



February / March 2024

Dear all,

It is hard to believe that we are already at the end of our second term, the spring term has been one of the shortest that I have ever known yet we have still managed to fit in an incredible amount of learning as well as curriculum enrichment activities! Please do take a moment to read through this combined February and March Newsletter to catch up on all of the wonderful things that have taken place over the last few weeks.

It will not be long now before the days start to become longer and the weather warms up! In school, staff have been busy planning their summer term curriculum and with this comes a number of trips across the school, including our Year 4 and Year 6 residential visits. You will see from the dates adjacent to this that we have a busy summer 1 ahead of us.

As we come to the end of this term, it is sadly time to say goodbye to Mrs Perricone who has worked at Ashwell School for just under 10 years. I want to thank her for her many years of hard work and dedication and wish her the best of luck in her new venture.

This time of year in school is always busy, and we appreciate that once we enter the summer term, children, parents and staff begin to cast one eye to the next academic year. We are currently in the process of working with Governors to set the 2024-25 school budget and alongside this we will also begin to explore our staffing structure for the 2024-25 academic year before turning our attention to focus on transition within the school. As ever, we will endeavour to communicate staffing organisation for 2024-25 as soon as we are able to finalise it. This is likely to be just after the summer half term.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our recent parent survey regarding annual reports and a 3rd parent consultation. We have analysed and discussed all of this information and will share the outcomes and plans once they have been finalised.

All that is left for me to do is to wish you and your families a wonderful Easter break. I hope that you all get to spend some quality time together and children can recharge their batteries ready for a long summer term of hard work ahead!

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/?calendar=1&pid=8&viewid=1>

- 15th April – INSET DAY School Closed
- 16th April – Summer Term Begins
- 26th April – Y1 Class Assembly
- 29th April – Y4 Maths Challenge
- 30th April – Y2 Scooter Training
- 1st - 2nd May – Y4 Celtic Harmony Residential
- 3rd May – Y2 Class Assembly
- 6th May – Bank Holiday
- 7th May – Choir @ Ashwell Music Festival
- 8th May – Y4 Pedestrian skills training
- 10th May – Ashwell Music Concert in Church
- 12th May – Ashwell @ Home
- 13th May – Y6 SATs Week
- 17th May – PTA Disco
- 20th May – Walk to School Week
- 21st May – Y6 Street Engineering
- 23rd May – Y4 Class Assembly
- 27th – 31st May HALF TERM



The Year 3/4 cast of Pirates vs Mermaids

Reminder - On Thursday 28th March, school will finish at: 1:00pm for ALL full time children

Year 3/4 Production



Year 3 and 4 were delighted to perform their play 'Pirates vs Mermaids' in front of children and parents before the end of term. We've had so much fun preparing for the play in the past few weeks, learning lines, singing songs. A big thank you to parents for contributing to costumes and props. We are so proud of the children's confidence and acting chops!



Year 1 Museum Trip

On Tuesday 5th March, Year 1 visited North Herts Museum in Hitchin to take part in a toys workshop. The children looked at different toys from the past, some over 100 years old! They got a chance to play with the different types of toys, such as wooden push and pull toys, a hoop la, roll a penny and mechanical toys. Pupils then got to design their own wooden peg toys. The children also had the opportunity to explore the museum. It was a fantastic workshop and the children really enjoyed it.



Half Term Holiday Club - Premier

There will be a Premier Camps Multi-activity Holiday Club at Ashwell School on the following dates:

➤ Tuesday 2nd April – Friday 12th April

This will be open to children aged 4-11 and more information is available at:

<https://www.premier-education.com/holidaycamps>



Nursery Admissions

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

Reception – September 2024 Intake

Deadline for applications – NOW CLOSED

Allocation Day – 16/4/24

All admissions are via:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

Nursery - September 2024 Intake

*PLACES STILL AVAILABLE in current Nursery cohort and for September 2024.

[On-Line Application Form](#)

APPLY NOW

Community Art Project – GP Surgery

Our Art board in Ashwell GP surgery has been updated! Work from our whole school Art Day is now on display. Some pieces from Nursery to Year 5. Keep your eyes peeled for Year 6's work to be displayed in the summer term! Thank you to Miss Harber for this.



Year 2 – Village Walk

Year 2 on the hunt for spring poetry inspiration armed with a checklist. Great discussion around expanded noun phrases to describe flowers as well as some adverbs to describe how the flowers move. My favourite was "the yellow, pretty flowers dance calmly in the breeze".



