



Millbrook Connect

Believe Achieve Succeed

Dear Parents,

It has certainly been a busy few weeks and it is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of our first term of this academic year! It has been wonderful to see the children back and so engaged with their learning after, what has been for some, a very long time out of the classroom.

Unfortunately, we needed to close one of our year group bubbles this week. However, the staff team worked incredibly hard to produce some amazing home learning resources including teaching videos and exciting activities linked to their curriculum. As we are still in the process of enhancing our home learning provision, it was wonderful to receive positive feedback from parents and carers about the 'new additions' to our remote learning offer. We have also loved hearing how our children have continued to be inspired to learn at home and in some cases, even wanted to watch the teaching videos on repeat!

We have all worked hard to adapt to a new way of life in school. Learning and social time look quite different presently, but we have introduced new ways to manage the restrictions that are currently in place. These changes include coming to school in PE kit, which has increased the amount of learning time for this lesson, as well as a socially-distanced 'Gold Star Afternoon Tea' in the hall (for the children who were due this treat pre-lockdown in March!) Congratulations to all our VIPs and Stars of the Week for this term too – we hope you have enjoyed receiving these messages about your child. Do read on further to find out which hardworking children have earned the prestigious 'Star of the Term' award – well done all!

In order that you can add the date to your diaries, parents' evenings this year will be held in the **week beginning 30th November**. Due to Covid control measures, these will take place remotely, either via video call or phone call. More details will follow next term.

We hope you manage to have a relaxing, safe and fun half-term ahead. We look forward to welcoming everyone back soon – don't forget the first day back is **Tuesday 3rd November** ☺

Mrs Faye Charlton

Mrs Laura Youngman

Head(s) of School

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Spotlight On.....



This week the spotlight is on... **Junior Leadership Team!**

At Millbrook, our JLT supports the Senior Leadership Team, teachers and all other members of staff to find ways of improving the school experience for all children. They arrange and support school events and help to organise different parts of school life. Our JLT provide children with the chance to develop leadership within the school, ensuring that their voices and opinions are heard. Each member of the Junior Leadership Team is a Year 6 pupil selected through an application process.



What our JLT want to achieve this year:

Bessie – “While in JLT I would like to help make the school a more fun and loving place for everyone.”

Emily K – “I would like to improve recycling across the school. People are also littering and it's hurting the animals of our community.”

George – “I would like to improve the appearance of children's PE kit.”

Emily C – “I would like to raise money for the school through fundraisers.”

Harmony – “I want to raise money for different charities and the school.”

Jayden - “I want to help improve reading across the school.”

Elenoa – “To try and do more recycling and energy saving across the school.”

Virtual Cross Country!



On Thursday 15th October, we took part in the Vale's virtual cross-country competition. Years 3&4 ran 1500m with years 5&6 running 2000m. It was amazing to see so many children taking part, and although they were allowed to run as far as they wanted, most pupils carried on to the end showing great determination to succeed! A special mention must go to our



wonderful Sports Leaders in helping run their first event. Congratulations to the winners in each of the races, and a huge well done to all of those that took part. The fastest times are listed below.



The results are:

Year 3&4 Girls:

Sofia Hamblett (year 3)

Year 3&4 Boys:

Calum Hill (year 3)

Year 5&6 Girls:

Lillie-Mai Smith (year 6)

Year 5&6 Boys:

Haydn Williams (year 5)



The times will be sent through to the VAT and the results will be published shortly before Christmas.

Mr Law, PE Lead

Curriculum Update!

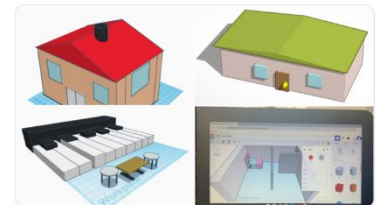
As mentioned in the last Millbrook Connect newsletter, one of our main priorities this year is to further develop our curriculum so that it is balanced, enables children to make links and inspires both curiosity and a love of learning.



