

The Extra Mile

Term 2 2014/2015



Seasons Greetings 2014



End of Term 2 – Message from Milestone Principal, Nigel Jones

Here we are again at the end of another very successful term. Our pupils have achieved a great deal and are making good progress. Well done to all our pupils who have worked hard this term, and of course a huge thank you to all the staff who are leading your son's/daughter's development.

There have been many festive events and trips during the last two weeks of term, and staff and pupils had their Christmas dinner on Wednesday, which was enjoyed by all. Thank you to Andy and the team in the Cucina kitchen for making it all run smoothly and producing such wonderful food.

As we are an ambitious school I have been thrilled to see that our 6th Form setting at Wilmington has taken root and developed.

Equally can I thank all concerned (staff, parents/carers) for the way in which we have collectively approached the mammoth task of transferring each pupil's Statement of Educational Needs to the new EHC plans. I know my thoughts are echoed by Fiona Tozer, who also wishes to thank one and all for the way they have co-operated in this task. The challenge now is to ensure we keep this momentum going in 2015.

Thank you as always to Ami for producing this newsletter and on behalf of the staff at Milestone, I wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and a happy new year, and we look forward to seeing the pupils return on Monday 5th January with tales of their festive holiday.

Best Wishes

Nigel Jones



Primary Department

Dear Families,

We have had a lovely end to the year in the Primary Department. There have been lots of Christmas trips, parties, nativities and a wonderful Christmas Dinner. It was so nice to see all the children taking part and staff eating with them.

There are some changes for January which I would like to share with you. Nicky McCarthy, Key Stage 1 Leader is leaving to begin her maternity leave. Nicky is expecting her second baby in February and we all wish her well over the coming weeks and months. I am very pleased to inform you Nicky's Key Stage Leader role will be covered by Nina Dipple, Cove Class Teacher and Amy Smith will cover Nicky's teaching in Beach Class. I wish both Nina and Amy well in their new roles. Also, Lucy Sparkes, Lake Class Teacher is due to return to school in January. We look forward to Lucy's return and I would like to take the opportunity to thank Faye for leading Lake Class so well in her absence.

Your very special children have been as wonderful to work with and for as ever this term. Every day at Milestone Academy brings a new achievement or something to celebrate. It is a privilege to watch the children learn and grow. We have some exciting developments in the Primary playground – new equipment and safety flooring is being installed and everyone is being very patient while we can't go onto the play equipment. I'm sure the wait will be worth it!

Many thanks for your ongoing support for

us. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have anything you would like to discuss further. In the meantime I wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and a healthy and happy new year.

Best wishes

Dee Pickerill, Primary Vice Principal

Secondary Department

As we near the end of Term 2 it is time to reflect on the learning and achievement of all our young people. Term 2 has been a term of Firsts!

Yesterday was the first time two secondary classes, Romans and Vikings, combined together to tell the story of the very first Christmas. The classes learnt to retell the story of the Nativity in a traditional way with a tableau of the birth of Jesus in the stable in Bethlehem and via a modern rap. It was a joy to see and hear the pupils read and recite their lines with such enthusiasm and activate their voice output switches on cue. Thank you to all the families of Viking and Roman pupils who came to watch and to the pupils and staff of both classes who had worked so hard to put the assembly together.

This term pupils from the department competed for the very first time in an inter-school Panathlon swimming event and a Rowing competition. Although we didn't win either competition the pupils demonstrated true sportsmanship. Pupils who took part in the swimming proudly returned to school wearing their Bronze medals. Do read Steve Devereux's report for greater detail.



Unfortunately, this term also saw, for the first time, the absence of two teachers for several weeks. Liesl Andersson and Suzannah Hall have been away due to ill health and their classes, Jurassic and Viking, have been ably led by Michelle South and Lesley Chilvers, two highly skilled and experienced senior teaching assistants, to provide continuity in education for the pupils. Liesl will be returning next term, but Suzannah is moving on to pastures new. Also moving on is Hollie Wilson, FE1's teacher, who is returning to teach in her native Somerset. We wish Suzannah and Hollie all the best for the future. At the time of writing we are interviewing new teachers and will let you know their names as soon as appointments have been confirmed.

