



11th September 2020

Newsletter

Welcome to a new school year at Mortimer St. John's. Whilst it has certainly been different this year, we hope you have all had a relaxing and enjoyable summer break. We would like to extend a special welcome to our new families and children who have joined us this term. We look forward to a successful term ahead.

COVID-19 TESTING

If you or your child are suffering from symptoms of Covid-19 (high temperature, new continuous cough or a change or loss of sense of taste or smell) you need to self-isolate and obtain a coronavirus test. The fastest way to get a test result is to go to a testing site. You will need a pre-booked appointment or you will not be given a test. You can also order a home test kit to be sent direct to your home. To book an appointment or order a home kit, please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>

These routes remain the primary channels for any individuals displaying coronavirus symptoms to get a test.

CORONAVIRUS

Visiting School - If you need to speak to the school at any time, please contact the school by phone on 0118 9332242 or by email on officemsj@mortimerschools.org. You will not be able to speak to a member of staff face to face without making an appointment in advance. Appointments will only be made in exceptional circumstances so we can ensure that you and our staff are kept safe.

School uniform - All pupils are expected to come to school in their full school uniform. In accordance with DfE guidance, uniforms do not need to be cleaned any more often than usual, nor do they need to be cleaned using methods which are different from normal.

Our school uniform is vital in contributing to the ethos of the school and sets an appropriate tone for pupils to return to learning.

Symptoms of Coronavirus - As per the current NHS and government advice, you should keep your child at home for a period of 10 days if they develop coronavirus symptoms. Symptoms include a high temperature, a new continuous cough, and a loss of sense of taste or smell. Where symptoms continue after 7 days, or begin to worsen, you should call 111. If someone in your child's household has symptoms, your child must self-isolate for 14 days from the day the other person's symptoms started. This is because it can take 14 days for symptoms to appear. More information regarding symptoms and actions can be found on the NHS website (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>).

School will insist that any child(ren) or member(s) of staff who show any symptoms that may be compatible with coronavirus, book a test immediately. Any child(ren) or member of staff displaying symptoms

will not be permitted to return to school until the test result is confirmed and, if necessary, the period of isolation is complete.

If someone, you or your child, has been in close proximity to has tested positive for Coronavirus, you may be contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service. Information on the NHS Test and Trace service is available via the following link: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youre-contacted-after-testing-positive-for-coronavirus/>

If you think your child may have been exposed to or has coronavirus, please contact the school at the earliest opportunity.

Maintaining a safe school environment

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the preventative measures the school has put in place in order to minimise the spread of infection.

As per the advice from the government, the following actions for infection control remain in place:

- Encouraging good hygiene by promoting the importance of handwashing for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap on arrival at school, after using the toilet, after breaks and sporting activities, before eating any food (including snacks) and before leaving school.
- Installing alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60 percent alcohol throughout the school
- Ensuring pupils and staff understand that they must cover their mouth and nose with a tissue before they cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue away
- Ensuring frequently touched objects and surfaces are cleaned and disinfected more regularly than usual
- If someone becomes unwell they will be isolated in a separate room, and providing a separate bathroom, where possible
- Telling staff to stay at home for at least 10 days if they develop symptoms of coronavirus and to arrange a test.
- Arranging classrooms so that children are seated side by side facing forwards and removing unnecessary furniture and equipment.

Attendance

From September 2020, the normal rules around school attendance apply. Therefore, we must remind you of your duty to secure that your child(ren) attend school regularly. School has a responsibility to record attendance for all children and follow up absence.

Share Your Light
Impartias Lucem Tuam

Matthew 25:29 "For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance"



PROTECTING CHILDREN ONLINE

Along with the many positive things which young people may see or experience online, they may also encounter things which may worry or upset them. This could be anything from a scary picture or hateful comment, to something which is intended for an adult audience or potentially even illegal content. Please see the link below for great advice for parents/carers regarding what to do if your child sees something upsetting online.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/advice-parents-what-do-if-your-child-sees-something-upsetting-online>

The latest copy of our Online Safety newsletter containing good practise ideas for keeping your children safe whilst they are online is attached.

TERM DATES

Please see below a list of term dates, which we trust you will find of use. We will give you information concerning each event nearer the time.

Wednesday 30th September - Brain Busters Workshops

Thursday 1st October – Census Day

Wednesday 14th October – Harvest Celebrations

Tuesday 20th October – Bag2School Collection

Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October – Half Term

Tuesday 10th November – Parents' Evening

Thursday 12th November – School Photos

Thursday 14th November – Parents' Evening

Wednesday 18th November – Nasal Flu Vaccinations

Friday 18th December – End of Term 2pm

SCHOOL CENSUS DAY – THURSDAY 1st OCTOBER

On **Thursday 1st October** it is School Census Day. Since the introduction of Universal Free School Meals, the School is now liable for the cost of providing school dinners. Although we receive Government funding, this is dependent upon how many children have school dinners on Census Day.

