

Newsletter 1

Friday 13th September 2024

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Welcome Back to School

A very warm welcome back to school and the new academic year. I always think we are so lucky to have two new beginnings each year, one in January and the other in September. It was wonderful to see the children looking so smart and full of smiles as they returned to school last week. I can't tell you how fabulous it feels to have the Monkfield Park family back together again and I have loved catching up with everyone's news and hearing the stories of all your Summer holiday adventures!

On Monday we welcomed the newest members of our school community—our new Reception children. We have been so impressed with how well they are settling into school and adapting to the new routines. The first days of the academic year are very important for everyone as we focus on becoming used to being a class again, as well as learning about the daily routines and our expectations for the year to come. We are having a big focus on manners at the moment and how simple things such as a greeting, a please, thank you or holding a door open for someone can make a huge difference to their day and make a lasting positive impression. Please do ask your children about the discussions we have been having in school about manners and how we are making a difference.

Mrs Howell.

Monkfield Park is a GOOD School



I was thrilled that our Ofsted report was published in time to be able to share it with the staff, the children and all our families at the start of the new academic year. As the inspection took place at the very end of June we knew that it would be September before we received the Inspector's judgement, but it was well worth the wait.

We are all extremely proud of the positive outcome and that we have retained our 'good' judgement. This is a testament to the care, commitment and hard work of our staff, the support of our parents and carers, and of course, a celebration of our wonderful children who impressed the

Inspector with their positivity and kindness. I would like to thank every member of the school community who work tirelessly to ensure Monkfield Park is a great place for children to learn and thrive and also, thank you, our parents and carers for your invaluable support and feedback. Although this is a time for celebration we are always keen to improve further and so we will continue to build on our successes to make Monkfield Park the best school that it can be. You can rest assured that we will be sharing all our ongoing achievements with you via our weekly newsletter.

Year 3 Visit to Wandlebury Hill Fort

Year 3 got the year off to a flying start with a visit to Wandlebury Hill Fort to learn all about life in pre-historic Britain. They spent the day learning about life in Iron Age Britain through a range of fantastic hands on learning experiences. The children investigated the hill fort and the artefacts the archaeologists found in recent excavations, before trying out some traditional Iron Age activities. Everyone had the opportunity to thresh and winnow some ears of grain before grinding it to flour on a quern stone, making it into bread and cooking it over an open fire! In the afternoon the children had the opportunity to practise spear throwing and making their own min-wattle walls.



Applying for a School Place for September 2025

If your child was born between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021, and you live in Cambridgeshire, you need to apply for a Reception place for September 2025 before the closing date of 15th January 2025. Applications received after this date will not be considered until the second round of allocations in May. Further information about how to apply for a school place can be found in the First Steps booklet via the link below:-

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/imported-assets/First-Steps-2025-26-06.09.24.pdf>

We appreciate that selecting the right school for your child is not an easy decision to make. Each parent and carer is looking for a school that will make the educational experience as motivating and rewarding as possible for their child. To help you make this important decision we would like to welcome parents and carers into school to see at first hand what makes Monkfield Park such a special place to learn.

We are offering a number of parent tours so that you can see the school in action and talk with the Headteacher and staff. Please join us for one of our parent tours which can be booked by contacting the school office on 01954 273377 or by email :office@monkfieldpark.cambs.sch.uk

The current tour dates are:

Wednesday 2nd October 9.30am

Thursday 17th October 2.00pm

Thursday 14th November 5.30pm

Tuesday 26th November 9.30am

Thursday 12th December 2pm

We very much look forward to welcoming you to our wonderful school and hope you will join us for one of the tours.

If you are unable to make this date, please contact the school office and we will be happy to arrange a mutually convenient date for you to visit.



Sentence starters

Ask your Reception child to tell you what they have found out about school this week.

Ask your Year 1 child to tell you about the Colour Monster's feelings.

Ask your Year 2 child to tell you the difference between dairy, arable and livestock farms.

Ask your Year 3 child to tell you about their favourite prehistoric hunting technique.

Ask your Year 4 child to describe the features of an information text.

Ask your Year 5 child to tell you why the invention of the telescope was important for space exploration.

Ask your Year 6 child to give you some examples of persuasive language.

New Statutory Attendance Guidance—A Reminder

The new statutory guidance for attendance came into effect on 19th August 2024. Called Working Together to Improve School Attendance, this guidance details what schools, parents and Local Authorities should do to improve pupil attendance at school.