Last year, two of our main focuses were to develop Maths and English, and when OFSTED visited, they recognised the improvements that had been made and the exciting journey that the school is on. While we are still striving to make these subjects even stronger, our curriculum area leaders are all working hard to ensure that all subjects have a clear progression; real purpose and inspiring end products. We hope that this will enable children to excel in subjects they might not have realized they had a talent in and most importantly, love learning about them!



We've already started to make some significant changes this term and have loved seeing this in action in the classroom:



- **From Term 2 we will be launching a new and exciting Computing curriculum (children in Years 5 and 6 are already really enjoying creating 3D products on TinkerCAD – see image above!).**
- **Miss Baldry has developed a creative Art plan for each year group, where each term teachers will be inspired by a different artist or sculptor.**
- **Mrs Donnellan and Miss Hornsey have begun to implement a new PSCHÉ scheme of work, which will enable children to understand more about their own feelings, emotions and the world around them.**



We have also loved celebrating **Black History month** this October with a series of powerful assemblies across the school – last week we explored the amazing work that Marcus Rashford did to support vulnerable children over lockdown and the personal values that he demonstrated throughout that time.

We are really excited to continue to share more curriculum successes in Term 2; please make sure that you check our **Twitter** page regularly for some examples of the exciting activities taking place! More to follow in the next Millbrook Connect!

Our New Library!

Over the summer holiday, on two of the hottest days of the year, a fabulous group of Millbrook staff gave up their time to 'relocate' our library into its new location. We are delighted with the transformation that took place and are very grateful to Mrs Hinder, Miss Johnson, Ms Jones, Mrs Ridgway, Mrs Willis and Mr Jacques who helped Mrs Youngman and Mrs Charlton over the two days. We are looking forward to re-opening our 'new' library soon, and sharing this fantastic space with our children!



Remote Learning Update from Mr Rose

As mentioned in our recent letter, we have been working hard on the development of a digital platform, taking into account parental feedback and ensuring that we retain aspects that worked well. Next half term, you will receive further information about our chosen digital platforms (**TEAMs for Years 1-6 and Tapestry for Nursery and Foundation Stage**).

Replicating the classroom remotely

It isn't possible to replicate the whole classroom experience remotely but the research we are using to help guide our future offer, found that the effectiveness of remote teaching is determined by many of the same factors as live classroom teaching. For example:

- *Ensuring pupils receive clear explanations*
- *Supporting growth in confidence with new material through scaffolded practice*
- *Engaging content and the application of new knowledge or skills*
- *Enabling pupils to receive feedback on how to progress*
- *Feeling connected to a community (class and school wide)*

These characteristics of good teaching are more important than the medium of delivery (either 'live' classrooms or pre-recorded). Much of the work we have been doing during Term 1 is considering how to transfer into remote education what we already know about effective teaching in the live classroom.

Live classrooms enable important interactions between teachers and pupils through, for example, questioning, eliciting and reflective discussion. These complex teacher skills are not always easy to recreate in a remote environment, but where possible our aim is to recreate at least some aspects of this important interactivity and dialogue.

Access to devices and connectivity

Access to appropriate devices and connectivity will be essential for the remote learning approach we are introducing. However, we know for many households, for various reasons, this presents other home learning challenges. Please be assured that we will work together to overcome these. Currently, as part of our planning for future disruption we are:

- *Capturing information to update our records as to which pupils and families do not have devices or internet access*
- *Considering how school technology resources could be used in future to support pupils without sufficient remote facilities. This includes preparing to provide laptops to identified families*
- *Liaising with Department for Education's 'Get Help with Technology Programme' which provides laptops and hardware should a school experience some form of closure.*
- *Considering ways to operate more flexibly through a whole school remote timetable, for example to accommodate contexts where pupils are having to share a single device within the home, meaning that access to recorded or live lessons isn't feasible at the same time.*

