



# Millbrook Connect

## Believe Achieve Succeed

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of our first term of 2022, we are delighted to bring you our latest edition of Millbrook Connect which is jam-packed with updates, news and photos of many of the brilliant things that have gone on this term!

One particular highlight for us was this Wednesday, when we held our postponed 'Christmas Dinner Day'. The children absolutely loved it! We went all out with roast turkey dinners, crackers, hats, Christmas jumpers and Christmas tunes!!! With Year 6 not being in school at the end of last term, it didn't feel right that they missed their last ever Christmas dinner at primary school; we are so pleased they didn't have to! ③ Next term, we launch new school dinner menus – read on to find out more!

FROM have also been busy (read on to find out more about a range of upcoming events!) and held a successful Chocolate Tombola and raffle – our continued thanks to Katie and the team who we really couldn't survive without! Their contributions to our curriculum and resources are enabling us to enrich our children's learning experiences every day.

Now, make a cuppa, sit down and enjoy this term's Connect!

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## **Millbrook Manners in the Community**



Inspired by one of our recent assemblies, some of our children have injected their Millbrook manners into improving our school grounds! We have a team of regular litter-pickers who volunteer most lunchtimes to collect litter from around the

different playgrounds and the school field – thank you Emily, Elara and Orlah!



These children are an asset to our school with their determined attitudes and embody our school values of 'Kindness' and 'Responsibility'.



In addition to our litter-pickers, we also have a team of Year 4 children known as 'The Crop Crew' who formed with the intention of developing sustainable growth opportunities within our school grounds. Managing their budget, the team have

purchased various seeds and are working alongside Mrs Wheatley to identify the best spot to grow their foods! Read on to find out more about our Nursery's plans to develop an Eco Garden!

Go Team Millbrook!

## Curriculum Update Go Team Millbrook!

It has been another amazing term at Millbrook; we have loved sharing some of the children's wonderful work with you all via our Twitter and Facebook pages and we continue to be incredibly proud of all that our children have achieved! This term, our teaching and learning development work has lots of great work by our wonderful staff team:

✤ Mr Baish has continued to work with subject leads to refine planning in their subjects – we are so proud of the work that all of our teachers have been doing to ensure that lessons and units are engaging and are helping children to

make links in their learning.

• Our teachers all attended a staff meeting about the role of the subject leader - there was some

fabulous discussion and teachers had the opportunity to 'quiz' each other about their subjects as well as share some 'golden nuggets' to support others!

We have been working on hard on updating our website curriculum areas and creating subject overview booklets to showcase our new curriculum approach – please do take a peek at our website to see the latest updates!

#### https://www.millbrookschool.org.uk/topic/our-curriculum

- Our Senior Leadership Team also conducted another 'learning walk' earlier this term, to see our curriculum in action. Mrs Charlton and Mrs Youngman were wowed by our children's ability to talk about their learning journeys including what they were learning about, why they were learning it and how their lesson was helping them with their final outcome. The children taught Mrs Charlton and Mrs Youngman a few things as well!
- We also welcomed Mrs Pittard (VAT Director of Learning) and a small team of local VAT staff to look at the work we have completed towards developing our curriculum. The team spoke to children, staff, leaders; watched lessons and reviewed plans. We were delighted with the feedback and to hear how amazingly our children spoke about their learning journeys! We were incredibly proud of the team! Here is a little snippet from our report:

Children were genuinely excited to speak about their learning – pupils could naturally see links between geographical understanding and how this helped them in history

- ✓ All available time has been very effectively used for curriculum development activity which is really driving the rapid improvements seen
- ✓ Careful thought has gone into how to evaluate the quality of the curriculum
- ✓ An overwhelming sense of support for early career teachers in planning and implementation
  of the curriculum.









## **School Development Priorities**

We are once again are delighted to share a short update of what we have achieved this term:

#### Key Priority 1: Curriculum Implementation

Focus on the implementation of the newly developed curriculum so that it is taught consistently well from Early years to Year 6.

