

Executive Headteacher: Ms Sarah Jane Bellerby

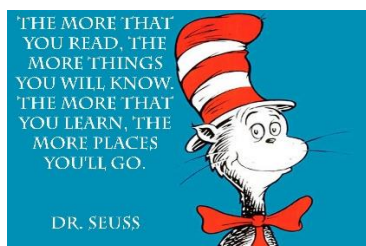
January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy New Year and welcome back to the Spring term! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday; the team have been really looking forward to welcoming all the children back to school. I would like to send a warm welcome to new families who have joined this term, I know the school community will do too.

As always, we would like to keep you informed about lots of upcoming events and launches, I have included some information that you might find useful below.

Reading



You may remember in a previous newsletter when I shared some fascinating statistics on children who are read to during the week and the number of words they learn, retain and use.

[The word gap:](#)

At 5 years old

Never read to – 4,622 words

1-2 times a week – 63, 570 words

3-5 times a week – 169, 520 words

Daily – 296, 600 words

Five books a day – 1, 483,300 words

Parents will be going through the stages now where their child will be applying their reading and phonics skills to read words independently, this is fantastic! However, there still needs to be many opportunities for you and your child to enjoy listening to and reading books together, this really supports their language development and comprehension on why stories are structured the way they are. Exploring why the author has chosen certain words and illustrations helps children understand purpose, meaning and inference which are important reading skills to practice and have!

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome Jo as the new teacher for Tiger Class. We are confident that Jo will feel right at home within the Wood Wharf community, and we look forward to the families getting to know her better in the coming months. Jo brings enthusiasm and a passion for teaching, and we are excited to see the positive impact she will have on the children in Tiger Class.

Congratulations...

We are thrilled to announce that Reema has welcomed a beautiful baby boy, and Sabiha has also recently given birth to a baby boy! We are absolutely delighted for both and wish them all the joy and happiness as they begin this wonderful new chapter in their lives. Congratulations to both families!

Exciting times

I have just concluded the Open Events for the September 2025 cohort of families (can you believe that this was many of you a year ago from now?) We have had a lot of interest in the school, and we have already recruited many families for next year as their first choice which is fantastic!



Celebrations and events

Next week we will share the celebrations and events calendar and assembly schedule. Just like in the autumn term, this will incorporate global events and cultural and religious celebrations from all faiths. We are an inclusive, community school and we welcome learning about family traditions. Please do not hesitate to come and tell us about a tradition that you would like us to mark in school and teach all the pupils about. We are currently reevaluating the timing of our

assemblies. After noticing that morning assemblies were impacting core learning time, we are exploring the possibility of moving assemblies to a more suitable time of day. Our goal is to ensure that the children have a balanced and effective schedule, and we will keep you informed of any changes. Celebration assemblies on Fridays will remain at 09.05am.

Here is a reminder of the assembly focus each day:

Monday – Value of the week

Tuesday – Global theme/Rights respecting

Wednesday – Singing

Thursday – Class assembly/give me 10

Friday – Celebration assembly - 9.05am Parents can attend

Parents evening

The next parent evening sessions will be:

Tuesday 18th and Wednesday 19^h March

Open door policy

Lindsay or I will always be available each morning, welcome and at the end of the day. We really enjoy talking to families so please feel free to approach any of us if you wish to discuss anything or give feedback. If it requires a private conversation or some more time, then we are more than happy to arrange a meeting with you. Please speak to one of us at the door or email admin@mulberrywoodwharf.org.uk

Class teachers also love talking to families, if there is something quite pressing that you would like the class teacher to know but they are unavailable then please let the admin team know or a senior leader who will get the message to them.

Attendance

It is a new term and yet again we are striving for a whole school target of **97%** weekly attendance! This is an absolute priority for the school, we are currently sitting around 92%!!! Each week the class with the best attendance will take the attendance trophy back to class to admire for the following week.

Extended leave

Please note that requests for extended leave from school will be unauthorised unless in exceptional circumstances. There have been many requests for extended leave in the autumn term, which have mostly been unauthorised. The school would never authorise a family holiday.

DfE Guidance on Attendance

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance clearly states that children should not take time off school for leave during term time. Regular attendance is crucial for maintaining progress in learning and missed school days can significantly impact a child's education. We kindly ask for

your support in ensuring your child attends school consistently so they can make the most of their learning opportunities.

