



Prior's Mill C.E. Primary School Newsletter 26th January 2024

Welcome to the Prior's Mill Newsletter - this is shared weekly and will contain key dates and information, paper copies are available at the office 26.1.24

In This Issue



This week we include:

- **Message from Mr Linsley**
- **Digital Leaders - Screen Time**
- **Attendance**
- **Spirituality**
- **Worship Theme - Neighbours**
- **Class News**
- **Key Dates**
- **NEW! Picture News (We thought you might like to read 'Picture News' this is shared with children in a class worship every week)**

Remember to apply for your Reception and Nursery place for September 2024



Reception and Nursery Places September 2024

A reminder to make sure that you take the time to apply for any reception and nursery places you want for September 2024 as places are starting to fill up. Please spread the word amongst any family and friends.

School Meals

Thank you to everyone who has pre-ordered a school meal using the new system - please continue to do this at home with your child as there is only limited opportunity for them to do it in school. Please contact the office and ask to speak to Miss Clapp or Mrs Twomey if you are having difficulties.

School Website

<https://priorsmill.org.uk/>

The new school website is now 'live' please check it out for all the up to date school information and links to the school Facebook feed. It also contains updated information about Safeguarding and the new child protection policy that the school uses. If you would like a copy of the policy or any other documentation that can be found on the website then please ask at the school office.

Prior's Promise Pals

Prior's Promise Pals identify children in school who display the Prior's Promise school values on a regular basis.

*** We are Honest**

*** We are Kind**

*** We give our Best**

***We Forgive**

***We are Respectful**

The Prior's Promise Pals are:

KS1

Everly, Noah, Grace, Lily and Thea

KS2

Christopher and Holly

Harvey, Daisy and Maria

Jessica and Tiah

Isaac and Laurie

Freya, Luke and Grace

Holidays in Term Time

We have had a huge increase in holiday forms lately and although I can appreciate the challenges created by the cost of living crisis and the incredible cost of going away in the school holidays - going away during term time is not the answer. The results we obtained last year reflected how well children with good attendance did compared to those with a number of absences. I appreciate that

there are some situations where it may be unavoidable and each case is looked at individually, however if you do require time off from school during term time please consider the following information:

- A holiday request form must be submitted 4 weeks prior to the event
- Leave of absence without completing a form will result in a fixed penalty notice for both parents
- We are currently issuing fixed penalty notices for absences longer than 5 days that do not meet the criteria

The school is working very hard to support parents and pupils to attend regularly and achieve highly - Mrs Hanson our Pupil Welfare Officer is available to talk to if you need support. The school has to follow very strict guidelines surrounding school absence please understand that we are here to support and only want the best for you and your children. Positive attendance provides many opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and social skills.

I have included some key reminders about dates (additional key dates are further in the newsletter):

Next Week :

Afterschool clubs as usual

Number Day Friday 2nd February

If you have any queries, worries or safeguarding concerns over the holidays/weekend then please use the email address:

office@priorsmill.org.uk

The email account will be monitored throughout the holidays/weekends and we will endeavour to reply to any queries as soon as possible.

Is my child too ill to go to school or nursery today?

24.1.24

Dear Parents/Carers

I have received today Government guidelines regarding school attendance and illness. By law, if your child is aged 5 to 16 years old they must be in full time education. Missing school not only has a big impact on them academically, but also socially.

The advice below is based on government guidelines. If in doubt as to whether your child should attend school due to illness, school can advise on current guidance and school policy. Obviously, we would not expect a child to attend who is clearly unwell, however for minor illness we are happy to welcome the child into school and we would always endeavour to contact you if we thought they were too ill to remain in school.

As always, we would advise speaking to your GP or pharmacist for help for any illness which does not clear up in a few days or requires treatment (such as headlice/conjunctivitis etc).

If you have difficulty with getting your child into school, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office and we can discuss ways to support you and your child.

