



Ashwell School Newsletter



Dates for your Diary

13th January 2012

January

- 15th Primary applications close**
for current Nursery Pupils
- 16th Take One Picture Week
- 20th Whole school art day
- 21st Burns Night
- 24th Millfield School visiting
- 26th Millfield School visiting
Chess match v St Johns
- 27th Millfield School visiting
- 27th Let them eat cake - Yr 5
- 30th Yrs 5 & 6 Visit from
Young Shakespeare Company
- 31st Yr 4 - to Hitchin Gurdwara

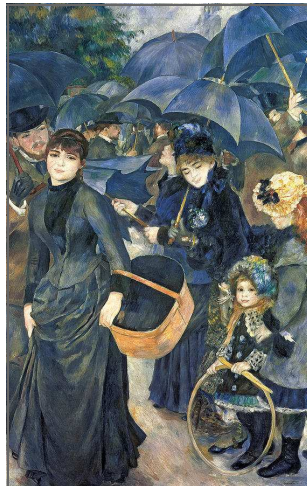
February

- 9th Chess match v Lordship
- 10th Yr 6 - KTS Singing Festival
- 13th HALF TERM WEEK
- 20th Nursery applications open**
- 21st Open Morning
- 22nd Open Morning
- 23rd School Tour - Prospective
Nursery Parents
- 29th School Tour - Prospective
Nursery Parents

March

- 1st World Book day
- 2nd PTA - Children's Disco
- 7th Parent Info Evening -
Maths & Writing
- 10th Village Quiz
- 12th SCIENCE WEEK
- 21st Parents' Evening
- 22nd World Water Day
- 22nd Chess match v Pixmore
- 27th Class Photos
Parents' Evening
- 29th Parents' Evening
- 30th Last day of term

Happy New Year! I hope that you all had an enjoyable Christmas break.



The spring term has started well, with work underway based on this term's whole school theme: **Water**. This will involve work in lots of different subject areas, including science, geography, literacy, design technology, music and art. Next week (beginning Jan 16th) is **'Take One Picture' week**, when much of the work in school will be based around a famous painting with a watery theme. On Friday 20th Jan we will holding a whole school **Art Day**, during which the children from Reception to year 6 will have a chance to choose

an art activity to work on in mixed age groups for most of the day. Many thanks to all those of you who have volunteered to help on the day – please come to the office at the start of your 'shift' and we will be able to direct you to the class you have been allocated to work with. If anyone else would like to volunteer, it's not too late, and you don't need to have artistic skills.

Opportunities for parents to find out more about what their children are learning at school, and how they can help them at home.

Recent surveys of parents' opinions show that you are keen to know more about your children's learning and how you can most effectively help them at home. We are planning the following events during this term to help you become better informed about what goes on in school:

Football Club Delay

The start date for Football club has been delayed to Thursday 26th January, this is due to Mr Linney attending an important meeting.

I am very sorry for the delay.

Open Mornings

Tuesday February 21st and Wednesday February 22nd, 9 – 12.

All parents are welcome to come into any or all of our classrooms for a 'fly on the wall' view of a normal morning at school. This is an opportunity to watch typical lessons in any age group, to see how teaching and learning are organised and to share your children's daily experiences of school. Parents who came last year found it both interesting and illuminating, and we hope that more of you will come this year.

Subject Information Evening

Wednesday March 7th, 7.30 – 9pm

This is an opportunity for you to find out about how **writing and maths** are taught in school, what the expectations are for different stages, what some of the unfamiliar vocabulary your children bring home means (e.g. 'partitioning', 'grid multiplication' etc) and how you can most effectively support your child's learning at home. Parent governors on the Curriculum Committee have been closely involved in planning the evening, so we hope it will be useful for you, and answer your questions about these vital areas of the curriculum.

Parents Evenings

Wednesday March 21st, Tuesday March 27th and Thursday March 29th

These give you the chance to discuss your own child's attainment, progress and wellbeing in detail individually with his or her teacher(s).

Yearly Plans on website.

The outline curriculum plans for the year, which teachers draw up during the preceding summer, are now available on the school website for you to read if you are interested. Information about all subjects taught is summarised on a single sheet for each year group, which necessitates some 'shorthand', and what is actually taught may slightly differ from the plans as teachers sometimes decide to make changes during the year.

