



Ashwell Primary School

Newsletter
31st October 2023

October 2023

Dear all,

So... the mornings and evenings are now darker and the weather has certainly taken a turn for the worse! Fortunately, we do now have heating back in all buildings!

I hope that you all had a lovely half term. I was hoping to get this newsletter, October's events, to you before half term but I wanted to include events that happened right up to the last minute! We have had an incredibly busy month or so in school, in the lead up to half term and since returning. There has been so much going on and we are keen to share some of the highlights in this newsletter.

It is that time of year again, when we welcome visiting families who have been touring our school with the view to joining us in September 2024 in Reception. I have had the pleasure of showing lots of visitors around! It remains one of the favourite parts of my job, getting to show off our school in action! I am always bursting with pride.

Clubs, trips and curriculum enrichment activities are now in full flow, it is difficult to keep up with all of the amazing things happening across the school!

The new PTA committee have been very busy! We were treated to a super pumpkin competition and a fantastic Monster Disco before half term. They now turn their attention to Saturday's Fireworks! Thank you in advance for all of your support and a huge thank you to the PTA committee for their efforts and time they had given up. I look forward to seeing many of you on Saturday afternoon!

We look forward to marking Remembrance Day on Friday next week, followed by Children in Need the week after.

Before we know it, we will be entering the Christmas period. Full details of each event will be shared closer to the time (EYFS and KS1 show details have already been sent!) but please do pop the key dates in your diaries!

Mr S England
Headteacher



A reminder that our school events are now shared on the new website calendar. There is a function for you to subscribe to this to have dates sync to your device.

<https://www.ashwell.herts.sch.uk/calendar/?calid=1&pid=8&viewid=1>

- 4th Nov – PTA Fireworks
- 8th Nov – Flu Immunisations
- 13th Nov – Anti-Bullying Week
- 16th Nov – Year 3 Class Assembly
- 17th Nov – Children in Need
- 21st Nov – Year 3 Fitzwilliam Museum Visit
- 20th Nov – Year 6 Mock SATs week
- 22nd Nov – Year 5 Sartorius Visit (CCI)
- 22nd Nov – Reception Audley End trip
- 24th Nov – Occasional Day (School Closed)
- 26th Nov – PTA BassBelle 10 Miler
- 1st Dec – Year 6 & PTA Christmas Bazaar
- 8th Dec – Christmas Jumper Day
- 6th & 7th Dec – EYFS Production
- 11th Dec – Widdershins Theatre
- 13th Dec – Y1/2 Production (PM)
- 13th Dec – Choir singing (Church - evening)
- 14th Dec – Y1/2 Production (AM)
- 15th Dec – Christingle & Carol Service
- 18th Dec – Choir Concert (PM)
- 19th Dec – Christmas Lunch & Santa visit
- 20th Dec – End of term (1pm)

Children in Need 2023

This year we will again be supporting Children in Need. A letter with further details of this event will be coming out shortly, our school council are in the process of organising it!



Year 5 Burwell House

On Wednesday 18th October, Year 5 headed off for their 3 day / 2 night residential to Burwell House, Cambridgeshire.

Children got to experience a wide range of activities linked to their curriculum topics this year. They put together a TV production in a studio; completed enamelling; developed orienteering skills and successfully navigated the Burwell Fox challenge

Thank you to all of the staff who gave up their time to enable this to happen. It was wonderful hearing about their experiences and they cannot wait to share these with parents in their class assembly later this year.



Nursery Admissions

The admissions information for our Nursery and Reception – September 2024 Intake is now all on our website [here](#).

Reception – September 2024 Intake

If you would like to book onto a Reception tour please use the link below:

[Reception Tours](#)

Deadline for applications – 15/1/24

Allocation Day – 16/4/24

All admissions are via:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

Nursery - September 2024 Intake

If you would like to book onto a Nursery tour please use the link below:

[Nursery Tours](#)

Deadline for applications – 9/2/24

Allocation Day – 8/3/24

*PLACES STILL AVAILABLE in current Nursery cohort

[On-Line Application Form](#)

APPLY NOW

Be Bright Be Seen

On Monday, children will take part in an important assembly about how to stay safe on the roads as the days get gloomier and nights get darker in the autumn and winter months. They will talk about the importance of wearing highly visible colours so drivers and other road users can see us, and the different items of clothing and accessories that can help keep us safe.