- ✓ Our January INSET Day included a curriculum update to all staff about progress; key documentation and next steps
- ✓ Subject leads have continued to work with teachers to support their planning and lead some fabulous staff meetings!
- Cross-school collaboration with other VAT schools, has continued to grow and develop so that we can share ideas together (for example Writing)
- ✓ A Writing review staff meeting was held to share some examples of great practice across the school – there was some amazing writing to celebrate!

#### Key Priority 2: Early Reading

Implement the newly chosen phonics programme from Nursery to Year 4 (Read, Write, Inc) and ensure that all staff are trained to deliver it effectively.

✓ We were delighted to welcome Lynn Knapp (National Leader of Education) to Millbrook so that she could provide some feedback and validation around the implementation of Read, Write Inc. We were delighted with her feedback about the great work that has been completed by our Phonics Team. Here are just a couple of comments from our report:



- The training that has been put in for Read, Write, Inc has had a positive impact on the teaching of phonics.
- Pupils confirmed that the teaching of phonics has improved and that they have made progress with their learning.
- The support staff who were observed were skilled in moving pupils on with their reading.

#### Key Priority 3: Grow and develop teachers

Grow and support teachers to develop their practice so that teaching across the school is excellent.

- ✓ Senior leaders have continued to work with teachers to plan units of work
- Mrs Wheatley has been working with every class to develop and grow provision for children with Special Educational Needs – this has included talking to pupils about what they feel would help them in their learning
- ✓ An exciting joint coaching project has been launched with senior leaders and staff across both Millbrook and Charlton primary schools. This is a two-year project led by Mrs Youngman and Mrs Campbell (from Charlton) to implement a new, supportive model of professional development for teachers linked to 'instructional coaching'. This will provide specific and individualised coaching for all teachers to develop their practice. We are very excited about this new venture and will keep you updated!

## Information for parents: 2022 multiplication tables check



#### Do you have a child in year 4 at school?

If so, your child will be participating in the multiplication tables check in June. The purpose of the check is to determine whether your child can fluently recall their times tables up to 12, which is essential for future success in mathematics. It will also help us to identify if your child may need additional support.

#### What is the Multiplication tables check?

It is an on-screen check consisting of 25 times table questions. Your child will be able to answer 3 practice questions before taking the actual check. They will then have 6 seconds to answer each question. On average, the check should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete.

#### What if my child cannot access the check?

There are several access arrangements available for the check, these can be used to support pupils with specific needs. Your child's teacher will ensure that the access arrangements are appropriate for your child before they take the check in June. The check has been designed so that it is inclusive and accessible to as many children as possible, including those with special educational needs or disability (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL).

However, there may be some circumstances in which it will not be appropriate for a pupil to take the check, even when using suitable access arrangements. If you have any concerns about your child accessing the check, you should discuss this with your child's teacher or a member of the leadership team.

#### Do I need to do anything to prepare my child for the check?

No, you do not need to do anything additional to prepare your child for the check. As part of usual practice, you should practise times tables with your child. For ways to do this and links to useful websites please see our school website. You can find time table support on the home learning grid for Year 4: <u>https://www.millbrookschool.org.uk/home-learning/</u> and the link to Times Table Rockstars here: <u>https://www.millbrookschool.org.uk/millbrook-accelerated-reader-ar-and-times-table-ro/</u>

In school we will have unlimited access to a 'try it out' area from March. This can use this to make sure pupils have the necessary support required to access the check. This includes opportunities for pupils to familiarise themselves with the check application and try out any access arrangements that may be required.

#### How will the results be used?

Schools will have access to all their pupils' results, allowing those pupils who need additional support to be identified.

#### Will I receive feedback on my child's check?

Yes. Your child's teacher will share your child's score with you, as they would with all national curriculum assessments. There is no pass mark for the check.

## Change to our school dinner menus!

From Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February (the first day of next term) we are changing our school dinner menus. Please note that the menu begins on this week but begins on **week 3** of the menu below.

We will also be reverting back to the system of wristbands given to the children to indicate whether they are main, vegetarian or jacket potato (based on the choices booked on ParentPay).



Please continue to book your child's school dinner in the same way via ParentPay. If you have any further questions or queries please contact the school office on: <u>officemb@millbrook.vale-academy.org</u>





## Spotlight On...

#### This term the spotlight is on our school assemblies!

At Millbrook, children experience a wide range of opportunities to discuss and share ideas about important, inspiring and current topics during our weekly assemblies.