Regards

Mrs ALLISON HANSON

PUPIL WELFARE OFFICER

YOUR CHILD CAN GO TO SCHOOL OR NURSERY WITH THE FOLLOWING:

- **Anxiety and worry**
- **Conjunctivitis**
- **Hand, foot and mouth/verrucae/athletes' foot**
- **Headache/earache/tummy ache**
- **Headlice**
- **Threadworms**

YOUR CHILD CAN ATTEND SCHOOL WITH THE FOLLOWING IF THEY FEEL WELL ENOUGH:

- **Coughs/cold/sore throat**
- **Shingles**
- **Tonsillitis**

YOUR CHILD SHOULD NOT ATTEND SCHOOL WITH THE FOLOWING:

- × **diarrhoea and vomiting (can return 48 hours after last bout)**
- × **fever or high temperature**
- × **flu or chest infection**
- × **impetigo**
- × **measles, mumps, German measles, chicken pox**
- × **scabies**
- × **scarlet fever**
- × **whooping cough**
- × **Covid* (if a child has tested positive they should stay away from school for 3 days) * there is no requirement to test now**

Digital Leaders - New Devices



This week Beatrice and Luke (Digital Leaders) have chosen the online safety guide and it has a focus on music streaming devices. If there are any apps or online sites that parents would like a fact sheet about then please get in touch and we'll try and provide one.

Any safeguarding concerns can be relayed to:

Mr Linsley - Designated Safeguarding Lead

Miss Huddart - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

The safeguarding policy is on our website and you can also request a paper copy from the office. We will also share with you our pupil version of the safeguarding policy.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalcollege.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

Top Tips for... MANAGING SCREEN TIME

According to the latest stats, people aged between 8 and 17 spend four hours on digital devices during an average day. Obviously, a new year is ideal for fresh starts and renewed efforts – so lots of families are trying to cut down their combined screen time right now, creating more moments to connect with each other and relying less on gadgets to have fun. Our top tips on reducing screen time are for everyone, so you can get your whole family involved in turning over a new leaf this year!

BUY MILK

GET OUT AND ABOUT

If the weather's decent, spend some time in the garden or go for a walk. Even a stroll to the local shop would do: the main thing is getting some fresh air and a break from your screen.

TRY A TIMED TRIAL

When you're taking a screen break to do a different activity or a chore, turn it into a game by setting yourself a timer. Can you complete your task before the alarm goes off?

GO DIGITAL DETOX

Challenge yourself and your family to take time off from screens, finding other things to do. You could start off with half a day, then build up to a full day or even an entire weekend.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let your family see you successfully managing your own screen time. You'll be showing them the way, and it might stop some of those grumbles when you do want to go online.

AGREE TECH-FREE ZONES

Nominate some spots at home where devices aren't allowed. Anywhere your family gathers together, like at the table or in the living room, could become a 'no phone zone'.

HOLD A SCREEN TIME AMNESTY

As a family, agree specific windows when it's OK to use devices. This should help everyone to balance time on phones or gaming with enjoying quality moments together.

BE MINDFUL OF TIME

Stay aware of how long you've been on your device for. Controlling how much time you spend in potentially stressful areas of the internet – like social media platforms – can also boost your wellbeing.

'PARK' PHONES OVERNIGHT

Set up an overnight charging station for everyone's devices – preferably away from bedrooms. That means less temptation for late-night scrolling.

SWITCH ON DND

Research shows that micro-distractions like message alerts and push notifications can chip away at our concentration levels. Put devices on 'do not disturb' until you're less busy.

TAKE A FAMILY TECH BREAK

Set aside certain times when the whole family puts their gadgets away and enjoys an activity together: playing a board game, going for a walk or just having a chat.

SOCIALISE WITHOUT SCREENS

When you're with friends, try not to automatically involve phones, TVs or other tech. Having company can be loads more fun if your attention isn't being split.

WIND DOWN PROPERLY

Try staying off phones, consoles, tablets and so on just before you go to sleep. Reading or just getting comfy in bed for a while can give you a much more restful night.

Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. They also provide training and support to education organisations and local authorities – empowering school leaders and staff with the knowledge and tools to shape their settings into inclusive communities where the mental health of pupils and personnel is prioritised.

DEVICE BOX

The National College

NOS National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

@natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety @national_online_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 03.01.2024

Attendance Matters



IMPORTANT REMINDER

In accordance with School and Trust Policy any unauthorised absences (that are not subject to exceptional circumstances) will be subject to a fixed penalty notice.

Current School Attendance is 93% (+1% FROM LAST WEEK) this is below the DFE target of 96%. We need to try and make sure we can maintain whole school attendance this year and aim for 96 - 98%!