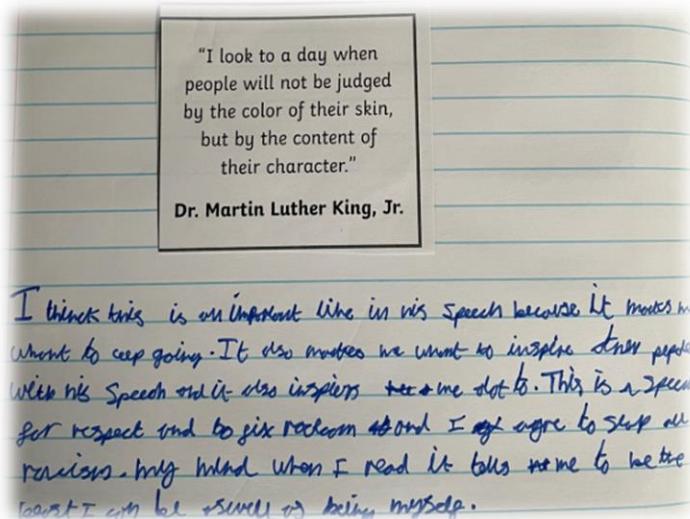
Rural Schools Football Tournament

On Tuesday 17th October, children from our Year 4, 5 & 6 football club took part in a Rural Schools Football tournament. It was really great seeing them progress as the tournament went on. They took part in 4 competitive fixtures and progressed out of their group into the semi-finals where they were unfortunate to be beaten in sudden death penalties. They stuck together as a team and showed real resilience when facing very strong teams of almost all Year 6 children! I was incredibly proud of every player for the part that they played. Well done to all involved. My player of the tournament went to our Goal Keeping – Sebastian B



Black History Month

October was Black History month and we used this as an opportunity to explore cultural diversity. Lots of learning took place based around a number of historical figures and the difference that they made. There were some amazing reflections from our Year 6 children and I wanted to share one of these below.



Year 5 CCI Science Project

On Thursday afternoon, Year 5 had a visitor from York University, Miss Draper, who delivered lesson 1 out of 3 of our CCI lessons. The pupils were sent a letter from the director, Dominic to help them find the most effective way to filter a medicine from a solution. They had 5 different filters to investigate: tissue, kitchen roll, J cloth, fabric and filter paper. The pupils had to make the 'medicine' from flour and water, and then filter it through their chosen variable, and then time how long it takes for the solution to filter through. Pupils then had to score the clarity of the water afterwards.

They had so much fun being efficient scientists for the afternoon! Looking forwards to lesson 2 next week, lesson 3 with Miss Draper the week after, and then finally, our visit to Sartorius in Royston on the 22nd November.



PTA Updates

You can also view the new PTA website to access information and their shop - <https://ashwellpta.co.uk/>

A huge thank you to everyone who has offered to give some time to help at the fireworks on Saturday – without this support the event simply would not be possible.

Dates for your diary:

PTA Fireworks – Saturday 4th November

BassBelle 10 Miler – Sunday 26th November

Christmas Bazaar – Friday 1st December

Brainstrust Bass Belle 26th November 2023

Some of you may remember that last year we had a team of parents & staff entered into the BassBelle 10-mile race based in & around Bassingbourn. It was great fun & raised an amazing amount of money for the school £1,522.

So far, we have a team of three, including our new treasurer. The organiser has agreed that we can still have late entries... so if you are up for the 10-Mile challenge please sign up asap, the entry will be closing shortly. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/brainstrust-bass-belle-10-miler-tickets-668177535997>

To support our runners – please donate here:

If you would like to show your support, please sponsor our team by donating on the link below.

<https://gofund.me/e1324a98>

If you would like to contact the PTA:

info@ashwellpta.co.uk



Remember you can still support the school by using the link below when shopping online:

<https://www.easypfundraising.org.uk/causes/ashwellschool/>

Or by donating @

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=FMN6V7N9XZDVY

Safeguarding

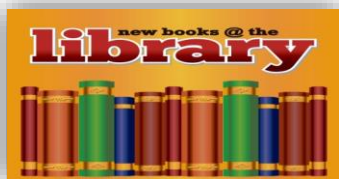
In school, we constantly remind our children that they can report any concerns they have about themselves or someone else to any adult in school. We encourage parents to report their concerns too. A reminder that our Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mr England & Mrs Andrews.



Donate a Book to our Library

Book donations continue to come into the school from our wish list.

A huge thank you to everyone who has already purchased a new book for the school library. To see our children's wish list and to donate a new book please see: <http://amzn.eu/OR6HXL4>



Attendance

Attendance at Ashwell continues to be good, although it has dropped by 1% recently. Our whole school figure at 97.3% for 2023-24.

May I remind parents to avoid booking holidays or medical appointments during school times wherever possible.

Class	%
Year 4	98.4%
Acorn (Nursery)	98.4%
Year 3	98.2%
Oak (Reception)	98.0%
Year 5	97.7%
Year 2	97.1%
Year 1	96.9%
Year 6	96.1%

Kitchen Improvements

Our Kitchen re-fit has been taking place over the half term and all of this week. It is already looking amazing. It will see us stop using gas and move to electricity that is powered by our solar panels as part of our work to be more environmentally friendly. We want to thank everyone for their co-operation, understanding and support during this week. We know it has caused inconvenience. We are hoping that it will be close to completion and operational on Monday and then we believe normal service will be resumed on Tuesday. We will confirm this with you.



Congratulations to Year 4 and Nursery who won the class attendance award for Autumn 1 and will have a non-uniform day as a reward.

Chill & Chat Fridays

As part of our whole school approach to supporting pupil wellbeing and mental health we have set up a weekly 'Chill and Chat' lunch club.

This takes place in Ash and is open to all children, should they wish to attend, during Friday lunchtimes.