On Mondays, our assemblies are led by Mrs Wheatley and Mrs Youngman. The aim of these assemblies is to teach our children about a wide and diverse range of themes and issues affecting children's lives today and highlight some amazing role models in order to help them grow into respectful young people who can make a positive difference in the world.

This term we have covered lots of interesting topics, including: Storytelling Week, World Religion Day and Veganuary, and in previous terms we have explored a range of inspirational people, such as Malala Yousafzai; Marcus Rashford; Katherine Johnson as well as topics such as refugees; the UN rights of the child, and Mental Health Awareness.

We have been hugely impressed with the mature views and ideas that the children have shared and can't wait for the term ahead!



## **Millbrook Pupil Parliament Update**



Our brilliant Pupil Parliament have continued to be as busy as ever this term! The Kindness Crew have gone from strength to strength! It continues to make us very proud to see how the 'culture of kindness' at Millbrook underpins all we do and inspires our children to want to model this in every part of their lives. We even have a waiting list to 'join the crew!'

The impact of their hard work is clear to see; one of our pupils even explained one breaktime after a little disagreement with a friend how a Kindness Crew member had offered some advice:

#### "The Kindness Crew have spoken to me and I am going to take five minutes."

This term the parliament have set their sights on their next, exciting project! After much discussion and lots of great ideas, we were delighted to hear that the children wanted their next project to be linked to **developing our classroom reading corners across the school and igniting 'the magic' of reading!** 

They came up with some amazing ideas for all our classroom reading corners:

- Blankets/cushions
- Low tables
- Headphones and calm music
- Fairy lights
- More of the latest books
- Pupil recommendations
- Plants
- Snacks to eat whilst reading (this one might be tricky!!)



Harry and Emily (Head Boy and Girl) then 'pitched' their ideas to Mr. Rose (in true Dragons' Den style!) and are planning their next steps! They shared their ideas via a brilliant PowerPoint and even made a representation of their vision using Tinkercad, a program that they earnt about in their Computing lessons! We can't wait to see the reading corners when they are finished!

Our parliament have also been working closely with the other VAT primaries and the VAT (Vale Academy Trust) Parliament led by a group

of fantastic secondary students from King Alfred's and Larkmead – they have decided to host an 'International Day' later this year across all of the VAT primaries, so that our children can learn more about different countries across the world. They have been carefully planning the activities – we will keep you posted!

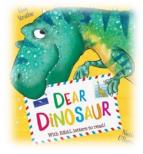
## **Elara's Sporting Dedication**



We love hearing all about our children's achievements outside of school and this is no exception! Elara from Swallowtail Class has made her parents (and us!) extremely proud with her recent commitment to her sporting activities. Elara swims for White Horse Swim Club and usually swims twice a week, but last weekend she also swam at 06:30 on Saturday for 1.5 hours! This week she will only have Monday as her free day as she will be doing Gymnastics on Tuesday, Fight Club (Kickboxing) on Wednesday, further Kickboxing training on Thursday, swimming on Friday, swimming at 06:30 on Saturday and swimming on Sunday!! And she still comes into school with a bright happy face! (3) Her

parents tell us that they do not push her in any way and are simply her means of travel to her dedications which she is always happy to commit to!

Our school motto Believe Achieve Succeed is in full action again – great stuff Elara!



#### Year 1 Dinosaur Party

Last Friday, Year 1 celebrated a special occasion - we held a birthday party for the T-Rex from our book, 'Dear Dinosaur.' First, we played Musical Statues: Meadow won the game and Mason M got a prize for his excellent dancing! Then we played Pass the Parcel. The winners of the game

(Sherry and Lexi) received a special stationery gift. Then we ate lots and <u>lots</u> of delicious party food: there were Party Rings, Chocolate Fingers and Mrs Dixey made us some special dinosaurshaped sandwiches! Finally, we had a crazy disco where we played 'Keepie-Uppie' with balloons and danced to Wham! We all really enjoyed our special party for the dinosaur!











