



## Merton Abbey Primary School Newsletter February 2026



**"WORKING HARD AND CARING FOR EACH OTHER"**

### Dear Parents and Carers,

2026 has got off to a good start at Merton Abbey. We have received a letter from Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, saying:

*'Congratulations to you and your team on the excellent outcomes the disadvantaged pupils at Merton Abbey Primary School achieved at the end of the 2024/25 academic year. Your school's performance places it among the very best nationally, and this is a significant achievement.'*

*Disadvantaged* is a term the government uses for a number of different groups, including those who are economically disadvantaged. Interestingly, our disadvantaged pupils achieved exactly the same results as their non-disadvantaged peers. Both groups, i.e. all of our pupils, achieved well above the national average.

So well done to our pupils, and all the staff who helped them achieve so well. Let's keep building on that success this year.

**Michael Bradley, Headteacher**

### Update from the Governing Board

**"Celebrate, Sustain, and Grow"** - our strategic priorities for the years ahead

One of the things the Governors have worked on with Mr Bradley and the

leadership team is to create some clear priorities for things we think are most important for the school in the years ahead. These are designed to ensure Merton Abbey can continue to live up to its ethos of **"Working hard and caring for each other"**

We felt there were three key themes for us to focus on:

#### 1. Celebrate

Merton Abbey has a fantastic inclusive and supportive culture. We do exceptional work, particularly in areas of inclusion for those with extra needs, that we want to make sure is widely understood and promoted.

We're focusing on actions that will improve the way the school communicates its successes and strengths, plus making sure our parents and partners are kept up to date. Our updated website is a really positive first step in this area.

In 2027 we have a very special event; the centenary of Merton Abbey. We'll be working with the leadership team and Friends of Merton Abbey to make the centenary a focus for the celebration of what we do.

#### 2. Sustain

With fewer families living in central London, pupil numbers in Merton are falling. Combined with rising costs like heating, keeping the school financially and operationally sustainable is something we have to really focus on.

The governors will be working with the leadership team on our staffing model and budgets, to make sure our work is affordable and balanced, with manageable workloads for staff.

#### 3. Grow

We have some capacity to take on more students in most of our year groups. We have agreed a priority to make sure we are publicising and promoting the school to families who may be moving into the area, particularly with new developments nearby.

We're also hoping to actively increase the breadth and depth of partnerships we have with other organisations in the area.

If you would like a copy of the full document on our strategic priorities, or to get involved with this work, please do get in touch. We would be happy to share the document with you.

Finally, we will be saying thank you and goodbye to Ryan Dale who has served on the Governors Board for the last ... years. We are therefore looking for a new governor, with accounting skills, who will be able to focus on our account and finances. If you know someone with appropriate skills who might be interested, do let us know.

As always feel free to contact us at [rpembrooke@mertonabbey.merton.sch.uk](mailto:rpembrooke@mertonabbey.merton.sch.uk)

or

[bsanasi@mertonabbey.merton.sch.uk](mailto:bsanasi@mertonabbey.merton.sch.uk)

Thank you!

**Robin Pembroke, Chair of Governors**



### Year 2 to the Magic Circle

Year 2 visited the Magic Circle to further support their learning on the book, *Leon and the Place Between* – a book about magic and belief. The day was fantastic. The children were treated to a tour of the museum, learned how to do magic tricks, saw the amazing Brendan Rodrigues, and even saw the vice-president, Michael J Fitch, perform in the theatre. Many children and adults were chosen to

participate with the tricks. We even saw one child fly! Thanks to the parents who supported with the trip – you know who you are!"

### Mark Oglesby, Year 2 Teacher



### Year 4 Visit to Polka Theatre

Year 4 pupils recently enjoyed a fantastic visit to the Polka Theatre to watch a live performance of *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*. This was a particularly special experience, as the children had studied the text during their literacy lessons in the previous term. Seeing the story brought to life on stage helped to deepen their understanding and enthusiasm for the book.

The children had a wonderful time and were fully engaged throughout the performance. It was a joy to see their excitement and delight as familiar characters and scenes unfolded before them. Many pupils were able to make clear links between the production and their prior reading and writing, making the experience both enjoyable and educational.

This memorable opportunity was made possible thanks to our valued partnership with Polka Theatre, who generously provided tickets for the performance. As a partner school, we are delighted that every child in school has had the chance to experience live theatre, enriching their

learning and inspiring a love of the arts.

### Lisa Laker, Year 4 Teacher



### Year 2 Library Visit

Year 2 visited Colliers Wood library to take out a book. At the library, the book, *Poo in the Zoo*, was read to them. Throughout the story, children in groups had the opportunity to tell their version of what happened next to the rest of the class. Thank you to Kayden's Mum for taking the time to help with the local trip.