The introduction of a school platform through Microsoft TEAMS, particularly in the early stages, will not be without its challenges. The move we are making to fully embed a digital platform into school operations reaches beyond plans for remote learning; it brings conversations, content, assignments, and apps together, letting staff create vibrant learning environments, build collaborative classrooms, receive training, and connect with colleagues across different schools – all from a single point of access.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to communicating with you and your child about our on-going developments. Please look out for regular up-dates on this topic. **Should you miss them in your 'inbox' all up-dates and communications regarding the migration to Microsoft can be found at the NEW 'Online Platform' tab on our website.**

Mr Rose

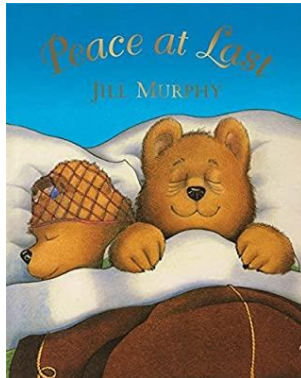
Executive Head Teacher

Book Corner!

Looking for a good book? In this section, we have asked two of our teachers to recommend a book they've enjoyed recently!



For our younger readers, Miss Baldry recommends...

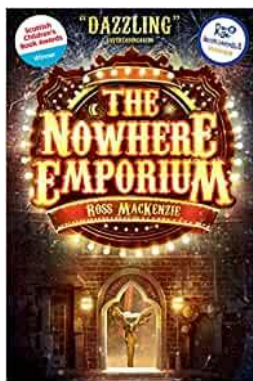


Peace at Last by Jill Murphy

I am a big fan of books that children love to listen to repeatedly, join in with and quickly retell by themselves. My favourite book for this is Peace at Last. With beautiful illustrations, and many chances for conversation, join Mr Bear, Mrs Bear and Baby Bear as they all go up to bed. Even though Mrs Bear goes straight off to sleep poor old Mr Bear is haunted by the sounds around him. Join him in his quest to find a quiet place to sleep, guess what sounds could be bothering him, join in making noises which keep him awake and feel the intensity of his frustration as 'he can't stand this!' and gets up to find the next place to rest: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9U9y35kWBvM>

For our older readers, Mrs Donnellan recommends...

The Nowhere Emporium by Ross MacKenzie



Ever heard the saying 'Reading is a discount ticket to everywhere'? I love visiting new places, countries and cultures, which has not been possible with the lockdown restrictions....until I read this book earlier this year! The world that Ross MacKenzie creates in the *Nowhere Emporium* is full of endless opportunities and wonders. On the face of it, 'The Nowhere Emporium' is just a shop, but inside it contains hundreds of doors which open to different times and magical places. Coupled with this, it also contains secret stories of the past, including the intriguing story of the shop owner himself. Daniel, an orphan from Glasgow, has to be quick-witted, imaginative and brave to unravel the mystery.

Full of magic, suspense, and adventure, I would highly recommend this book to anyone who fancies a trip to somewhere else.

(AR 5.0, found on Millbrook's Reading for Pleasure shelves in Y5)

Stars of the Term!



Congratulations to the following children for being our first set of 'Stars of the Term' this academic year!

Beavers: **Tia Aitken**

Otters: **Casey O'Dell**

Dragonflies: **Clara-Lou Clooney**

Ducklings: **Isaac Smith**

Badgers: **Eliana-Rose Dixey**

Butterflies: **Darcey Gadsby**

Grebe: **Lucie Wilcox**

Swallowtail: **Arthur Smith**

Frogs: **Max Breakspear**

Swans: **Dylan Webber**

Kingfishers: **Harry Haskins**

Hérons: **Joseph Hendy**

Weasels: **Bessie Jones**

Pondskaters: **Flynn Denboer**

Gold Star Afternoon Tea!

