tables are set and it is quieter
- KS2 children felt that they preferred having a shorter amount of time for learning in the afternoon and more time in the morning, as they had more energy to learn in the morning
- One child in KS2 felt that as lunchtime was 30 minutes later, it was important they ate a snack at break time so that they weren't too hungry prior to lunch

A couple of parents have brought to my attention playground incidents where they feel that behaviour or first aid hasn't been dealt with in line with school policy and this has been addressed with staff and children. Parent feedback is really important, as we want to continually improve our practice to benefit the children; ensuring that playtime is safe and enjoyable for all.

Developing Personal Safety

One key area of our school development plan for this academic year, is in improving the opportunities for children to learn how to stay safe, as well as evolving some of our safeguarding practices in school to improve the efficiency of communication. One of the developments is the introduction of a 'safety' assembly each week. As a starting point, over the first few weeks, the children have explored: How children stay safe in school (this was a starting point in auditing our provision), what you could do if you feel uncomfortable around someone and the importance of school attendance.

Attendance Matters

In monitoring progress of pupils across all year groups, the simple fact is that poor attendance directly correlates to less than expected progress. With a number of children, unsatisfactory attendance occurs year after year. Unless children are far too unwell to come to school or there is a very significant other circumstance, there is no reason why a child should not attend. This term I have already had a few parents notify me that they are taking children on holiday. I sympathise with you in regards to the cost family holidays out of term time, however, this is not an acceptable reason for children not to be in school, as this contributes to them missing key learning and falling behind.

In addition, in line with Bucks County Councils guidance, I am not allowed to authorise holiday as an acceptable reason for absence. Please see the attached link to view the school's well established guidance on attendance <https://www.monksrisboroughprimary.com/attendance.html>

Walk to School Week

We encourage all children to walk to school this week. This is a simple way to increase activity levels and reduce the increasing levels of traffic on the roads. Please see the attached letter for more information <https://www.monksrisboroughprimary.com/>

Online Safety

Last week Year 6 went to Princes Risborough Secondary School for an internet safety theatre production. The children stated that it made them 'really think' about how to stay safe and act respectfully online. For example, they learnt about: cyber-bullying and the impact on others, the importance of knowing in person who you are communicating with online, the dangers of spending too long online, having strong privacy settings so that people cannot identify you. Most importantly, they taught the children that if they are unsure about anything online they should also tell a parent or responsible adult.

Getting Active

Another key area of our School Development Plan is focused on increasing the opportunity for physical activity. As a result, we have introduced an element of physical activity before lessons start for the day; the last few weeks this has been a daily mile and from today, a series of 'Wake and Shakes.' Parents and teachers alike have commented on the positive impact they feel this is having on children; particularly in being energised when beginning their learning.

Exploring the Great Outdoors

Last week, Wrens visited the Oxford Botanical Gardens and Arboretum. As well as exploring the beautiful plants and environment, they also learnt about sustainability and reducing waste. The instructors at the arboretum commented on how engaged and knowledgeable the children were in their learning, as well as their 'outstanding' behaviour – well done Wrens.

Multi-Sports Festival

Nine Children from Year 2 attended a Multi-Sports Festival at Princes Risborough Secondary School last week. The children worked extremely well as a team, supporting each other with a range of activities and also looked very smart in their new PE Kits!

Football Focus

Last week, both our Year 6 Boys and Girls football teams took part in cup competitions. Our girls team competed at 'The Downley School' and, after 3 closely fought matches, finished joint runners up in their group. Unfortunately, they missed out on progressing to the next round due to goal difference. Mr (Mourinho) Mullen! is still seething that they were not awarded a penalty in one of the games which would have seen them through. However, the girls were terrific and, as a newly formed team, improved continually throughout the competition.

The Boys team took part in a cup fixture against Princes Risborough. After a very closely fought local derby, they secured a 1-0 victory to progress to the next round – well done.

Dads in School Morning

This Friday we will be holding our annual 'Dad's in School Morning.' This is a great opportunity to spend time with your children in their school setting and gain an insight into their learning. If you are not able to attend, then I am more than happy for a grandparent / family member to take their place.

As always, your children's progress, happiness and well-being are my main priorities. If you do have any concerns regarding these areas, please do make an appointment to meet with me.

Kind regards,

Tom Baskerville

Headteacher

In the first 4 weeks of school 141 children have 100% attendance. During this time, 14 children attended medical appointments, 5 children had unauthorised holidays and 4 children had unauthorised absence.

POLITE REMINDER THAT THE SCHOOL GATES CLOSE AT 8.45AM

Dates

October

Black History Month

Monday 8th
Thursday 11th

Harvest Service St Dunstan's 9.30am
Kites to Whipsnade Zoo
Netball & Football at PRS Falcons & Eagles 12.30pm
Dads in School Morning

Friday 12th

Monday 15th

STEM Week

School Council Meeting 1.40pm
Parents Evening 5pm – 8pm
Parents Evening 3.30pm – 6.30pm
Last Day of Half Term

Wednesday 17th
Friday 19th

Monday 29th
Tuesday 30th
Wednesday 31st

First Day of Term
Flu Nasal Spray for Rec, 1,2,3,4, & 5
Open Morning Reception 9.30am - 11am

November

Thursday 1st
Friday 2nd

Open Morning Reception 9.30am - 11am
Individual Photographs 9am

Wednesday 7th

School Disco
Kestrels to Chiltern Open Air Museum

Monday 12th
Tuesday 13th
Thursday 15th

Anti-Bullying Week
Tag Rugby Falcons & Eagles to PRS 12.30pm
Tag Rugby Kestrels & Hawks to PRS 12.30pm

Tuesday 20th
Friday 23rd

Book Look
Mufti Day for Christmas Hampers

Monday 26th
Wednesday 28th
Friday 30th

School Council Meeting
Unit Hoc Wrens & Kites at PRS 12.30pm
Bottle Mufti Day for Christmas Fair
Parent Forum Meeting 2.15pm

December

Saturday 1st

Christmas Fair

Wednesday 5th
Thursday 6th

Robins, Wrens & Kites Nativity to Community 10.30am
Robins, Wrens & Kites Nativity to Community 10.30am

Wednesday 19th

Last Day of Term

January 2019

Wednesday 2nd
Thursday 3rd

INSET DAY
First Day of Term

SCHOOL TERM DATES

	School opens on the morning of	School closes on the afternoon of
Autumn 2018	Thursday 6 th September (NB. INSET day Wednesday 5th September)	Friday 19 th October
	Monday 29 th October	Wednesday 19 th December
Spring 2019	Thursday 3 rd January (NB. INSET day Wednesday 2nd January)	Friday 15 th February
	Monday 25 th February	Friday 5 th April
Summer 2019	Wednesday 24 th April (NB. INSET day Tuesday 23rd April)	Friday 24 th May (Monday 6th May Bank Holiday)
	Monday 3 rd June	Wednesday 24 th July
Autumn 2019	Wednesday 4 th September (NB. INSET days Mon 2nd & Tues 3rd September)	Friday 25 th October
	Monday 4 th November	Thursday 19 th December
Spring 2020	Tuesday 7 th January (NB. INSET day Monday 6th January)	Friday 14 th February
	Monday 24 th February	Friday 3 rd April
Summer 2020	Monday 20 th April	Friday 22 nd May (Monday 4th May Bank Holiday)

For the complete calendar of school dates please see the website www.monksrisboroughprimary.com

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