The School Council has continued to meet and the class representatives have discussed many subjects including ICT provision across the school as well as changing the school uniform for secondary pupils. One of the first uniform suggestions was for secondary pupils to wear blazers and ties. Please do not worry about going out to buy anything new as yet as the Council has to undertake a piece of action research into the costs of change, the quality of fabrics and suppliers. Once they have finished their research they are going to present their findings to the senior leadership team. Watch this space!

It is the first Christmas for our 6th form students in our satellite provision at Wilmington Academy and they have been involved with the students from the main school in a Christmas Tea Dance. 6th form students from Milestone Academy have also travelled to Wilmington to be

included in Christmas activities with their peers.

Some of the 6th form students in our satellite provision have been undertaking independent travel training in small groups for the very first time catching local buses into Dartford.

As usual none of the above would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff. On behalf of them thank you for your continued support.

Best Wishes for a 'Merry Christmas' and all the best for 2015.

Berenice Frith, Secondary Vice Principal

Early Years

This term has been very busy and the children have enjoyed the change in seasons in the outside environment, collecting leaves for various projects, splashing in puddles and learning to wrap up warm for very cold days. The weather theme continued during the term through art and craft work, looking at weather around the world and exploring hot and cold environments. The children joined in the WW1 commemoration ceremony that took place within school.

We had our first 'Stay and Play' in November which was enjoyed by a number of parents. It was good to get together afterwards and talk about our on-line journal and share experiences. There will be another date in the diary for Term 3.

The children have been busy with the letters for Father Christmas. All of the children enjoyed a trip to the shops to buy stamps and post their letters. Along with



the Christmas theme the Department enjoyed a trip to the Woodville Halls in Gravesend to watch a short Christmas show and meet the man himself and then onto McDonalds for refreshments.

The children have just starred in their first performance at school. The Early Years Department put on their production of the 'First Nativity'. Every child's performance was exemplary and enjoyed by all of those in the audience. The FE Department took on a major role in the production, producing the scenery, programmes, narrating and ushering. Once again a big thank you to the students!

We would all like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and we will see you in the New Year.

Claire and all the staff in the Early Years Department

KS1

Term 2 has been a very busy one as we have learnt about the topic of mealtimes. All of the classes have been looking at healthy eating and we have enjoyed preparing a range of snacks and meals in our food technology lessons.

We are now coming to the end of our Christmas fun and all classes have been knee deep in glitter, sequins and tinsel! All KS1 classes have been out on visits to Father Christmas either at Ruxley Manor Garden Centre, Millbrook Garden Centre or Bluewater and Cove and Beach Class enjoyed a tractor ride at Broadditch Farm. We have had a visit by Father Christmas at our party and are looking forward to our Christmas dinner. River class will lead the

Nativity at the end of the term.

I am leaving this term to go on Maternity leave and Nina Dipple will be covering my role whilst I am away. I want to wish all our families a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and thank them for their wonderful support they have given us throughout the year. I would also like to thank all class teams for their hard work and enthusiasm this term and I look forward to seeing you all again upon my return!

Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year

Nicky McCarthy, KS1 Leader

KS2

This term the juniors have been learning about 'Food and Drink'. They have been focussing on what constitutes a healthy and unhealthy diet and have been working hard on their sorting skills using different food and drink. Lots of food making and tasting has been happening with children expressing likes, dislikes and sharing simple opinions. In Meadow Class, the children have been exploring and investigating different materials and how they can be separated. They had great fun finding out about which materials dissolve and which do not. In Mountain Class, the children have used all their senses to explore different fruits and vegetables. They have created some lovely art work and have used different describing words to great effect! They have also been developing their fine motor skills through food preparation. Ocean Class have worked hard on their swimming skills at North West Kent College, they have made really excellent



progress. Valley and Forest classes have enjoyed going out and about on their community participation. Valley class have been shopping for different food and drink in supermarkets. Forest Class have been horse riding now since September and have really developed their skills. The children in Coast class have been focussing on celebrations, they have been learning about Diwali, winter and Christmas through interactive and sensory activity.