The more children that have a school lunch on 1st October, the better the School is financially. This money can then be used for resources for the school towards the teaching and learning of your children.



CHILDREN'S MILK – YEARS 1 AND 2

Milk money for the remainder of this half term (14th September to 23rd October) is £6.00 or 20pence per day. If you would like your child to have milk please place the money in a named envelope and ask your child to give it to their class teacher.

Milk for the Foundation Stage children is provided free of charge.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

We currently have a vacancy for a Lunchtime Carer and Teaching Assistant. Please see the attached advert for further information.

WARM CLOTHIING

In line with government guidelines the school is being regularly ventilated and doors and windows are being left open where possible. As the weather gets colder please ensure that your child has additional layers of clothing available to keep them warm in warm in addition to a coat or a tracksuit for PE.

Please ensure that all of your children's belongings are clearly labelled.

HANDWRITING SHEET

At school we teach the children to use cursive script. To enable you to help your children with the formation of letters please see the attached hand writing sheet.

PENCIL GRIP INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

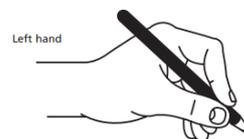
Why is having good pencil grip important? Holding a pencil or pen correctly requires strong finger and hand muscles and dexterity. A correct pencil grip will enable the writer to move the fingers, controlling the pencil or pen with efficient finger movements.

It is very important to address a poor pencil grip early. If it is not corrected, it can affect speed and fluency and impact on academic achievement, as well as put undue stress on developing joints causing pain when writing.

Please spend time checking your child's pencil grip.

Guidelines:

- ▶ the pencil is held in a stable position between the thumb, index and middle fingers
- ▶ the ring and little fingers are bent and rest comfortably on the table
- ▶ the index finger and thumb form an open space
- ▶ the wrist is bent back slightly, and the forearm is resting on the table
- ▶ the pencil is held about 1–2 cm from the tip.



Cited from www.morrellshandwriting.co.uk

ENCOURAGING YOUR CHILD TO READ

Encourage your child to read - Reading helps your child's wellbeing, develops imagination and has educational benefits too. Just a few minutes a day can have a big impact on children of all ages.

Read aloud regularly Try to read to your child every day. It's a special time to snuggle up and enjoy a story. Stories matter and children love re-reading them and poring over the pictures. Try adding funny voices to bring characters to life.

Encourage reading choice - Give children lots of opportunities to read different things in their own time - it doesn't just have to be books. There's fiction, non-fiction, poetry, comics, magazines, recipes and much more. Try leaving interesting reading material in different places around the home and see who picks it up.

Read together - Choose a favourite time to read together as a family and enjoy it. This might be everyone reading the same book together, reading different things at the same time, or getting your



children to read to each other. This time spent reading together can be relaxing for all.

Create a comfortable environment - Make a calm, comfortable place for your family to relax and read independently - or together.

Make use of your local library - Libraries in England are free to use and were able to reopen on 4 July, so visit them when you're able to and explore all sorts of reading ideas. Local libraries also offer brilliant online materials, including audiobooks and ebooks to borrow. See [Libraries Connected](#) for more digital library services and resources.

Talk about books - This is a great way to develop understanding and make reading even more enjoyable. Start by discussing the front cover and talking about what it reveals and suggests the book could be about. Then talk about what you've been reading and share ideas. You could discuss something that happened that surprised you, or something new that you found out. You could talk about how the book makes you feel and whether it reminds you of anything.

Bring reading to life - You could try cooking a recipe you've read together. Alternatively, play a game where you pretend to be the characters in a book, or discuss an interesting article you've read.

Make reading active - Play games that involve making connections between pictures, objects and words, such as reading about an object and finding similar things in your home. You could organise treasure hunts related to what you're reading. Try creating your child's very own book by using photos from your day and adding captions.

Engage your child in reading in a way that suits them - You know your child best and you'll know the best times for your child to read. If they have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) then short, creative activities may be the way to get them most interested. If English is an additional language, encourage reading in a child's first language, as well as in English. What matters most is that they enjoy it.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP – This week the children took part in virtual assemblies during which they were told all about the role of a Worship Leader in school. Each Key Stage 1 class will have their own Worship Leader. The children have been given the opportunity to apply if they would like to undertake this role. Further details to follow.