

Milldene News 13

5th December
2017

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Staffing Updates

Welcome back!

Following her maternity leave, we are delighted to welcome back Mrs McGrane to Year 1, Sapphire Class, on a part-time basis. During the Spring and Summer terms, the boys and girls in Sapphire Class will benefit from Mrs McGrane's teaching on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The children were very excited to see Mrs McGrane back in the classroom for a catch up last week. Mrs Webb will continue her work with the class on a Thursday and Friday.

A fond farewell and welcome

After over 7 years of dedicated service, we will be saying goodbye to Miss Bishop, our Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator, at the end of term. We are sorry to see her go but hope that she takes with her many happy memories and our good wishes for the future. Mrs McGrane will be undertaking training in order to step in to Miss Bishop's SENCO role in the future. We also welcome Mrs Massey, who will be our interim SENCO for the Spring and Summer terms 2018.

Get well soon!

The children were very excited to see Mr Clarke back in the classroom recently, as part of our LSA team. However, unfortunately Mr Clarke's continuing ill health has prevented him from returning at this time. We wish him well with his ongoing treatment and hope to see him back at Milldene in the not too distant future.

Books and Biscuits

This week's Books and Biscuits took place earlier than usual, so that a special guest could join us. Mrs Harper, parent and Governor, was eager to see for herself what was so special about Milldene's weekly Books and Biscuits sessions. Firstly, Zachary, Bobby, Ethan and Isla confidently explained the structure, purpose and benefits of our weekly sessions. Then, Mrs Harper got to experience the real thing! Wonderful samples of work were shared, with all participants focussed on their learning, their targets and their achievements. Impressive, polite and articulate everyone!

Today's participants were:-

Bobby —Year 6, Deacon and Katie —
Year 5, Kathy—Year 4, Savannah —Year
3, Lexi —Year 2, Amber—Year 1 and
Mikhail —Ruby.

Mrs Locke



Parking

As I am sure you are aware, parking is notoriously difficult in the vicinity of the school, particularly at drop-off and pick-up times. Trying to navigate safely is more difficult when cars are parked on both sides of the road. We have received several reports from concerned parents and neighbours about pedestrians having to walk into the road to pass cars parked in such a way that the footpath is obstructed. I am very concerned about the safety of all members of our community. Whilst I have no authority to patrol the public highways, I do have a duty of care for all our children. Please, please drive and park responsibly, being mindful of our neighbours, our young pupils and their parents.



Thank you for your co-operation. Mrs Locke

Keep children and data safe when buying smart toys and devices

Have you finished your Christmas shopping yet? Planning to spend a couple of hours in a Christmas Market or even on Amazon? This Christmas there will be more tech toys than ever before, and many of them will use bluetooth or wifi to link to apps and the wider internet. Some of these toys will have cameras and microphones recording the environment and the child's play. The Information Commissioner recently published an article looking at the risks of using smart toys and it is well-worth sharing it with you all.

<https://iconewsblog.org.uk/2017/11/23/the-12-ways-that-christmas-shoppers-can-keep-children-and-data-safe-when-buying-smart-toys-and-devices/>

Which? Magazine have also surveyed many connected toys and found that, without appropriate safety features, they can also pose a big risk to your child's safety.

The Which video below shows just how easy it is for anyone to take over the voice control of a popular connected toy, and speak directly to children. Which? found that it is easy enough for almost anyone to do, not only skilled hackers.

<https://www.which.co.uk/news/2017/11/safety-alert-see-how-easy-it-is-for-almost-anyone-to-hack-your-childs-connected-toys/>



This week is **CRAZY-BUSY** with **Secret Santa wrapping, the pantomime trip and the Christmas Fair**. But then we're finished until the new year so no more pestering for donations and helpers. Secret Santa present wrapping took place yesterday and today so please check your child's school bag if you have ordered a gift. We are no longer accepting orders. We hope you will be pleased with the gifts and there will be some happy faces on Christmas Day.



Christmas cards designed by your child - ORDERS HAVE ARRIVED

Please check your child's schoolbag this week for your order; mugs must be collected from the school office. Thank you!

Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs pantomime trip | THIS THURSDAY



We wish the children, staff and parent helpers a fantastic time on Thursday. Please remember to send your child to school with their water bottle as we will take them to the theatre. The PTFA are providing snacks at the interval.

Non-uniform day | THIS FRIDAY



Don't forget that children can come to school in their own clothes on Friday - Christmas jumpers or Christmas colours (red/ green/ white or sparkle) are encouraged. Please bring a donation for the bottle tombola instead of the usual monetary donation. Anything NEW is suitable - from bubble bath, shampoo, nail polish to soft drinks and alcohol. Please leave donations at the school gate on Friday morning, but please take alcohol directly to the school office. Thank you for your valuable contributions.

Christmas Fair | THIS FRIDAY | 3:15-5:15pm





Only three more sleeps to go... **but we are still in need of helpers to cover a 30-minute slot on a stall. Please email us if you can help: ptfa@milldene.essex.sch.uk** Full details on what's planned will be sent home shortly. We are welcoming back external stall holders to sell their goods and there are some lovely Christmas gifts and pocket money toys etc to purchase. So please come along to get your Christmas presents. Finally, please continue to take good-quality toy donations for the popular toy tombola to the school office – we are particularly in need of soft teddies. Thank you to everyone who has already donated.

Christmas Raffle | THIS FRIDAY | 5:00pm

Please return your raffle ticket stubs, money and any unused tickets by drop off on Thursday. Extra tickets are available from the office or can be purchased at the Fair.

Thank you for your support, Milldene Primary School PTFA

 ptfa@milldene.essex.sch.uk
 Milldene Primary School PTFA
 Registered Charity Number: 1172920



**Only 20 sleeps
til Christmas!**

Attendance

Our Attendance Award winners last week were Amethyst Class again! They managed to get 99.68%! Fantastic!

Overall, our school attendance for last week was 94.84%. We are way below our 97% target; let's see if we can turn it around next week!



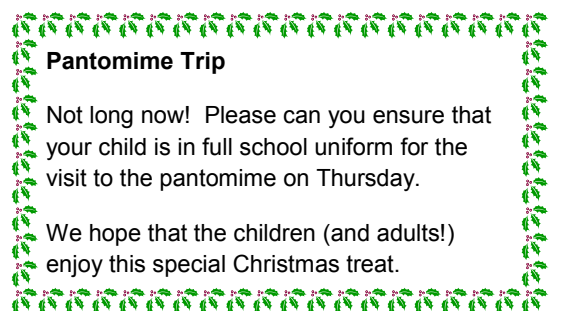
Christmas Tree Decorating at St Luke's Church in support of Farleigh Hospice

Last week, Mrs Munson took a small group of children to decorate a tree at St Luke's Church in the village. The children were full of Christmas cheer as they sang songs on the walk to the church. At the church our tree was adorned with all sorts of beautiful ornaments, crackers and garlands. Great work everyone!



School Meals

Please note that we are on Week 3 of our school menus this week.



Pantomime Trip

Not long now! Please can you ensure that your child is in full school uniform for the visit to the pantomime on Thursday.

We hope that the children (and adults!) enjoy this special Christmas treat.