Next term we are learning about 'Looking After Ourselves' and 'Colours of the Rainbow'.

As we near the end of the school term, the children are enjoying their Christmas activities. Trips to Broadditch Farm to meet Farmer Christmas and to Bluewater to go ice skating have taken place. Pizza parties and trips to the cinema to see an autism friendly screening of Frozen have also been enjoyed. The children have worked hard this term and are enjoying a fun and festive end to the year.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas.

Emma Wilkinson, Key Stage Two Leader

KS3

This term **Norman** class have been exploring the world of fables, from Aesop's original tellings to the poems of La Fontaine. In Maths they have been developing their knowledge of angles in shapes and movement, acute, obtuse and right angles. Norman class have used number to identify shapes in the environment from coins to objects at home and find fractions of shapes in tenths and hundredths with some equivalent fractions being found. In geography they have discussed different projection maps of the world and came to the conclusion that no map is perfect in terms of position, shape and size of countries but there are better maps for certain needs. In RE the class have been researching influential Christians. Pupils have chosen Martin Luther King, Mother Theresa and Johan Bach to name a few, using the internet to research and collect information and pictures to create a booklet about whom they are and why they are inspirational.

In the run up to Christmas Norman class

enjoyed our trip out to Bowling and Pizza and although not everyone could win, Simon did come 2nd so all was good!

Jurassic class enjoyed a festive visit to Bluewater. They enjoyed looking at the Christmas lights, going into the shops selling decorations and exploring the different colours and textures. After lots of walking they were ready for a yummy McDonalds lunch. Jurassic class have also enjoyed using lots of glitter to make decorations for their families.

Romans class had the opportunity to feed real live Reindeer on their trip to the garden centre this term. They had a great time interacting with all the Christmas decorations and paraphernalia, and made a great display using the book "Aliens Love Panta Claus" as our inspiration, with a big sleigh and loads of glittery festive pants!

Saxon class have been studying the story of Harry Potter in English this term and went on an exciting visit Harry Potter World. Everyone had a fantastic time and you can see some photographs of our visit on the school website!

Viking Class have been looking at the life of Charles Dickens and studying one of his famous books; 'A Christmas Carol'. They have been exploring the different characters and looking at the way that people lived within the Victorian times and how different it is today.

On Wednesday 3rd December, **Tudor** Class had a great morning at Dickens World as part of their English work on 'A Christmas Carol.' Students and staff alike were amazed with the wonderful Christmas scenery there and enjoyed

interacting with the guide (who was dressed as a historical figure) as they made their way through the Victorian streets. It was lovely to see every student engaged and interacting in role play. One student was very animated with his 'bah humbugs'.

So as Tiny Tim said, "A merry Christmas to us all..... God bless us everyone!"

Wishing you all a lovely Christmas and a happy beginning to the New Year!

Noleen Donaghy and the Key Stage three team!

14-19 Department

The students in the 14-19 Department have been very busy this term.

Students in Victorian Class have enjoyed their first term of Work Related Learning at Bore Place, an organic dairy farm near Chiddingstone each Tuesday this term. They have carried out activities such as cleaning out the chickens, raking leaves and shovelling manure!

This term Millennium class have been busy completing their bags in Design and Technology and have produced some very detailed designs. They have also been regularly accessing the local shops and library and enjoyed a trip to Bluewater. This term Millennium class said goodbye to Ellie who has moved to Norfolk. Ellie received lots of goodbye and good luck cards and enjoyed a party on the day she left.