## **Our New Nursery**

You may not have seen our new nursery in person yet but trust us, it has changed a lot! The new, purposely build space for the youngest members of Millbrook Family is exceptional. The classroom is light, airy, full of natural objects and the children love their new 'home from home.' We've already had the chance to celebrate some birthdays, sports achievements, Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day but it is just the beginning of our new adventure.

A big, open-plan classroom which has dedicated areas to explore freely each day. Enjoy your journey 🐵

#### **Calm Area for Books**

Book area with our Tipi is used for quiet looking/reading either individually or groups as appropriate. Children choose from a broad range of fiction and non-fiction books including some which are relevant to what the children are learning. The space is also used for group song times, rhyming and rhythmic activities.



#### Home Corner and Dress Up

We decided to using authentic, homely resources. It encourages children to role play in familiar,



cosy surroundings. Making cups of tea using real teabags they measure, pour, and play co-operatively. Modelled careful use of kitchen utensils and real China practises-controlled and careful handling of tools – two and single handed.

Adding props and backdrop creates a fantasy world of dreams, hopes and imagination, with permission to be something or someone different. Children determine what their characters will do and say and how to

react to evolving situations. Freely expressing imagination develops storytelling, collaboration, and productive social interactions.

Inspiring curious minds is what we do best!

#### **Loose Parts**

The opposite of toys (which are designed with a specific purpose in mind), loose parts know no such restriction. We love to watch our children using them so creatively. They have no set instruction, can be combined, moved, taken apart, redesigned, lined up, stacked... the only boundary being that of the



imagination. Loose parts can be natural or synthetic, small, or large; anything

from boxes, to pine cones, Scrabble letters to marbles. Play is not directed and evolves in amazing ways – becoming increasingly purposeful as children start to plan what to act out or invent.

#### Construction



Construction is where the children flourish! The creation of abstract entities, develops their problem-solving skills, encourages thinking freely, decision making and flexibility, basic geometry, spatial awareness, and collaboration. We encouraged them to using natural and authentic materials: tubes, blocks, planks, tyres, crates and boxes a whole unique environment and





community can be built. Tinkering and experimenting, exploring cause and effect, and hypothesising all develop children's innate curiosity. The woodwork table outside is where real tools and real wood could be used to create masterpieces of carpentry. Noticeably children who normally will not persevere at a task will work longer at woodwork, realising that it is something not only truly challenging but is producing something 'real'. Children are guided to keep themselves and others safe – learning to treat tools with care and respect.

#### **Small World**

Playing with dinosaurs, cars, trains, animals, figures, fairy gardens and model houses all helps build language skills, vocabulary and understanding.

In groups or independently, civilisations and fantasy worlds can be created in familiar, safe surroundings with high levels of collaboration and interaction.

Children communicate knowledge about life and the world around them, acting out stories and different scenarios.

Emotions can be explored and worries or concerns expressed through a character, doll, or animal.



#### **Outdoor Learning**

Pick up the backpack or a bike and go for a walk with us. Our new, extensive outdoor area is still work in progress but it is our playground – we are always discovering something new, tree stumps alive with insects, bird's nests, trees to climb. We can practise crossing roads walking safely, do tree bark rubbings, explore beneath rocks, and leaf piles. We run, jump, soon roll down the hill and make as much noise as we like. We discuss discoveries, question, and form hypotheses.



#### And our next step... An Eco Garden

We would love to create our own eco garden providing habitats to attract bugs and insects, and encouraging an appreciation of nature and the environment in children. One of the ways we would champion this is by teaching the children how to grow their own fruit and vegetables, and then teaching them how to use these ingredients, so they begin to understand the cycle of food and about nutrition. Fruit and vegetable peelings from our snack buffet will be composted to help us grow our own fruit and vegetables.

#### What do our children say?

Alessia: 'I like making pictures and drawings'

Teagan: 'Home corner is best! It has a kitchen and I can make pancakes! I like the books too!' Lewis: 'I like building with the blocks and make horses with paper tubes. I love horses and you! ' Joshua B: 'I love to play with all my new friends, trains and trucks.'

Daisy 'We have food, like the rice we tried and fruits so we can eat them. I love bananas!' Lily M: 'I like all toys and playing with them with all my friends, big and small!'