We strongly advise that any holiday in term time should be avoided due to the impact of lost learning time on children. Please be aware that leave of absence (holiday) during term time will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. It is school policy to refer any unauthorised absence due to holiday to the local authority who may issue a fixed penalty notice. This is a penalty of up to £120 per child, per parent and so can add up to a significant amount. The school does not receive any revenue from fines; the money is paid to the Local Authority. In addition, we now have a new system in school for pupils who are late. Pupils must be escorted to the office in the main building and a form completed by parents/carers to sign the pupils in and indicate the reason for the lateness. This is for our records and also to avoid pupils becoming distressed.

All gates are opened at 8.20am, KS1 & 2 staff will be in attendance and children remain in the yard until school doors are opened just before 8.30am. For Nursery and Reception children gates are opened for access and to ease congestion on Clifton Avenue and staff are not in attendance until school doors are then opened just before 8.30am. Children should remain supervised until then. Pre-School will open at 8:25am.

LATE MARKS ALSO IMPACT NEGATIVELY ON ATTENDANCE PLEASE TRY TO BE ON TIME!



"THIS MORNING, HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT SCHOOL... BUT LOOK AT HIM NOW!"

MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

 HM Government
Head to the Education Hub to find out more.



MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

“THIS MORNING, HE HAD A RUNNY NOSE... BUT LOOK AT HIM NOW!”

MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

 HM Government

Head to the NHS website to find out more.



Spirituality at Prior's Mill CE Primary School

What Is Spirituality?

It is very difficult to put into words what 'spirituality' actually is because it is a very personal experience. It differs from person to person, and often spirituality changes within people during their lifetime. Spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith.

As a school, we have defined spirituality as:

“Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions, inspiration and being aware of something ‘bigger’ outside of ourselves.”

Teaching Opportunities and Strategies

At Prior's Mill we follow the Liz Mills approach to provide opportunities for spiritual development:

WINDOWS: giving children opportunities to become *aware* of the world in new ways; to **wonder** about life's 'Wows' (things that are amazing) and 'Ows' (things that bring us up short). In this children are learning about life in all its fullness.



MIRRORS: giving children opportunities to *reflect* on their experiences; to **think** about life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. In this they are learning from life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.



DOORS: giving children opportunities to *respond* to all of this; to **do** something creative as a means of expressing, applying and further developing their thoughts and convictions. In this they are learning to live by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.



We provide **WINDOWS** throughout our curriculum. Children reflect (**MIRRORS**) on their learning, experiences and global issues at our school and often identify **DOORS** for themselves. They may hear of a local issue or an international event and request to take action, through fund raising and raising awareness. We also work with the local community through local fundraising and other activities. We also take part in Comic Relief, Children in Need, as well as identifying other charities to support during the year.

We also use this format of Windows, Mirrors and Doors within our Collective Worship.

School staff can develop spirituality in school through:

Establishing and maintaining a partnership between pupils, parents and staff; recognising and respecting the faith background of the children and their families;

Taking part in, and supporting, collective acts of worship;

Being good role models in their conduct towards other members of the community;

Promoting an attitude of respect for other people and for others' views;

Nurturing consideration for and generosity towards others.

Drawing on the experiences of pupils and their families during religious education lessons and beyond;

Recognising and being constantly aware of the needs and backgrounds of each individual pupil;

Being willing to develop their own knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and the faiths of others;

Having a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education;

Conducting themselves towards others considerately and respecting the views and beliefs of others in line with the Prior's Promise.

Pupils can do this through:

Taking an active part in acts of collective worship;

Participating in activities which promote the skills allowing them to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice;

Conducting themselves towards others considerately and respecting the views and beliefs of others in line with the Prior's Promise.

Parents can help through:

Adopting a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education;

Supporting the school's Christian ethos and acts of community worship such as assemblies and church services;

Respecting the views and beliefs of others;

Conducting themselves towards others considerately and respecting the views and beliefs of others in line with the Prior's Promise.

Worship Theme - Neighbours



WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS (GOSPEL) THAT JESUS BRINGS?

Luke 10: 25-37

We are going to continue to look at Jesus' life and teaching in the gospels which encapsulates the Gospel. I wonder what Jesus taught about embracing difference and helping everyone to belong? I wonder who is your neighbour?

Explore the story of the Good Samaritan

I wonder why some people simply ignored the man lying injured? I wonder if we ever ignore situations that need our help and understanding?

