



# Merrydale Junior School

**Be the Best you can Be!**



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Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you to ask you for your support in a new initiative we are undertaking across our group of schools during the pandemic lockdown and beyond. I have been incredibly impressed by our children's diligence and our parents' dedication in ensuring learning continues during this difficult time. We truly understand the challenges and the logistics that parents need to overcome in order to do this and the fact that learning at home creates many new ordeals. A key barrier for many families has been the limited access to online and home learning when the whole family is accessing hardware and space at the same time. On average we know that over one third of children nationally do not have regular access to hardware needed for online learning.

The government has announced this week funding to support secondary school families with improved access to hardware and we have been selected to support other schools in developing effective online learning. We have been chosen as a Trust to be one of the schools who will provide support for other schools and parents. A key area we would like to address is the access to hardware for children in KS2 and in order to attempt to improve this access we would like to do two things.

1. Provide IT Technical Support for families as an online help service and a technical support service with home devices.
2. Seek donations of redundant laptops (**Max 5 years old, min 4GB ram and 80GB hard drive**) that our IT department can reconfigure, recondition, and prepare for schools to use which we could loan to families who are struggling to access online learning.

Our IT department will be available to offer advice and technical support to assist families who may need to ensure their personal devices are fit for purpose, safe and setup to maximise learning opportunities for those parents who require access to this support. To gauge this and scope the demand and overall need we have created an online form for you to complete if you would like to access this provision.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=7cXzqZdY-kCCZ246vAAaNEPfqS2IkI9lpVRDX1Orj1ZUNk82Q1dJMko2TIMyVEFOSloyNIFVN0pZRS4u>

Some parents have already contacted us saying that they have some spare hardware or know that their businesses/workplaces may have devices they are happy to donate for this project. If you are able to, please help us by taking your hardware to your local school at your earliest convenience and/or share this email address with your employers - [alapidge@discoveryschoolstrust.org.uk](mailto:alapidge@discoveryschoolstrust.org.uk), and we could arrange collection in the coming weeks when restrictions are more so relaxed.

I will also be sharing, in the next few weeks, our policy about the expectations for online learning for the future and what we will be doing to further ensure it is accessible, measured, and achievable for children.

Thank you for your continued support in these challenging times.

C Mugglestone  
Headteacher