Active and Safer Travel Team

Our newly formed team met this half-term. They discussed possible initiatives which could increase active and green travel amongst our school community. One exciting idea is to create an Ashwell School Geocaching Trail, which would encourage everyone to explore the village, on foot. They have scoped out the village to find possible locations to hide caches and are excited to share more information about how you can take part soon - watch this space!



PTA Updates

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the recent Mothers' Day shop and Easter Bingo which raised over £500. Lots of fun was had by all.

The committee are now busy planning the two next big events which are Ashwell @ Home and the summer fete.

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

Dates for your diary:

- ✓ Ashwell @ Home – Sunday 12th May
- ✓ PTA Disco – Friday 17th May
- ✓ Fathers' Day Shop – Friday 14th June
- ✓ Summer Fete – Friday 12th July

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.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ashwell-school/>

Or by donating @
https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id

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.

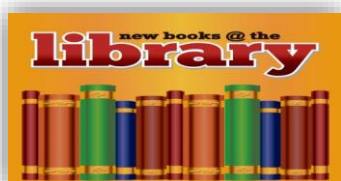
**Keeping
children safe
is everyone's
responsibility**



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/0R6HXL4>



Attendance

Our current whole school attendance figure is at 95.9% for 2023-24. This is slightly down on last year but remains above the national average.

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

Class	%
Year 3	97.3%
Year 5	97.2%
Acorn (Nursery)	96.9%
Year 4	96.6%
Year 1	96.4%
Year 2	95.6%
Oak (Reception)	95.6%
Year 6	94.2%

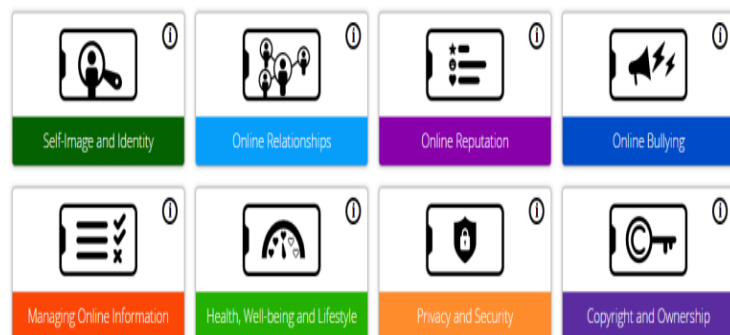
Art Day

On Friday 16th February it was our whole school Art Day. The theme for the day was 'Really Wild'. All children across the school took part in different Art activities that linked to animals with a print. Work was then showcased in our whole school Art exhibition on Friday 1st March. The pieces that were created were amazing!



Safer Internet Week

At the beginning of February, children across the school too part in a daily Safer Internet Week session. This included a week long focus on various aspects of online safety. Children have already covered specific online safety units of work as part of our computing scheme of work in the autumn term and this was to further enhance these skills. During the week the children covered age related knowledge and skills sessions based on the following themes.



World Book Day 2024

On Thursday 7th March, we celebrated World Book Day. The day started with an inspiring and captivating assembly from our visitor Mark Grist who talked to the children about his passion of writing and performed some poems and read one of his own stories. Each class was then treated to a workshop with Mark. Thank you to our PTA who funded this opportunity for the children to enjoy.



In addition to World Book Day, during the week, as part of the World Book Day celebrations, a number of children also entered Mrs. Furr's Masked Reader Competition. During the week, children watched video clips and used clue to make guesses. It was fantastic watching them and seeing how creative the children have been. A huge thank you to everyone who entered.

Year 5/6 KNex Challenge

On 14th March, our Year 5 and 6 classes took part in this year's STEM KNex challenge. They were tasked with designing and building a construction vehicle that was able to move forwards and backwards and also had the ability to lift something up.



The staff themed as the Hungry Caterpillar Book



Children from Year 3



Anxiety and School Avoidance

NESSIE in Ed are a Hertfordshire-based therapy organisation and have released details of fully funded parent workshops and courses to support with anxiety and school avoidance. You will find full information here: <https://nessieined.com/hertfordshire-parents>

Upcoming Events:

Online Peer Support Group for Parent/Carer - Children avoiding School (8 weeks) Seeing your child overwhelmed and unable to attend school can be distressing for any parent/carers. In this closed, confidential group, parents/carers will have the opportunity to discuss their current situation and find support from others going through the same thing. Guidance is available from qualified therapists that will help you communicate better with your child and what they are feeling, as well as providing some useful coping strategies.	8 Weeks Tuesday 23rd April - Tuesday 18th June 9:30am - 11:00am
Parent/Carer Webinar - Anxiety The aim of this early intervention workshop is to share helpful tools and strategies to support your child to develop confidence and resilience in order to manage their anxiety.	Thursday 18th April 9:30am - 11:30am
Parent/Carer Webinar - When Children and Young People Struggle to Attend School This webinar will provide information for families about managing, signposting and supporting with appropriate interventions. It will also offer parents and carers a chance to ask open questions in a warm and supportive environment.	Thursday 2nd May 9:30am - 11:30am

