

Miers Court

Matters

UPCOMING EVENTS

21.01.25
02 Young
voices

NSPCC—
Number day
Dress down
day 07.02.24

14.02.25—
PTFA Valen-
tines Disco

14.02.25—
Last Day of
term

Note from Mrs Fordyce

We have reached the end of our second week of term and it has been full of exciting learning opportunities for all of our classes. The week began with an assembly from Nathan who is the Vicar at St Margaret's Church where he told us a story that we could all join in with. Nathan will be coming along to our assemblies once a month. All of the children in the school are working on ensuring that their handwriting and presentation is really good - please help us at home by practising handwriting with your children to support them once they are in school.

Next week our choir are off the Young Voices concert at the O2 ... I know this event is amazing and I can't wait to hear about it on Wednesday morning.

Have a fantastic weekend - see you bright and early on Monday morning ready for another exciting week of learning opportunities.

Attendance – Well done Hummingbird (year 1) for achieving 98.6%, Nightingale Class (year 2) for achieving 97.3% and Puffin Class (year 3) for achieving 97.3%. These classes are this week's top attenders!

Celebration

Congratulations to Lola, Laura-Fey, Ivy-Bluebell and David P in year 2, Alfie M in year 4, Erin L, Dexter, Georgia, Callum P, Mason and Nikita in year 5 for earning 25 Dojo points

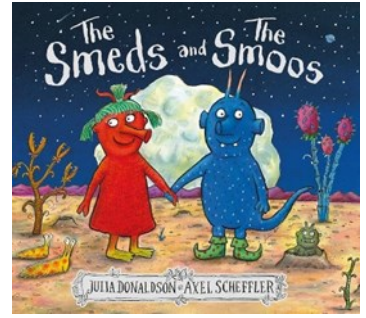
**MOMENTS
MATTER,
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**



Book Talk

Year 1 Book Talk

In Year 1 this week we have been reading *The Smeds and The Smoos* by Julia Donaldson.



The Smeds (who are red) never mix with the Smoos (who are blue). So when a young Smed and Smoo fall in love, their families strongly disapprove. But peace is restored and love conquers all. Year 1 really enjoyed this book and wanted to read it again and again. They loved the settings and characters and were inspired to draw and write about their own aliens and planets. Once again they enjoyed the wonderful language that Julia Donaldson uses and were thrilled to learn lots of new vocabulary too like “vivid”, “neon” and “periscope”

“This teaches us that everyone can be friends with each other” **Beti**

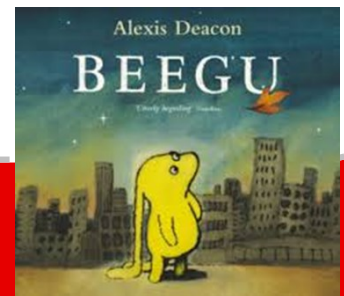
“I like that they have a purple baby”. **Ava-Mae**

“I liked it so much, I have watched the movie at home”. **Logan**

“I like the Smoos, I love the colours blue and red”. **Taylor**

“Janet and Bill get married. They sneak off from their family homes and they sneak off to the rocket because Janet’s grandfather forgot to lock it”. **Kamilah**

This term our theme is Infinity and Beyond, where we shall be focusing on Space. Below are some great space/alien books that we recommend the children read



Quote of the week

“A problem is only a problem when viewed as a problem”

Robin Sharma

Safeguarding Corner

As a reminder, our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs L Fordyce. Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are; Ms Munns, Miss Collings, Mrs Doherty, Miss Bradley and Mrs Kavanagh. If you have any safeguarding concerns, do not hesitate to get in contact.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TIKTOK

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT
While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, for you is a collection based on user preferences and watch history. Most of these videos will probably be innocuous, but the app does occasionally show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more likely to follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS
With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially on accounts created by over-16s (or young people using a fake date of birth) or set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables anyone to download or comment on any.

MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION
Although this short video on TikTok tends to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of ideologically, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

ADDICTIVE DESIGN
With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 57 minutes per day on the app; that's twice as much as in 2023. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The constant, skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

IN-APP SPENDING
TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £5.99 to £99.99 per month, which may not sound appealing, but the app still generated £7.3 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that users can't reuse in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING
Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can turn both on Restricted Mode (reducing the chance of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING
If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS
If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to look for a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

READ THE SIGNS
If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

Meet Our Expert
Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.

#WakeUpWednesday The National College

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2024/jul/18/tiktok-guidelines>

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Year 3 Engage Activity

In Year 3 we started our new term with an engaging afternoon to introduce the 'Egyptians' topic we are focusing on this term. The children discussed what prior knowledge they had of the Egyptians. Then the children researched an Egyptian collar, a popular part of Egyptian culture. They designed their own collar in their art books and then tried to recreate them using paper plates. I'm sure you will agree they look amazing. It is a great start to a fun and engaging topic.



EYFS Garden refurb

Year R are hoping to be able to develop their garden area to make it even more inviting and purposeful for the children. We have lots of ideas, but funding is always a challenge in schools.

One of our main difficulties is not being able to use the space when it rains as our canopy doesn't currently cover much of the space. We were wondering if we have any parents or carers who work for, or know of any canopy companies who may be able to help us. Please get in touch with the school office if you have any contacts you think might be able to help office@mcps.school.

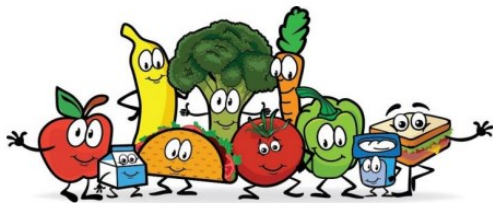


We also need to replace our storage shed, as that has seen better years! If anyone is looking to rehome a shed or again has contact of someone who may be able to help us, please let us know, we are keeping an eye on the market place pages on social media as well.

Battery Recycling – This week we have **299** batteries!! Fantastic total, thank you. We submit our total to the Duracell website each week.

We also collect empty, clean bread wrappers and used ink cartridges (domestic only, please), which we give to Gillingham Street Angels, who receive a small amount of money for them. This money is used to help fund the projects that they run, for example, the soup kitchen and food bank.

Meal Balance reminder – Please can we remind you to keep an eye on your child's meal account, and top up when needed. Thankyou. Please remember that, if your circumstances change, you child may be eligible for Free School Meal Support. You can apply on line for this and we are always happy to help if you are finding it a little tricky. The link will take you to the application page and you will get a decision really quickly. https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200164/school_information/354/free_school_meals



Dates for your diary

21.01.25—02 Young Voices

07.02.25—NSPCC Number dress down day

14.02.25—Last Day of term

24.02.25— Children back to school

Stay connected

Phone: 01634 388943

Email: office@mcps.school

School website: <http://mierscourt-that.org.uk>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/mierscourthat/

Instagram: www.instagram.com/mierscourthat/