### Mark Oglesby, Year 2 Teacher

### FoMA February newsletter



Whilst Christmas feels like a lifetime ago we wanted to say a big thank you to everyone involved in helping create another wonderful event with our 'Christmas Cheer' at the end of last term. From the twinkling lights of the Grotto to the fantastic festive performances and of course the highly popular raffle. It was yet another fantastic success, raising an incredible £2,200.

We finished off the term with a Christmas movie night where we got to premier our new speakers in the hall...funded by FoMA! It is really brilliant that due to all the support we get from our amazing school community we can fund items like this. We kicked off our 2026 calendar with a Valentines Disco where love was in the air. Beautiful to see all the children having such a lovely time together.

We have lots of exciting events planned for the next few months including the return of the Bradley Bar sale, our hugely successful Colour Run and lots more. As always if you have any ideas that you'd like to share we openly welcome them! Find us on Instagram, Facebook or email;

[mertonabbeyfriends@gmail.com](mailto:mertonabbeyfriends@gmail.com)

### Walk Like an Egyptian-Year 3 Meet Ancient Egypt



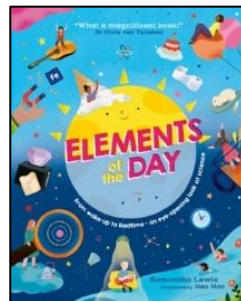
Year 3 had an exciting trip to the British Museum to learn more about Ancient Egypt. The children saw real mummies, coffins and statues that were over three thousand years old. They looked at beautiful amulets, images of gods and goddesses, mummies, wrapped animals, the **Book of the Dead** and many other fascinating artefacts. The children were engaged throughout the visit, taking part in activities and asking thoughtful questions. It was wonderful to see how confidently they could recognise different Egyptian gods and explain the mummification process, clearly showing how much they had learnt at school. The children also enjoyed

looking closely at hieroglyphics and hunting for pharaoh symbols around the museum, making the trip engaging and memorable.

### Meet Author Samantha Lewis and Explore the Elements!



We are excited to welcome author Samantha Lewis to our school during British Science Week **on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March** for her interactive event, *Elements of the Day*! This exciting session will introduce children to the amazing world of elements – the building blocks of everything we see, touch and taste – through fun games, fascinating stories and an astonishing demo



We would like to encourage all parents and carers to purchase a copy of *Elements of the Day* before the event so that children can bring their books along to be signed by Samantha Lewis.

**Monika Brown, Year 3 Teacher**

### Free Breakfast Club

Under a new government programme, all schools will be offering free breakfast clubs from September

2026. At Merton Abbey, we will be starting our free breakfast club from April 2026, just after the Easter Holidays. This means we will be able to help more children have a great start to the school day. Look out for more information which we will be sharing after the February half-term.

### Ramadan

We want to mark the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan so we will be making special signs and posters in all classes. We would love families to come and join us, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Please come along to the Ramadan craft activities on Monday 23rd February 2026 between 2.30pm-3.30pm. The timings for nursery children are a little different: 8.30am or 3.00pm.



### Champs Within

In February and March our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to take part in an innovative sporting programme: non-contact boxing. The course is run by Champs Within and will teach the children the values of sporting discipline found in boxing, without the dangers of contact. We are looking forward to seeing how the children get on!



### Pancake races

Our pancake races were a great way to teach children about the beginning of the important Christian season of Lent. Lots of our families came along to take part and had lots of fun, racing and tossing the pancakes. We hope you enjoy eating your pancakes on Tuesday.

### Term dates

#### Spring Term 2026

Half term: Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February 2026  
Last day: Friday 27th March 2026

#### Summer Term 2026

INSET day for staff: Monday 13th April 2026  
First day for children \*\*: Tuesday 14th April 2026  
Half term: Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May 2026  
Last day: Friday 17th July 2026  
INSET day for staff: Monday 20th July

#### Autumn Term

INSET day for staff: Wednesday 2nd September 2026  
First day for children \*: Thursday 3rd September 2026  
INSET day for staff: Friday 23rd October 2026  
Half term: Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October 2026  
Last day: Friday 18th December 2026

#### Spring term 2027

INSET day for staff: Monday 4th January 2027  
First day for children \*\*: Tuesday 5th January 2027

Half term: Monday 15th February to Friday 19th February 2027  
Last day: Thursday 25th March 2027

#### Summer Term 2027

INSET day for staff: Monday 12th April 2027  
First day for children \*\*: Tuesday 13th April 2027  
Half term: Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June 2027  
INSET day for staff: Monday 7th June 2027  
Last day: Thursday 22nd July 2027

\* Children in Reception and Nursery have different start dates in the Autumn Term

\*\* Children in Nursery have different start dates in the Spring and Summer Term