Science Week 2024 - Time

This term we celebrated Science week between 11th and 15th March. The theme this year was 'Time'. The week started with Miss Howley, our Science Lead, delivering an assembly to the children. During the course of the week, children explored the theme of time and carried out a range of scientific experiments. One of these included a whole school themed investigation where classes were challenged to find out the perfect time needed for the perfectly dunked biscuit in a cup of tea! Lots of fun was have.

The week concluded with a visiting Science Workshop where children continued to think about the concept of time. The workshops were funded by a generous donation!

Year 5/6 Young Shakespeare

On Friday 8th March, our Year 5 and 6 children enjoyed an interactive afternoon watching and taking part in a performance of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' facilitated by the Young Shakespeare Company.

Children had the opportunity to watch professional delivery of the show whilst also having an opportunity to question characters to gain understanding and also play some of the parts themselves!



Year 5 Investigating biscuit dunking!

Primary Strings Day

On Wednesday 13th March, Ben and Harry from Year 4 attended the Hertfordshire Music Centre's Primary Strings Day. They joined with other musicians from schools across North Hertfordshire and Stevenage to learn new pieces of music and play in a string ensemble. Mrs Andrews had the chance to attend the afternoon performance and was wowed by their musical talents!



Parent Neurodiversity Event



On Monday 18th March a group of parents, Mrs Andrews and Mrs McBeal met to chat about neurodiversity and special educational needs. It was a great opportunity to share our ideas, experiences and thoughts on a range of different issues and challenges in the world of SEND. It was also lovely for parents to be able to network and meet others who may be able to offer advice and tips from their own experiences. Thank you to everyone who came along. We look forward to another event in the Summer Term.

Neurodiversity Day

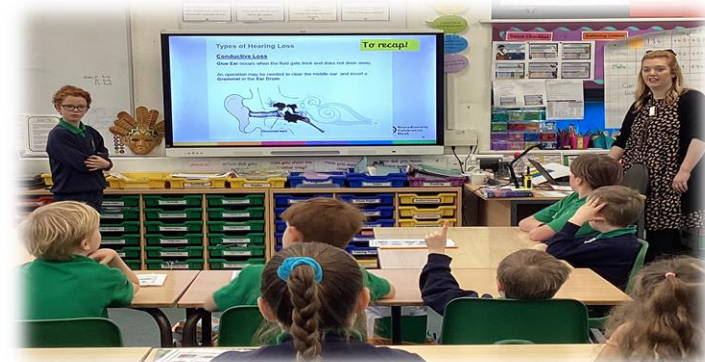
On Friday 22nd March the whole school came together to celebrate and learn about Neurodiversity. We discussed that everyone has a differently-wired brain and their own unique way of experiencing the world and celebrated the strengths and talents of neurodivergent people. Children joined in games, practical activities and shared ideas to remember the importance of being kind, tolerant and accepting of everyone.



Learning about Dyspraxia



Learning about Sensory Processing



Learning about Hearing Impairments



What is ADHD?

Mental Health Support for Hertfordshire's Children and Young People



JUST TALK

If you're young and feeling a bit low, or worried, find the help you need in Herts.



www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/mentalhealthsupportforhertsyoungpeople



JUST TALK

Find advice and help if your child is feeling low, anxious or generally struggling



www.justtalkherts.org

If your child or teenager is feeling low, anxious, or generally struggling, there are lots of services available to help them all year round. Please always encourage them to talk and ask for help if they need it.

The services listed on Just Talk's webpage are all free and don't need a professional referral, so they can be contacted directly by young people and/or their parents/carers. Services listed include Hertfordshire's new With Youth Digital Wellbeing Service for ages 5-18, parents and carers and many more, so please take a look:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/mentalhealthsupportforhertsyoungpeople



luminova.app



For 7-12 year olds
(School Years 3-7)



An effective & fun therapeutic mobile intervention improving pupil anxiety

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- ★ **Based on highly effective Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**
- ★ Helps breakdown fears and worries into manageable steps
- ★ Development funded by the NHS



Medicines &
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Helps pupils learn life-long
skills to self-manage worries
and build resilience



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(Children & Young People's Digital Wellbeing Service)

To find out more visit: www.withyouth.org/lumi-nova

or Scan QR code to sign up for instant access to Lumi Nova now.



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

4
weeks
missed!

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%

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.