During the time of Jesus, people believed Samaritans were people to be avoided. They were seen as different and not as important and so people tried to stay away from them. They didn't belong. That is why it is so surprising that it is not the priest or the Levite that stops to help the injured man, but a Samaritan! The first two men – the ones who did belong - could have helped, but they let their prejudice get in the way of doing the right thing. After listening to the story, the questioner has to

accept that it is a Samaritan who takes care of the injured man, someone considered to be different, someone who didn't belong.

For prayer/reflection:

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other. [Mother Teresa](#)





Class News





KEY DATES



Key Dates

School reopens Monday 8th January

Number Day NSPCC - 2.2.24

Mental Health Week - 5.2.24

Safer Internet Day - 6.2.24

School closes Friday 16th February - Half Term - Re-opens Monday 26th February

National Careers Week - 4.3.24

World Book Day - 8.3.24

British Science Week -11.3.24

Comic Relief - 15.3.24

Food Bank Donations - 18.3.24

Easter Around the World RE - 22.3.24

DT Week 25.3.24



1 - And Finally...enjoy the Weekend

Picture News

[2-14--collective-worship-powerpoint-2024-01-19](#)



What's happening

in the news this week?



Let's have a look at this week's

22nd – 28th January 2024

To drive or be driverless?

God		Fall	People of God
Incarnatio	Gospel	Salvation	Kingdom of God

© Picture News 2024

Motorists in Britain could be completing journeys using driverless cars by 2026 the transport secretary, Mark Harper, has predicted. He believes that fully autonomous vehicles, in which people become passengers in their own cars, will arrive in the UK that year and follow a gradual rollout. The government introduced a bill in a speech by King Charles III that paved the way for autonomous cars, without a safety driver, after pressure from industry, MPs, and Sir Patrick Vallance in his recent review of technology regulation.

Think together and talk

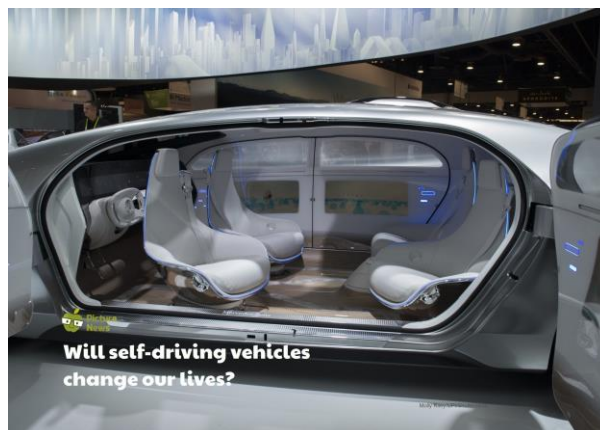


Think together and talk

Make a list of the different vehicles you have come across. For each, discuss who controls it.


What is a self-driving vehicle? Have you ever used a toy vehicle that appeared to be self-driving e.g., a pull-back car?

How do you feel about the vehicles people use becoming driverless in the future?




What does the Bible have to say?





God created the universe. Throughout history, discoveries of science and technology have impacted how we live. These discoveries make us wonder even more about the power and majesty of God, the Creator. We have a responsibility to Creation.




The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands

Acts 17:24



What do others think?



Science and technology revolutionise our lives, but memory, tradition and myth frame our response.

Arthur Schlesinger - historian

Time to be quiet and to pray



Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for the wonderful world and
everything in it,
Thank you for the people who make new
discoveries that aim to make our lives
better,
Help us to look after all Creation,
Amen

Continue thinking



Key Stage 1 class discussion

What vehicles have you travelled in before?
Who was driving/controlling it?



Do you have a favourite vehicle? Why do you
like it?

Do you think you would enjoy driving or would
you prefer to be a passenger?

Key Stage 2 class discussion





Driving is a skill. Discuss how this skill may have changed over time. What do you predict your experience of driving will be in the future?

Can you think of any other skills that people have adapted over time as technology has advanced? Consider how clothes are made, medical practices, how people learn at school.







Time to worship



Somebody greater
Click [here](#) for the hymn online
(musical accompaniment only)



Carpenter, carpenter, make me a tree,
That's the work of somebody far greater than
me;
Gardener, gardener, shape me a flower,
That's the work of somebody with far greater
power.



Somebody greater than you or me,
Put the apple in the apple tree;
The flower in the Earth and the fish in the
sea,
Are by somebody greater than you or me.





Builder, now raise up a coloured rainbow,
 That's something far greater than people could
 know;
 Farmer, I ask you, design me some corn,
 That's somebody greater than any man born.