Illness

We understand that children do become unwell, and it is best that they stay at home and rest and recover. It also prevents any unnecessary spread of infection. The NHS website is a good location for offering advice but in general:

- Please keep your child at home if they have a temperature, it is a sign that they are fighting an infection
- If your child has sickness, diarrhea, or both, then you must keep them at home for 48 hours since their last moment of sickness or diarrhea
- Please contact the school if your child is going to be absent so we can update our registration system. You can do this via telephone or email.

Punctuality

Thank you to parents for getting their child to school on time last term, we know how busy mornings can be for families. The children are much more settled and calmer when they arrive with their peers. A reminder of the registration times is:

8am: Breakfast club starts

8:50 – 09:00: Doors open for children to arrive

After 9am: Parents will be asked to fill in the lateness sheet, this is so we can track and ensure all children have been entered on the register

09:05am: The register will close

After 09:05am: pupils will be marked as late

3.30pm: End of the school day

4.30pm: End of school clubs

6.00pm: final collection at Premier Wraparound

Playground Update

We are excited to announce that we plan to open the playground very soon! The necessary risk assessments are in place, and we have made sure that clear communication and procedures for staff are ready to ensure a safe environment for all children. We will keep you updated with further details as we approach the opening. Thank you for your continued support!

Site Update

We understand that many parents have been eager for an update on the completion of the school building. At this time, I do not have a specific completion date, but please know that I will

share the latest information with you as soon as I receive it. I want to ensure that any updates I provide are accurate and reliable. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Homework

Class teachers will be sending out their half term letters this week detailing the upcoming learning that will be taking place in class. Please take the time to read these. Included in the letters will be details on how you can support your child at home this half term, including a home project linked to a class topic.

The Government believe that a sensible programme of homework activities for children in Key Stage 1 should be designed on average to take about 1 hour a week. At Key Stage 2 the demand should gradually increase so that by Years 5 and 6 children are spending about 30 minutes a day (two and a half hours a week) on homework. A reasonable time request is to be made of children, taking into consideration that several of our children may have out of school commitments.

At Mulberry Wood Wharf Primary we support home learning by:

- 1. Requesting daily reading**

As mentioned above, this is the most important homework for our children to do because it helps them to:

- Improve their spoken English, their English vocabulary and awareness of grammar
- Become more fluent readers with improved comprehension
- Develop their writing skills.

- 2. Spelling practice in Y1 and Y2**

- 3. Home projects linked to class topics, sent out by the class teacher**

- 4. Workshops for parents**

Teachers will be hosting workshops this term, we hope all parents will attend. Workshops are planned to be engaging and interactive and with purpose so that parents leave feeling well informed about the teaching and learning practice in school. The workshops always have tips for parents and ideas on how to support their child at home.

Worksheets

We prefer not to use worksheets as a tool for homework, they are not always developmentally appropriate for young children because they can be abstract in presenting a concept. Young children learn best by hands-on, concrete experiences. We are also very mindful of how much printing we do in school and have moved away from printing resources unless it enhances learning significantly.

Online learning

Class teachers will be informing parents of good online learning tools. We are also developing our online learning platform through the website and have already added some resources here

[Mulberry Learn – Mulberry Wood Wharf](#)

Our school values



As well as the values running through the curriculum, we focus on one per week so that children really understand what each of them mean. Each week, children are rewarded with a certificate in the celebration assembly where they have demonstrated the value of the week.

Value dates

w/c	Value
06.01.25	Kindness
13.01.25	Creativity
20.01.25	Resilience
27.01.25	Being Active
3.02.25	Respect
10.02.25	Community

Term dates

We will be sending out the 2025/26 term dates out shortly.

2024/25 dates

Spring Term	
Term 3:	Monday 6th January 2025 – Friday 14th February 2025
<i>Half Term 2:</i>	Monday 17th February 2025 – Friday 21st February 2025
Term 4:	Monday 24th February 2025 – Friday 4th April 2025
<i>Eid Al-Fitr (closed to pupils)</i> *TBC	Sunday 30th or Monday 31st March 2025
Easter Break:	Monday 7th April 2025 – Monday 21st April 2025
Summer Term	
Term 5:	Tuesday 22nd April 2025 – Friday 23rd May 2025
<i>Half Term 3:</i>	Monday 26th May 2025 – Friday 30th May 2025
Term 6:	Monday 2nd June 2025 – Tuesday 22nd July 2025
<i>Eid Al-Adha (closed to pupils)</i> *TBC	Friday 6th or Saturday 7th June 2025

In addition to this we will be closed on bank holidays.

As always, thank you parents for your continued and growing support, we feel very lucky to have you be a part of the school community.

Let's get busy learning!

Yours sincerely



Sarah Jane Bellerby

Executive Headteacher