



St Meryl News

April 2025

This will be a shorter-than-usual newsletter, as April appears to have flown by without us spending too much time at school!

I am pleased to report that pupils have settled into the routines of the Summer term very quickly, and we are all enjoying the benefits that the warm weather brings (daisy chain building, games on the field and not having to wear coats to name but a few).

Homework Feedback

Thank you to those of you who completed the Homework Survey. We used this information when staff met last week on INSET Day, and it formed part of a new approach to homework that we will be starting **next half term**.

At St Meryl School we believe that reading the most powerful way to unlock your child's full potential — academically, emotionally, and creatively. It is the cornerstone to all learning. It has often been expressed to you in newsletters and letters that if your child can read to a competent level, this will help them meet success in all other areas.

In general, we feel that we have been more supported by you this year when it comes to ensuring your child reads at home. However, our latest review has identified 43 children across the school who are *persistent non-readers*, meaning they are not recorded as reading at home at least three times a week — possibly not reading at home at all.

Our analysis shows:

- 9% of these pupils are currently working **below expected standards** (PRE).
- 51% are **working towards the expected standard** (WTS).
- 33% are **meeting the expected standard** (EXS)*.
- 7% are already working at a **greater depth standard** (GDS).

*We have also found that *57% of these children* (8 out of 14) *have the potential to achieve Greater Depth* — but only if they engage in more regular reading.

The following statements are proven through research (Department for Education, Institute of Education, National Literacy Trust):

- Children who read at home frequently make faster progress across all subjects — not just English.
- Regular readers develop better concentration, stronger vocabularies, improved writing skills, and deeper comprehension.
- Pupils who read often gain more confidence in expressing themselves and tackling new learning challenges.

In response to these findings, for the second half of the summer term, we are making an important adjustment:

Reading will become the main focus of our homework.

This means that the usual written comprehension and maths homework will be largely replaced by a strong emphasis on daily or near-daily reading at home. We will provide support and guidance on how best to encourage and record reading at home, and staff will monitor and celebrate children's efforts closely.

How you can help at this stage:

- Aim for **at least** three short reading sessions each week (**four in Key Stage 2**) with your child.
- Encourage them to explore different kinds of texts: stories, information books, comics, and more.

- Talk about what they have read — ask questions, discuss characters, or predict what might happen next.
- Make reading a relaxed, enjoyable time together.

We continue to be very grateful to all the families that have these procedures firmly in place already. You are giving your child the best possible chance to thrive now and in the future with all learning.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

School Uniform

As summer begins to, there is an increase in the number of pupils who are taking liberties with what they are wearing at school.

Our [Uniform Code](#) is available to read on our website, and if parents are struggling to find uniform for their children, please contact the school, as we may be able to assist. The link to our uniform provider, [Watford School Uniforms](#), is also on our website.

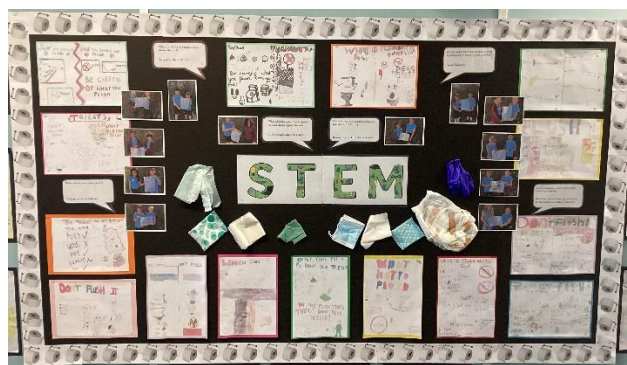
Thank you for your support with this matter. As our Uniform Code states, *“Our school uniform promotes a sense of pride in the school, looks smart, is practical and makes children feel equal to their peers in terms of appearance.”*

Displaying our Learning

New displays have been put up in our hallways this week! This half term, the theme is STEM (Science, Technology and Maths). Take a look at some of the fabulous learning that has taken place.



Reception studied what happens to caterpillars.



Year 4 and 5 researched what (and what not) to flush down the toilet.



Nursery investigated what colour worms were easiest to find in the garden.



As a follow-up to their Great Fire of London workshop, Year 2 created fire engines.



Year 1 used “Stanley’s Stick” as a stimulus for their learning.

Writers Corner

Year 3 have been writing narrative stories based on their own experiences. Please enjoy Dorthea's effort – all about a music exam.

"I am ready!" I said loudly to my flute teacher Becky. I thought to myself, "Can I pass my flute test?" because it was my first time.

It was now my turn to enter the exam and it was so quiet like I was in the middle of a forest. I then had to play my first song, a long, hard and lovely song and after a while I finished the song with a loud "hooray!" from my family.

I then felt that I could do it and I did my next song and my last song perfectly. I then completed my scales but then we had to do sight reading and I was so bad at it. I then had to do it and I thought to myself "I can do it!!". I then did sight reading and after that I had to leave the quiet, beautiful and shiny exam room. Once I got out the beautiful exam room my family gave me a big hug with "yay!" that came from my mum and it was the best best day ever!

- written by Dorthea

Dates for Your Diaries

- Monday 5th May – Bank Holiday – school closed
- Wednesday 7th May – Stay and Play – Art/ DT theme
- Friday 9th May – PTA Zumba session for parents
- Monday 12th May – Thursday 15th May- KS2 SATs Tests
- Wednesday 14th May – Friday 16th May - Year 5 Tolmers Residential
- Monday 19th May – Friday 23rd May – Year 6 Gilwell Park Residential
- Monday 19th May – Arts Week/ Walk to School Week begins

- Friday 23rd May – Break the Rules Day
- Monday 26th May – Friday 30th May – Half Term week
- Week beginning Monday 2nd June – Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check
- Tuesday 3rd June – Shavout – children invited to wear traditional clothes
- Wednesday 4th June – Stay and Play – Outdoor Learning
- Friday 6th June – Year 3 to St Albans Verulamium Museum
- Week beginning Monday 9th June - Year 1 Phonics Check
- Monday 9th and Friday 13th June – Father's Day Sale
- Wednesday 11th June – Eid-al-Adha – children invited to wear traditional clothes
- Friday 20th June - Sports Day
- Monday 24th June – Year 4 visiting St Albans Cathedral
- Saturday 28th June – Summer Fair
- Tuesday 1st July – Year 6 at Child Safety Event (Vicarage Road Stadium)
- Thursday 10th July – Transition Morning (Full Day for Year 6 pupils at their new secondary schools)
- Monday 14th July – Second Transition Morning
- Wednesday 16th July – St Meryl's Got Talent
- Thursday 17th July – Rocksteady Concert
- Monday 21st July – Year 1 to Windsor Castle
- Monday 21st July (evening) Leavers' Show
- Tuesday 22nd July (morning) – Leavers' Show
- Tuesday 22nd July – 2pm – School finishes for the year



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Our Vision

At our school we will provide a safe and stimulating learning environment which challenges all learners and promotes outstanding achievement.

We encourage all members of our learning family to be open, honest and accepting of others.

We seek to instil a thirst for and love of life-long learning in everyone who is a part of this family.

Everyone at our school works as a team; supporting, encouraging and caring for all who join us on their learning journey.