It is run by Mrs Andrews and Miss Sohal (Early Years TA), it is a safe space for children to talk to a school adult about anything that might be worrying them.

SEND Coffee Morning

This morning Mrs Andrews ran our first SEND Information Coffee Morning. Thank you to those parents who attended. It was a lovely opportunity to meet with parents and talk about SEND provision at Ashwell and also to discuss some of the other support available locally for emerging and more complex needs. It was also nice for parents to just chat to each other, informally about challenges we all face and share resources and ideas. We will be running another session after Christmas and hope to make this a regular event in the school diary.



Do you have a worry? Is something making you unhappy? Come along to...

Chill and Chat!

Friday lunch times in Ash
A safe space to talk



EYFS Little Cities Experience

Oak and Acorn classes had a visit from the 'Little City Experience' to accompany their learning on 'People Who Help Us'. Children spent the morning fully immersed in various roles; doctors, shopkeepers, builders, hairdressers and many more. The children (and staff!) had an absolute ball! A huge thank you to the PTA who funded this experience. (EYFS often miss out on other funded workshops!)



Indian Drumming Workshop

On Monday, we returned to school with a bang and enjoyed an Indian drumming workshop. The children learned about the origin of some of the drums as well as hearing some techniques such as the bass, tone and slap. They were even treated to a song!

Children loved the opportunity to repeat rhythms and create their own melody using what they had been taught. There is a live video on our Twitter feed!

A big thank you to our PTA for helping to fund such a great workshop.



Year 2 DT Project

Year 2 completed their first KAPOW DT day, learning about structures and their stability.

They showed brilliant resilience during the day as well as excellent teamwork skills in supporting each other. The finished product: Baby Bear's Chair!



Community Art Project – Y1 Art

Ashwell GP surgery approached us last year to enquire if we would like to be part of making the surgery waiting area welcoming and community orientated.

Miss Harber, our Art Leader, has taken this on and she has now put up our first display. Hopefully many of you have already seen this if visiting the surgery. We are very proud of our Year 1 art work.



Year 6 Ancient Greek Day

On Thursday 12th November, Year 6 were transported back in time to experience a day in the life of Ancient Greece courtesy of a 'History of the Page' visit. We were so impressed with the array of Greek style clothing and costumes the children wore to really immerse themselves in the day.

The day allowed Y6 to experience different aspects of Athenian life, covering subjects such as religion, democracy and the different groups of people that lived in Athens. Children were given special roles and tasks throughout the morning - some were Athenians, some metics and some slaves! They got to practice and explore activities such as mosaics, soap sculpting, olive oil pressing and ink tiles. In the afternoon the children performed Greek plays alongside a feast of wine (juice!), apples, bread and cheese. It was a super day!

We heard that our parent volunteers got into character and thoroughly enjoyed the day too!

One child told me that it was "the best day ever!"

Thank you to Mrs Furr for organising this and also to our parent volunteers who enabled it to run smoothly.



Year 6 food tasting during their Ancient Greek day.

PTA Pumpkin Competition



EYFS Winners



Year 1 Winners



Year 2 Winners



Year 3 Winners



Year 4 Winners



Year 6 Winners

PTA Winners	
Nursery:	Willow
Reception:	Margot, Sam, Nyla-Rae, Margaux, Sebastian
Year 1:	Fred F, Willow, Rion
Year 2:	Olivia, Grace, Orlaith, Albert
Year 3:	Cora, Kiran, Bea
Year 4:	Zion, Livia, Connie, Elodie
Year 5:	Marley
Year 6:	Ava, Charlie sharp, Sofia

Nursery: Willow

Reception: Margot, Sam, Nyla-Rae, Margaux, Sebastian

Year 1: Fred F, Willow, Rion

Year 2: Olivia, Grace, Orlaith, Albert

Year 3: Cora, Kiran, Bea

Year 4: Zion, Livia, Connie, Elodie

Year 5: Marley

Year 6: Ava, Charlie sharp, Sofia



How Does School Attendance Affect a Child's Learning?

365 Days in a Year
190 School Days
175 Non School Days

0 Days
Absence

190
Days
in
School

Perfect!

100%
Attendance

Best chance of success

10 Days
Absence

180
Days
in
School

95%
Attendance

19 Days
Absence

171
Days
in
School

90%
Attendance

Less chance of success

29 Days
Absence

161
Days
in
School

85%
Attendance

38 Days
Absence

152
Days
in
School

80%
Attendance

Serious impact on
education and
reduced life chances

47 Days
Absence

143
Days
in
School

75%
Attendance

Over half
a term
missed!

Having 90% Over 5 school
years, is half a school
year's work missed.

A 2 week holiday in term
time, means that the
highest attendance a child
can achieve is 94.7%

4
weeks
missed!

Please park **SAFELY**

We need everyone to play their part in keeping the roads near schools safe.

DRIVERS SHOULD NOT:

- park on yellow zig zag markings.
- park on double yellow lines at any time, or on single yellows during restricted hours.
- park or drive on footpaths.
- park within 10 metres of a junction, as this decreases visibility.
- block driveways or dropped kerbs.

You may be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

Thank you for your cooperation.