Empire Class has had a great term 2. They have been busy and working hard on their targets and in English they have been exploring a sensory version of Harry



Potter whilst working hard to create an interactive display in the secondary area. The sixth form students from Empire class have continued to enjoy swimming alongside their peers at Whiteoak Swimming pool each week and MEAPA gym as part of their recreation choices. Empire Class also enjoyed visits to Millbrook Garden Centre and the Bowling Alley and Pizza Hut alongside their peers in FE4. A great time was had by all!

Sparta class have been finding out about jobs in the local community. This has included a visit 'behind the scenes' at the cinema in Bluewater and they went to a shop in Rochester and interviewed the shopkeeper.

All of Key Stage 4 enjoyed the Christmas Fair, Christingle service, Nativity and Christmas Dinner and we would like to thank Noleen, the Key Stage 3 Leader, for organising the Christmas Celebration Day.

All of Key Stage 4 would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Janet Tidmas, Assistant Principal and 14-19 Leader

Sixth Form

What a busy term this has been!

The enterprise group (Stepping Stones) made up of year 12 students have been very busy making and selling Christmas merchandise including tree decorations that were sold to staff and students. To date they have made over £200 with which to purchase new materials which is excellent. A group of work experience students have begun to think about where they would like to spend their placements and have visited the Oxfam

shop in New Ash Green, Tuck by Truck, The Billings Group and Maidenhead Aquatics.

FE1 this term have been learning about Healthy Living as part of their accredited coursework. This has involved walks outside and a weekly exercise session. The class enjoyed a trip to Pizza Express and to buy a gift at Bluewater to support their work on using money. Sadly the FE1 teacher, Hollie Wilson is moving on to pastures new at the end of this term. She will be sorely missed by all the students and staff and we wish her all the best with her future.

FE2 have focused on A Christmas Carol as their text this term, a graphic novel version, which the students have been engaged with and completed role play activities for some chapters. FE2 have also been accessing local buses to visit the library and shops in Dartford as part of their travel training work. Some students from FE2 represented the school at a Trust Remembrance Service at the Leigh Academy. The class had great fun during a visit to the Ice Rink at Bluewater and dinner in TGI Fridays. The students had saved hard for their trip over the past couple of months and all felt it had been worth it!

FE3 held a party for all the sixth form classes in the hall at Wilmington. This was the culmination of all their hard work since September completing the accredited module titled 'Preparing food and drink for an event', which they all completed. FE3 have accessed the local community at least once a week, visiting different shops to work out budgets for the party food and to decide what they needed to buy. FE3 enjoyed a visit to the



Harvester for their end of term treat.

FE4 have had a very busy few weeks. They focused so well on the Harry Potter interactive story in class that they were taken to the Harry Potter tour in Watford. The students all had a fantastic time at what was a memorable experience. FE4 also joined the other sixth form classes for a party at Wilmington and enjoyed a trip to Ruxley Garden Centre with lunch at McDonalds on the way back to school. As well as this they had a visit to the Bowling Alley and Pizza Hut alongside Empire Class – they will need their rest when we break up!

A number of students based at the Wilmington site attended a Tea Dance that Wilmington Academy held for some people from local nursing homes. Our students served food alongside the Wilmington students and a good time was had by all!

So, as we go into a hectic couple of weeks all the sixth form students and staff wish you all the best and we look forward to seeing all the students refreshed on 5th January 2015!

Janet Tidmas, 14-19 Leader

Environment and Land Based Studies

The Year 2's have been working on pruning and propagation. They have all been lucky enough to take home their rhubarb, sissy rinchum, currant cuttings to continue growing at home and carrots.

They have completed the preparation for the growing beds to survive the winter frosts and will hopefully be able to

harvest the shallots, red and white onions, broad beans and more rhubarb.