There are some important changes to attendance management which will affect the support parents and pupils receive from schools, and the legal sanctions that are used in certain circumstances. Schools are legally obliged to provide support and intervention for pupils who are at risk of persistent absence i.e. where a child's attendance is 90% or below. This will take the form of meetings with parents, school-based interventions, and the offer of support from outside agencies and professionals. As a school we are very keen to identify the barriers to attendance that families face and will welcome opportunities to overcome these barriers together. However, when a child's attendance falls outside of the parental legal obligations to send their child to school, there are legal pathways that must be followed by the school.

Changes to Penalty Notices—Term Time Leave

If a pupil takes unauthorised term time leave for 10 consecutive sessions or more (generally 5 days) they will be subject to a penalty notice. The fine for a penalty notice has now increased to £80 per parent, per child. This increases to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days for pupils who are of statutory school age. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, parents may be the subject of court proceedings for failing to ensure the regular school attendance of their child and this could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months per parent.

For second offences of unauthorised term time leave (10 consecutive sessions or more) within a three-year rolling period, the fine is a flat £160 per parent, per child. For the third offence in a three-year rolling period, the referral will be automatically considered for prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996.

These fines apply to term time leave taken after 19th August 2024. The three-year rolling period begins from the date the first PN fine is issued to the parent after 19th August 2024. Any PN fine issued to parents before this date does not count towards the 'three-year rolling period' rule.

Applications for term time leave must be made to the school in writing but will only be authorised if the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional.

Irregular School Attendance Over Time

If a parent is willing to support their child and the school in improving school attendance, and engage with school to achieve this, an Attendance Contract will be offered. This is a way of school and parents working together to improve attendance in a supportive and nurturing way. If a parent is not engaging with any offers of support from school, and attendance continues to decline, the school may use a different method of support, called a Notice to Improve. This is a last effort to engage parents before legal sanctions are considered. A Notice to Improve will be a formal collaboration between the school, the Local Authority and parents. If these attempts at formal support fail, and a pupil's attendance continues to be a concern, the school will make a referral to the Local Authority for legal sanctions to be considered.

The Attendance Policy has been updated to reflect these changes.

FORTHCOMING DATES Autumn Term 2024

16th September—RWInc evening for new Reception children at 5.00pm

w/c 23rd September—Year 6 Bikeability

26th September—NHS flu vaccinations

27th September—Year 4 Bikeability

27th September—Friends of Monkfield Park AGM at 3.30pm in the Activity Hall

7th October—Individual school photographs

8th October—Year 5 Careers' Convention

8th October—Year 1 trip to Hedingham Castle

11th October—Phoenix Class assembly at 9.15am

15th October—4.00pm –6.30pm—Parent consultation evening

16th October—Year 4 Roman WOW Day

18th October—Year 1 Animals WOW Day

21st to 25th October—Art Week

24th October 4pm —6.30pm—Parent consultation evening

28th October—1st November —HALF TERM

4th November—Children return to school

5th to 7th November—Children's Art Gallery

w/c 11th November—Anti bullying week

14th November—Open Evening and Tour for prospective parents at 5.30pm

15th November—Children in Need Day

22nd November at 9.15am—Indigo Class assembly

10th December at 2pm—Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Carol Concert

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12th December at 6pm—Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Carol Concert

16th December—Reception theatre trip

17th December at 2pm—Year 1 Nativity Play

18th December at 10am—Year 1 Nativity Play

18th December—Team afternoon

19th December—Christmas Lunch

20th December—LAST DAY OF AUTUMN TERM

23rd December—3rd January 2025—CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

6th January—INSET Day (school closed for children)

For general queries regarding the Care and Learning Centre, please contact the school office by e-mail on: clcoffice@monkfieldpark.cambs.sch.uk or by telephoning 01954 273377.

To speak with a member of the Care and Learning Centre staff please telephone 01954 273301

Welcome Back Everyone

Welcome back everyone, and an especially warm welcome to our 23 new children and their families starting with us this term! The 'older' children have settled back really well after the Summer break and have had a great time exploring their new base room and the exciting resources on offer. Last week, staff carried out Home Visits for all of our new children, and this week they have been attending their Starter Sessions. It's been lovely to begin to get to know them as they settle in.

We can't wait for the exciting term ahead!

Best wishes
Jane Turner