This afternoon we finally hosted our socially-distanced 'Gold Star Afternoon Tea Party' in the hall! This was delayed from March 2020 and was for the children who were due this treat for earning 5 gold stars in their work! They all had a brilliant time: they showed their Millbrook Manners, enjoyed cake and hot chocolate, being waited on by Mr Jacques and chatting to Mr Rose and Mrs Charlton about their learning. But for most, the best part of it all was the special guest....Max the dog!



Pupil Premium

What is the Pupil Premium?

The Pupil Premium is additional funding given to schools so that they can support specific groups of pupils who may be at risk of underachievement.

Who is eligible for the Pupil Premium?

The Pupil Premium is allocated to schools for pupils who are known to be eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) or who have been eligible at any point in the past 6 years. It is also allocated for children who have been looked after by the local authority continuously for more than 6 months as well as children who have been adopted.

A smaller grant is also allocated for children whose parents serve in the armed forces. Nationally, this group of children is not under-achieving compared to their peers but the premium enables schools to provide extra support including pastoral support where required. Children whose parents have left the Services since April 2011 (when the Premium was first introduced) will still be eligible, up to a maximum of six years.

Who is entitled to Free School Meals?

Your child may be entitled to Free School Meals, if you are entitled to receive any of the following: If your child is eligible for free school meals, it is worth registering them even if they're not going to have the school lunch. It will have a direct impact on the funding and will maximize the support we can provide.

- ☐ Income Support
- ☐ Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- ☐ Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- ☐ Support from NASS (National Asylum Support Service) under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- ☐ The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - ☐ Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of no more than £16,190
- ☐ Working Tax Credit run-on
- ☐ Universal Credit.

How do I apply?

Contact the school office by emailing: office@millbrook.vale-academy.org with the parent's full name, date of birth and National Insurance number. We will check your details with the Free School Meal Hub and let you know if you are eligible.

FROM update – non-uniform day!



The FROM are keen to continue their good work and are organising a non-uniform day on **Friday 6th November**. We ask that in exchange for wearing their non-uniform, each child brings in a **donation of £1** which will go towards improving our school! Please look out for the next edition of our newsletter to hear more from FROM and all the wonderful work they have been doing!

Times Tables Rockstars & Hit the Button



We have access to the Times Tables Rockstars online resource. This is popular amongst pupils as they can challenge themselves to improve their times tables as well as trying to improve the time it takes them to answer questions. Similarly, our younger pupils in Year 2 should endeavour to practise their skills on Hit the Button online resource, which aids their multiplication speed and fluency. Both links can be accessed from our school website using the links for children under the Home Learning Extra tab:

<https://www.millbrookschoool.org.uk/home-learning-extra/>

Contacting us



Please make sure that we have the most up to date contact details for you. If your details have changed over the summer, please let the school office know:

office@millbrook.vale-academy.org

Useful SEN Links

Please see the link below to a new area of the **National Autistic Society** website:

Is it Mental Health Awareness Day on 10th October. Have you seen our [new guidance pages on mental health and autism?](#) Explore these pages and click on the "professionals" tab for useful information to help you when working with autistic people.

Autism support groups:

<http://oasisonline.org.uk/>

<http://www.afso.org.uk/>

Support for parents of children with special needs:

<https://www.shift-abingdon.org.uk/>

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer/support-services-send/support-families>

<https://sendiass-oxfordshire.org.uk/about-us/>

Safeguarding – What you can do



Parents and carers play a vital role in safeguarding children in their community. If you have any worries or concerns about a family or child, no matter how small, you can raise it with the school safeguarding team, contact the office or get advice from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This safeguarding hub seeks to enable the sharing of information so that risks to children can be identified at an early stage. It is a link between universal services, such as schools and GPs, and statutory services, such as police and social care. **If you have a concern about a child, please call MASH on 0345 050 7666.**

This website is a useful place to find out about lots of support and information about a range of issues that may be worrying you:

[#https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/practitioner_toolkit.page #](https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/practitioner_toolkit.page)

Handwashing advice



It is essential that everyone washes their hands more often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Hand washing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside). The latest guidance and video on hand washing can be found

at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