Year 1's have been learning about maintaining their pond area to continue the development of the area through the winter months. They have also provided habitats for hedgehogs, birds, insects and pond life.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Richard Allwright, Land Based Studies Co-ordinator

Creative and Performing Arts Team

Music

This term has been a particularly busy one for the Music Department. With the build-up of Christmas in mind: 9 Lessons and Carols; Christingle and the end of Term 2 class concerts, there has been a lot of practice of Christmas music both traditional and popular. Key Stage 3 music classes gave excellent performances of the Huron Indian Carol, carol of the drum, In dulci jubilo and the traditional French carol Il est ne. All classes made use of drums, hand bells and Suzuki tone chimes.

Key Stage 2 gave excellent performances of the modern day carol Come and Join the Celebration. Meadow and Ocean class represented the school in the Parish 9 Lessons and Carols involving 144 children from the local area. This was organised by David the class music teacher.

Norman Class have continued to make outstanding progress in music along with Saxon and Viking class.

Two pupils have excelled themselves with their keyboard skill/piano playing by using



both hands and playing from notation, well done to John and Harry.

On Remembrance Day the Millennium Arts Award Group gave an excellent performance of the Remembrance Waltz which was composed by David especially for the event. They made use of hand bells and tone chimes keeping an exact waltz rhythm and sensitively played. They performed well and followed the conductor of the teaching assistant Sam Nash. Well done to all and a Merry Christmas.

David Walker, Music Teacher

Dance

Although at present we are all getting in the Christmas spirit, students in the sixth form department have been busy preparing for a show that we hope to perform to parents and friends next summer. FE3 have used the popular movie 'Frozen' as the inspiration for their work. While some pupils have choreographed a dance others have made puppets which feature in the video. They have also been assisting in the film recording and theatrical effects. Their hard work and enthusiasm has produced an item not to be missed next year.

Jenny Garwood, Dance teacher

Therapy Team

The therapy team has been busy in the last couple of terms. We have established excellent joint working with our visiting OTs and Physios. I am grateful to the team for their efforts and appreciate the support of parents with this.

Amy and Lily, Speech & Language Therapy students successfully completed and passed a ten week placement here. Both are now looking forward to starting their first jobs in the New Year. I am thankful to all the staff for supporting their placement and the children for being such an inspiration.

Karen Al Khina, Occupational Therapist ran an informative session with a small group of parents on using the Wilbarger Protocol. We are looking to introduce this as a technique for some children with identified sensory processing difficulties. We are hoping to run a more generalised 'therapy' coffee morning in the New Year.

Emma Hamilton, Physiotherapist has joined the team at the Children's Resource Centre and will be working with Carolyn Parker, Physiotherapist here.

If parents have arranged appointments regarding wheelchairs or specialist seating to be held in school, please let Anne Cherriman OT & Physio Assistant know so that we can facilitate the visit in school.

Jamie has delivered a signing workshop for parents and plans to run a refresher for parents in the New Year. Just this week, the signing club performed 'Let it Go' to the drivers and escorts.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas

Liz, Julia, Tim, Jamie, Terri & Anne

PE Department

Sainsburys School Games

1. Our U19 and U14s Boccia team both qualified for the Kent Finals to be held in March 2015.
2. The following students represented Milestone Academy in the Panathlon

Swimming competition held at Larkfield Leisure Centre last Friday: Isobel, Laura, Jenna, Elias, Reece, Robert, Kai and Tyler.

The swimming team finished in 3rd place overall and won a bronze trophy/bronze medals for their efforts. It was the first time that the competition had been set up especially for PSCN (Profound, Severe and Complex Needs) and was a thoroughly enjoyable day for competitors and spectators.

3. The following students will be taking part in a disability indoor rowing event on Wednesday 10th December at Greenacre Academy. It will be an opportunity for students to take part in competitive rowing in a fun and friendly sporting environment: Jamie, Jamie, Thomas, Danny, Lee, Bethany, Onyi, Clare and Nikki Ann.