## Christmas Dinner Day....in February!

On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February at Millbrook Primary School we held our postponed Christmas Dinner Day! The children absolutely loved it and it felt so lovely to hear all the laughter and singing as well as seeing all their Christmas jumpers again!!! <u>#hohohoho</u> <u>#MerryChristmasEveryone</u> <u>#FebruaryisthenewDecember</u> <u>#millbrookmagic</u> <u>#whatateam</u> <u>#itsbeginningtolookalotlikechristmas</u>











More photos on the next page...





















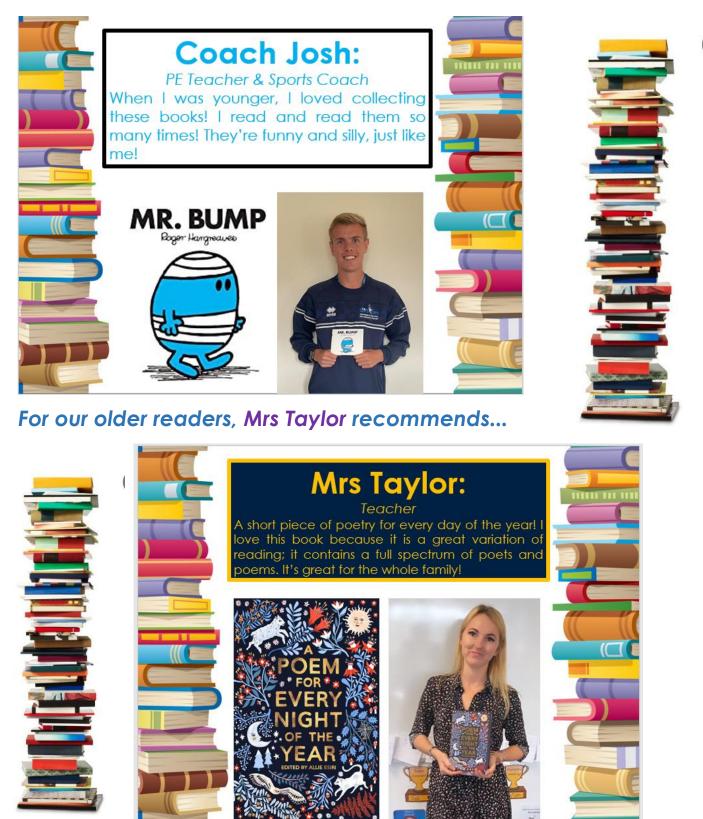




**Book Corner!** Looking for a good book? In this section, we have asked two of our teachers to recommend a book they've enjoyed recently!



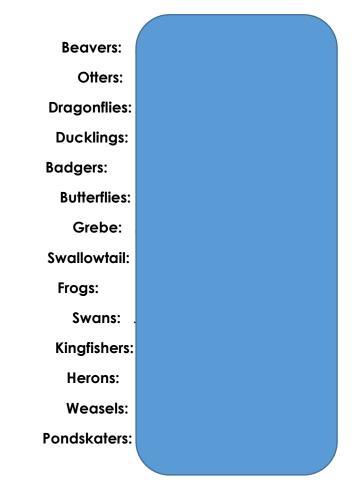
#### For our younger readers, Coach Josh recommends...



## Stars of the Term



Congratulations to the following children for being this term's Stars of the Term!



## 



A message from our Chair of FROM Katie:

I just wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone who had a turn at the chocolate tombola and the chocolate raffle! Also, to everyone who donated the chocolate in the first place! We raised  $\pounds$ 217 in total which is an amazing amount and it was all down to you! Thank you!

We are aiming to raise  $\pounds$ 2000 to put towards brand new i-Pads for the school, these will be used throughout the whole school and will be an amazing resource for all of our children.