Somebody greater than you or me,
 Put the apple in the apple tree;
 The flower in the Earth and the fish in the
 sea,
 Are by somebody greater than you or me.



Now, electrician, will you light me a star,
 That's the work of somebody who's greater by
 far;
 Plumber, connect up the river and sea,
 That's the work of somebody far greater than
 me.



Somebody greater than you or me,
 Put the apple in the apple tree;
 The flower in the Earth and the fish in the
 sea,
 Are by somebody greater than you or me.





MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

Attendance: the top facts to know & share



The link between attendance and attainment is clear:

- In 2018/19, **just 40% of persistently absent (PA) children in KS2 achieved expected KS2 standards**, compared with 84% of pupils who were regular attenders.
- And **36% of PA children in KS4 got 9 to 4 in their English and maths GCSEs**, also compared with 84% of regular attenders.¹

And it's never too late to benefit from good attendance:

- **More than half (54%) of pupils who were PA in Year 10 and then rarely absent in Year 11, passed at least 5 GCSEs**, compared to 36% of pupils who were persistently absent in both years.²

But attendance is important for more than just attainment:

- Regular school attendance can facilitate **positive peer relationships**, which is a **protective factor for mental health and wellbeing**.³



Send **your nomination** **before**
Friday 26 January 2024!

Who deserves an award ...

*...for what they do,
or have done for our
community?*

Please help draw attention to
the **great** things they **do** and
have done, and **show them**
that they **are appreciated**.

Award Categories:

- **Young Person Award**
- **Service to Community Award**
 - i. **Individuals**
 - ii. **Groups & Organisations**
 - iii. **Business**
- **Health & Wellbeing Award**
- **Green Award**
- **Carer/Foster Carer Award**

Everyone knows an individual, a
couple, group / organisation, or
business that **deserves** recognition
for the **fantastic difference** they
make in the **lives of others** across
the **borough** of Stockton on Tees.

Make a nomination

- Use the **link** in the email, **or** the
attached form.
- For **more** information call the
Mayor's Office on **(01642) 528161**
or email:
mayors.office@stockton.gov.uk
- The awards will be **presented**
at the Council's **Annual Meeting**.

Closing date:
Friday
26 January 2024

All Together For You

Monthly multi-agency drop-in sessions



Family Hubs

Pop along to ask questions and get advice from a variety of services to help support your family.

Ask questions, get advice on the support available or make a plan on how to tackle your issues.

No appointment needed, just turn up!

All Together For You

Monthly multi-agency drop-in sessions



Family Hubs

January 19	Billingham	9.30am - 11.30am
February 16	Redhill	9.30am - 11.30am
March 15	Stockton	9.30am - 11.30am
April 19	Thornaby	9.30am - 11.30am
May 17	Billingham	9.30am - 11.30am
June 21	Redhill	9.30am - 11.30am
July 19	Stockton	9.30am - 11.30am
August 16	Thornaby	9.30am - 11.30am
September 20	Billingham	9.30am - 11.30am
October 18	Redhill	9.30am - 11.30am
November 15	Stockton	9.30am - 11.30am
December 20	Thornaby	9.30am - 11.30am

No appointment needed, just turn up!

Contact Us



If you would like to contact us about anything in the newsletter or need an additional conversation then please don't hesitate to catch me outside on the yard or through making an appointment at the office.

Safeguarding

The school safeguarding policy is on the website and a paper version can also be requested from the office. Safeguarding is at the heart of all we do at Prior's Mill CE Primary School.

Prior's Mill C.E. Primary School

Clifton Avenue, Billingham. Stockton-on-Tees, TS22 5BX

Tel: 01642 650 426

Email: office@priorsmill.org.uk

Visit us on the web at <https://priorsmill.org.uk/>

School Vision

As an inclusive Church of England primary school, we welcome children and families of all faiths and none to be part of our school family which has a distinctly Christian character and ethos. At Prior's

Mill, we encourage everyone to discover, flourish and grow in their talents, nurturing their God given gifts and potential. We work with passion to foster a love of learning, a love of community and personal resilience. Following in the footsteps of Jesus, we are a school where kindness, forgiveness, respect and honesty underpin our words and actions.

Biblical Narrative - The Parable of The Mustard Seed – Mark 4:30-32 (NIV)

“What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”

School Values

We give our best - We are kind - We are honest - We are respectful - We forgive