After School Football with Kent FA

Our after school football sessions have been very successful with 15 students (boys and girls) taking part in an extra weekly extra-curricular healthy activity. The sessions have been run by coaches from the Kent FA and supported by staff at Milestone. Funding for this was provided by Kent Sport who have provisionally offered to release funding for further sessions to take place in the new year. I have had excellent feedback from parents and students involved in this after school activity and we will be looking to get something similar set up for different sports/activities in the New Year.

Steve Devereux, PE Co-ordinator

DfE Changes to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Provision for Children and Young People

As you are aware, the system for supporting children and young people with SEN and Disability is changing.

Statements of Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDA) are being replaced with a single Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan for children and young people with complex needs. The EHC plan will place much more emphasis on personal goals and will describe the support your child will receive while they are in education or training.

Milestone Academy's SEN&D policy is currently in development and this should be available by January 2015. The draft policy is available for consultation via the Milestone Academy website. The consultation process closes on 21st January 2015 and we would welcome your feedback. Once all comments and feedback have been analysed the final policy will be published.



Friends of Milestone AGM

We would like to invite you all to the Friends of Milestone AGM which will be held on 28 January 2015 at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start. This will be taking place in the TRAC centre at Milestone Academy. Refreshments and biscuits will be provided and there will be an informal chat about how the Friends have helped in the last year and how they can work with you and your children.

At present all of our committee members have no children still attending Milestone Academy and are wishing to stand down, therefore we are looking to encourage new members to take over their roles. This is a great opportunity for a new committee to start afresh and bring new ideas to the table. If this is something that you would be interested in, it would be great to welcome you on board.

If you are interested in joining the committee but are unable to attend the AGM please feel free to call into the school office, telephone or email using the numbers/email below.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. Wishing you a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Thank you,

Friends of Milestone Academy

School Office Tel No: 01474 709420

School Email: lyn.french@milestoneacademy.org.uk

Kent Parent Carer Forum

Uniting Listening Influencing



SEN & Disabilities Information Day

Monday 26th January 10am-3pm
Woodville Halls Theatre
Woodville Place, Gravesend
Kent, DA12 1DD

For parents, carers and families of all children with disabilities or additional needs

Over 30 Information stands available from a wide range of support services, professionals, and organisations representing a range of disabilities and needs locally and nationally.

Opening speech by Julie Ely, Head of SEN Kent County Council on the progress of SEN schools in Kent

KPCF Good Practice Star awards presented by
Mayor John Caller and Mayoress Sue Caller

Contact a Family hosting a coping support workshop

Guest: Adam Holloway MP
Walk Tall Drama Showcase

Entry is free

Refreshments available

For more information contact us:
07811 900 223 or heather@kpcf.co.uk
www.kpcf.co.uk

TERM DATES 2014-15



Term 1

Staff Training – Tuesday 2nd and Wednesday 3rd September 2014

School opens Thursday 4th September 2014

School closes Friday 24th October 2014

Holiday

Monday 27th October to Friday 31st October 2014

Term 2

School opens Monday 3rd November 2014

School closes Thursday 18th December 2014

Holiday

Friday 19th December 2014 to Friday 2nd January 2015

Term 3

School opens Monday 5th January 2015

School closes Thursday 12th February 2015

Staff training - Friday 13th February 2015

Holiday

Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February 2015

Term 4

School opens Monday 23rd February 2015

School closes Wednesday 1st April 2015

Holiday

Thursday 2nd April to Friday 17th April 2015

Term 5

Bank holiday Monday 4th May 2015

School opens on Monday 20th April 2015

School closes Thursday 21st May 2015

Staff training - Friday 22nd May 2015

Holiday

Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May 2015

Term 6

School opens Monday 1st June 2015

Staff training – Friday 10th July 2015

School closes Friday 24th July 2015

Holiday

Monday 27th July to Thursday 3rd September 2015 (subject to change)