

Mapledown School



Working & Learning Together to Achieve our Best

9th January 2026

Dear Families,

Welcome back! I wish you all a happy and healthy new year. I hope that you and your families have remained well over the festive break, and that you have all managed a restful time. I am very aware that the holidays can be challenging for many of us.

We have scheduled a number of coffee mornings and workshops this term, please do keep an eye on forthcoming letters and texts. We are really looking forward to seeing you all in school.

Curriculum

As discussed in our Autumn Newsletter, we launched our Work Related Learning and Post-16 Enterprise curriculum, which runs alongside our existing curriculum pathways. The Work Related Learning curriculum aims to enhance the curriculum and the opportunities and experiences of our pupils and support our school's clear intentions to 'prepare students for adulthood'. The Work Related Learning curriculum incorporates the skills needed for adult life for all young people, widening experiences and learning from different people, alongside learning about the World of Work. The Work Related Learning offer will build on each pupil's previously acquired skills e.g. independence, communication, social, life and key skills in a tailored way through an accompanying curriculum based on the world of work. The curriculum offer aims to promote ambition, aspiration and achievement through everyday life and work experiences at school and empowers learners to manage appropriate roles and responsibilities within their class and their Work Related Learning group. The post-16 offer addresses Work Related Learning modules which enables the 'enterprises' to develop as pupils' skills do, as well as alongside pupils moving through the school and eventually into adult life.

Donations:

Each term we ask for a **voluntary** contribution for the children's snacks, drinks, additional cooking ingredients and messy play activities. We would greatly appreciate it if you could send in a donation of £15 for the whole term. This really helps us to carry out some really fabulous activities with our classes which they all really love, and provides additional snacks to encourage more choice making. The Office team will add the voluntary contribution into **School Money**, so that you can make an online donation if you are able to. We are very grateful for your support.

Winter illnesses:

The UKHSA (UK Health Security Agency) has released guidance for schools as we have seen a steady increase in seasonal illnesses. There are steps we can all take to help keep our school community safe and well. The following guidance provides comprehensive information to help schools and families manage the routine infections currently circulating:

Scarlet Fever (Group A Strep)

- Common symptoms: sore throat, fever, mild skin infection.
- If your child has these symptoms, contact your GP or NHS 111.



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- If diagnosed, your child must stay **off school for 24 hours after starting antibiotics**.
- Rare but serious symptoms (seek urgent care): high fever, severe muscle aches, localised muscle pain.

Norovirus (“Winter Vomiting Bug”)

- Causes vomiting and/or diarrhoea, usually lasts 2–3 days.
- Your child must **stay off school until 48 hours after symptoms stop and they feel well**.
- Wash hands with soap and water to prevent spread.

Respiratory Infections (including COVID-19)

- Most cases are mild; seek GP advice if your child has underlying health condition.
- If your child tests positive for COVID-19:
 - **Stay home for 3 days** and return when well and fever-free.

Flu vaccination

- Anyone eligible for seasonal flu vaccination, and has not received it this year, should aim to get this as soon as possible. For more information on flu & vaccination eligibility and how to book: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/flu/>

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

- Mild illness with fever and rash/blisters on hands, feet, mouth.
- No exclusion needed if your child feels well.

General Advice

- Keep your child off school if they have diarrhoea, vomiting, or a high temperature **until 48 hours after symptoms stop and they feel well**.
- Practice good hygiene: wash hands, cover coughs/sneezes, clean surfaces, let fresh air in

Therefore, we ask that you:

- Keep your child at home if he/she has a temperature (24 hours or 48 hours if it is a high temperature) or is too unwell to undertake normal activities.
- Do not send your child to school if they are unwell with illness and particularly do not give any medication such as Calpol or Ibuprofen so you can send your child into school while unwell without consulting with the school nurse.
- Keep your child at home for 48 hours after starting antibiotics.
- Be contactable at all times by telephone while your child is in school.
- Collect your child when asked to do so, should they become unwell at school.

If your child has a severe epileptic seizure or medical treatment prior to coming to school, please be sure that she/he will be able to cope in a busy classroom before you send her/him in, and let the school know. A day at home is often beneficial after a hospital admission for illness, but not after tests or checkups.

If there are any changes with your child’s health, medical condition or medication, please inform the school nurses immediately so that they can update your child’s health care plan.

Organisation:

To help us keep track of belongings please could you ensure that your child’s clothes, coats, equipment, etc are **clearly** labelled; this really helps us to take care of your child’s belongings.



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Reheating food in school:

We have guidelines on re-heating food in school, which we must adhere to in order to comply with health and safety procedures. Generally, schools are discouraged from re-heating packed lunches sent from home to avoid food poisoning risks. The preferred method is for you to heat the food at home in the morning, and send it in a heat proof wide neck flask, where the food will remain at a suitable temperature until it can be eaten. However, we recognise that it is not an option that will be suitable for all children, especially for pupils who are learning to be more independent with cooking and heating at lunchtime, or who like their food quite hot. If you would like your child's food to be reheated in school, please contact the school office so that they can send you some additional information.

Dates for your diary:

Monday 16th Feb – 20th Feb

Monday 23rd February

Tue 24th & Wed 25th Feb

Thursday 19th March

**Wednesday 25 March
(10:30)**

Friday 27th March

Monday 30th March - 10th April

Half term - School closed to students

Students back to school

Parents' consultations (Tue - Copthall, Wed - main site/Clarion)

Star of the Term Assembly

Spring Festival - Class Performances – Open to all families

End of Spring term 2026

Easter / Spring Holidays

Thank you in advance for all you do this year to support your child and to work with us. We really value the partnership we have with our families.

Take care and best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Schaaya".

Sandra Chaaya
Headteacher



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