<http://www.ashwell.herts.sch.uk/Parents-Information%20.htm>

I hope that you will make use of these opportunities to increase your understanding of your child's educational experience, and feel better informed as a result. I will be sending you more precise details about the different events nearer the time.

120 Club

MONTH	POSITION	NAME	NUMBER	PRIZE
December 2011	1st	Caroline Barton	71	£15
	2nd	C & T Luggeri	39	£10
	3rd	Dr F Moynihan	17	£5
	Bonus	Louise Bruning	67	£50
January 2012	1st	B Lohoar	83	£15
	2nd	W Hepburn	18	£10
	3rd	C Moynihan	46	£5

The school has just this week received a cheque for **£500** from the 120 Club. Many thanks to Alison Picking, who organises the club, and to the subscribers for this very generous and much needed donation.

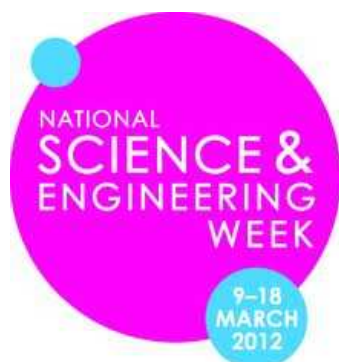
Fundraising for charity

I am delighted to tell you that the children raised a grand total of £482.24 for Children in Need in November, through a variety of sponsored events, dressing up etc. The Christmas performances raised £363.30 for the East Africa crisis appeal. Many thanks for your generosity.

Lost property

There is a box of **lost property** in the dining hall. Please check through it for your child's possessions, as I will soon need to take it to the clothing bank as it is becoming too full. On Friday afternoons, if the weather is fine, the lost property is put on display on the playground. Please name items, especially lunch boxes, coats and jumpers, so that they can be returned straight to their owners if lost.

Science week



The week beginning March 12th is **National Science and Engineering Week**, and Mrs Docking is planning a range of events to stimulate children's interest in science. If you have a job or hobby involving science or engineering, such as working in medicine or in a science related industry, or having a passion for fossils or botany, we would be very grateful if you could spare the time during the week to talk to a small group of children to help them learn about the importance of science and engineering in the wider world. I will be writing to you with more details next month.

<http://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/web/nsew/>

School Library



Don't forget that the school library is open for parents and children after school on Fridays.

Please could you look around for any school library books at home that your child has finished with and return them to the blue tray on the library desk: some children seem to have rather a lot of books out at the moment.

Parking

I am very grateful to the managers of the **Rose and Crown** pub for letting parents use their car park for dropping off and picking up children. I'd like to remind parents that the car park is only to be used for a few minutes outside pub opening hours (i.e. NOT between 11.30am and 3.00pm or after 5.30pm). This means the car park cannot be used when picking up Nursery children, at the end of term when school finishes early or for evening events such as children's discos & parents' meetings.

Parking at the beginning and end of the school day continues to be a problem, with some dangerous parking on bends and opposite the school gate. Can I appeal to parents who live in Ashwell to walk their children to and from school, and for parents who live outside the village (but can't use the school buses) to park further away from the school, for example on the High Street or on Mill Street, and walk the last few metres.



Proposed changes to admissions arrangements

Hertfordshire County Council is running a consultation on the proposed admissions arrangements for the school year 2013/14 and is seeking responses from parent/carers, schools and community groups.

The main change proposed is to allow an increase in the number of preferences from three to four, i.e. parents will be able to apply to four schools, as opposed to only three as currently. Views are also being sought on :

- A rule to prioritise children of school staff
- Amending the priority area rules and "nearest" school definitions

Other proposals for the treatment of twins/multiple births, a single sex priority area and in year admissions

The consultation period runs until 29 February 2012. Please visit www.hertsdirect.org/admissions2013 for more information and to respond online or call Mini Harish on 01992 555840 for a copy of the consultation document.

Headlice



There have been several cases of headlice reported this term so we have sent home a leaflet about treatment. Please make sure you check your child's hair regularly and treat as soon as nits or lice are spotted.

Ashwell Patient's Group – Calling All Volunteers!

There are, as you will have heard, many changes occurring within the Health Service.