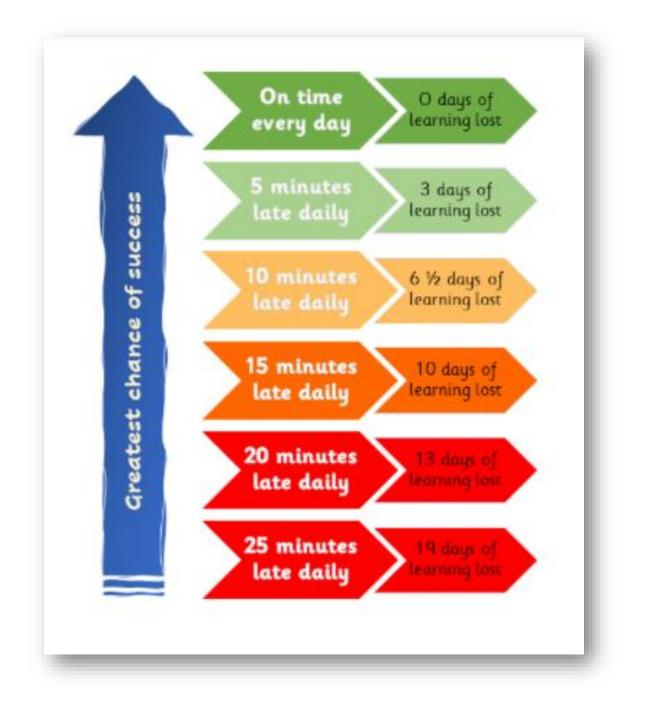
We have some exciting events planned for the coming months! Exact dates are to be confirmed, but we hope to hold another disco, our famous Easter Bingo, and a very exciting event to commemorate The Queens Platinum Jubilee!

Please consider volunteering at these events, even if it is just half an hour, or to stay behind at the end to help clear up. Any help is massively appreciated 💙



### **Learning Days Lost**

The school gates are opened at 8:40am to allow children time to settle into class before the register is taken promptly at 8:50am. It is noticeable that a number of children are still arriving late. The following table illustrates the impact lateness can cause on school attendance. Please make every effort to ensure your child is ready in the classroom to start at 8:50am.



## Key Dates for the Diary



#### February 2022

Mon 28th February: Children back to school for Term 4

Wk beg 28th February: New school dinner menu launched (beg on wk 3 of the menu)

#### March 2022

March: FROM School Disco – exact date to be confirmed

Tues 1<sup>st</sup> March: FROM meeting – 7.30pm (at Millbrook School)

Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> March: World Book Day – children come dressed as a 'word' of their choice

**Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> March (6-7pm):** Bedtime, Bears and Books evening at school for parents, staff and pupils in Key Stage 1 – more information to follow

Fri 4<sup>th</sup> March: Star of the Term presentations (9am: KS2 2:30pm: KS1)

Mon 14th March: Grove Library 50th Birthday (2-5pm)

Wed 30th March: Science Explorer Dome in school

#### April 2022

April: FROM Easter Bingo – exact date to be confirmed

Fri 1<sup>st</sup> April: i-Rock Concert for parents at 9.30-10am (more details and info to follow)

Fri 8th April: Last day of term. Finish at 12pm!





## **Millbrook Primary School**

#### 2021 - 2022 School Calendar

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|    | July '22 |               |    |    |    |    |  |  |
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| Su | M        | M TU W Th F S |    |    |    |    |  |  |
|    |          |               |    |    | 1  | 2  |  |  |
| 3  | 4        | 5             | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |  |  |
| 10 | 11       | 12            | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |  |  |
| 17 | 18       | 19            | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |  |  |
| 24 | 25       | 26            | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |  |  |
| 31 |          |               |    |    |    |    |  |  |

School Closed/ Holidays

INSET Day - September 1st & 2nd / October 18th 2021

November 1<sup>st</sup> 2021/ January 4<sup>th</sup> 2021

June 6<sup>th</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> 2022



## **Oxfordshire Libraries**

# **Grove Library** is turning 50!

## **MARCH 2022**

## CELEBRATE THIS SPECIAL BIRTHDAY WITH US Come along and share some birthday cake on Monday 14th March, 2-5pm TIME TRAVEL WITH US THROUGHOUT MARCH We will have a display of what life was like in

1972, with photos, memorabilia, and bestselling books from the year.

grove.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk

01235 763841

@oxonlibraries G Oxfordshire Libraries



#### **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.millbrookschool.org.uk/home-learning-extra/

#### **Contacting you**



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

officemb@millbrook.vale-academy.org

#### 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 #

#### Handwashing advice

Stay Sap

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).