At Ashwell Surgery, we have always tried to take advantage of changes in order to improve the services we can provide for our patients.

One of the current initiatives is the formation of a 'Patient Reference Group', or PRG.

This is not a body which will meet formally, face-to-face but a group of people, broadly representative of our patient population, who will make suggestions regarding all aspects of our services and whose opinions we can canvass via postal or on-line questionnaires, in order to make improvements where we can.

We are hoping to recruit around fifty or so people for this group, between now and the end of January. If you would like to contribute to this scheme, please complete the PRG Form available from the surgery, or via the new surgery website

<http://www.mysurgerywebsite.co.uk/index.aspx?p=D81047>

Thank you for your support.

Puffin Book Club

Book club catalogues have been sent home separately – the deadline for orders is Thursday 19th Jan. Many thanks for supporting the bookclub as your commission allows us to order books for the classrooms and library.

Spend & Raise - the more you buy, the more we earn!

Thanks to everyone who has visited the new eStore! You can help us to raise valuable funds today by shopping online – and you won't spend any more than going to the retailer's website directly.

<http://www.spendandraise.com/AshwellSchool/>

PTA news

Many thanks to the PTA for organising a very enjoyable Turkey Dinner towards the end of last term.

This term's PTA events include:

- * Burns Supper on Saturday 21st Jan – tickets are selling like hot oatcakes so buy yours soon if you plan to come
- * Children's Disco on Friday March 2nd; 5 - 6.00pm for Reception and Years 1 & 2; 6 – 7.30pm for Years 3-6.
- * Ashwell Village Quiz on Saturday March 10th—advance notice to give you time to start organising your team of 6. Easier questions are promised for this year....

If you have ideas for PTA events, please see a member of the PTA committee on the playground or come along to the next committee meeting which is on Wednesday February 8th at 8pm in the back room at The Three Tuns.

Ashwell at Home

This year the Ashwell at Home village open day will be on the 13th May, and the proceeds from the day will be divided as usual between the Ashwell Primary School, Ashwell Village Museum and St. Mary's Church. This event brings a welcome boost to the income of all three organisations, which are very grateful for it in these straightened times.

Ashwell at Home always brings out the best in our community, relying as it does on the energy and good will of so many people who all do their bit for such a good cause. This year, in addition to the many cooks, bakers, gardeners and other helpers, we are looking in particular for volunteers who can manage some specific tasks in the weeks between now and the big day. Would you be able to set up a web-site or a face-book page for us? Would you be able to organise the advertising for the programme, or distribute flyers in Ashwell and beyond? Could you organise a cake stall? Could you help to arrange the car boot sale? Could you co-ordinate our other volunteers, allocating them to the tasks to be done on the day?

If you think you could help with one of these tasks I'd be delighted to hear from you.

Cliff Jenkinson 742592 cliffjenkinson47@live.co.uk

Wisepay



Thank you for using Wisepay we find it works very well; could we please ask you not to return reply slips to school saying payment has been made until payment have actually been made onto Wisepay.

Procedure for Extreme Weather

In the event of extreme weather conditions, we would like to remind you of the procedures that we will follow.

Any decision to close Ashwell School would be made if at all possible by 7.00 am, although please bear in mind that it is possible that conditions can on occasion change dramatically hour by hour. Please check regularly for updated information as follows.

Local radio	BBC 3 Counties Radio 103.8 FM
Herts County Council website	http://www.hertsdirect.org Please follow the links
Ashwell School answerphone message	01462 742297
Email message sent from school email	

Do I qualify for help towards school expenses?

To be able to get financial help, you need to be receiving one of the following benefits:

- Income Support*
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance*
- Income-related Employment Support Allowance*
- Child Tax Credit, with a taxable income of no more than £16,190 and not in receipt of Working Tax Credit*
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit)*
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999*
- Child Tax Credit - payable at a rate higher than the family element i.e. £545.34 (this is £1,095.00 if you also have a child under one year old)
- Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, or Council Tax Benefit (not including second adult rebate)
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after employment finishes or after you start to work less than 16 hours per week

* Some help is only available if you receive these specific benefits.

How do I apply?

You can apply online at:-

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/canhelp/>

If you have any further queries, please contact the Education Benefits Team by email:

howcanwehelp@hertscc.gov.uk or call 0300 123 4048.

