



September / October – Autumn 1

Dear all,

It is hard to believe that our first half term has already passed us by. This is my first newsletter of the academic year, and it contains lots of information and news about the exciting things that have taken place since the beginning of term!

We welcomed lots of new children into our Nursery class, Reception class and across the school in other year groups at the beginning of this term. I am delighted to report that they have all settled in incredibly well and it has been a pleasure getting to know them all.

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!

As ever, we have had an exceptional busy half term! From 'Meet the teacher' parent sessions through to curriculum enrichment workshops, sports fixtures, class trips and assemblies. Many of these have a short report within this newsletter below.

It is that time of year once again, when the mornings and evenings are now darker and the weather is beginning to take a turn for the worse.

Straight after half term, we start the 'school touring season' when our September 2027 admission cycle begins. Our attention turns to showcasing our wonderful school to prospective parents for Nursery and Reception. Further details regarding this can be found in this newsletter and on the admissions page on our website. If you know anyone with children of that age, please do pass on the message and give them a nudge in our direction!

I wish you all a lovely half term, make the most of it because it won't be long before we enter the extremely busy, festive Christmas period!

Kind regards,

Mr S England
Headteacher



Our school events are now shared on the website calendar.

<https://www.ashwell.herts.sch.uk/cal>

- 26th – 30th October – Half Term
- 6th November – Year 3 Fitzwilliam Trip
- 7th November – PTA Fireworks
- 9th November – Meet the Pastoral Team
- 11th November – Music Showcase
- 13th November – Children in Need
- 16th – 20th November – Anti-Bullying Week
- 18th November – Year 6 Open Class
- 23rd November – Y6 Health Checks
- 26th November – Y5 Sartorius Visit
- 26th November – Christmas Bazaar
- 27th November – Occasional Day
- 30th November – PTA Wreath Making 1
- 1st December – PTA Wreath Making 2
- 3rd December – EYFS Performance 1
- 4th December – EYFS Performance 2
- 8th December – Whole School Panto Visit
- 10th December – Key Stage 1 Performance 1
- 11th December – Key Stage 1 Performance 2
- 14th December – Music Concert
- 15th December – Christingle in Church
- 16th December – Choir at Village Carols
- 17th December – Christmas Jumper Day
- 17th December – Christmas Lunch & Santa
- 18th December – End of Term (1pm)

Christmas Break 21st December – 1st January

- 4th January – INSET DAY
- 5th January – Spring Term Begins

Meet the Teacher

Thank you to everyone who attended our Meet the Teacher sessions. It was fantastic to see so many people. We hope that you found the session informative and that it gave you a chance to hear about the year ahead, as well as meet your child's class teachers. You should have received the presentation alongside some other useful documents. Please keep these to refer to as the year goes on.

Parents Evening

Thank you to everyone who attended our parents' evening last week, it was wonderful to have such a fantastic attendance, and the teachers really valued being able to share how children have settled in and provide advice and support on their strengths and how you can continue to support them at home.

School Council

During the early part of the term, children were invited to put themselves forward to be class representatives and form our 2026-27 school council. Following class elections, I am delighted to be able to share with you our new school council for this year:

Executive Rep & Chair – Amora W / Lennon K (Year 6)
Year 6 – Lexi P / Oscar L
Year 5 – Florrie B / Jenson B
Year 4 – Regan D / Addley W
Year 3 – Everly S / Leo H
Year 2 – Anna L / Theo E

Already this term, our older members have been active. They visited the War Memorial to help place 54 crosses in preparation for Remembrance Sunday. They will also be involved in the village service and act of Remembrance, placing a Wreath at the memorial on behalf of the school.



Half Term - Holiday Camps

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

➤ Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October

More information is available at:

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

If you're not eligible for the funded places but would still like to book, you can do so by adding in your postcode and selecting the club on the link - <https://www.premier-education.com/holiday-clubs/>



Nursery & Reception Admissions

**Join our
School**

The admissions information for our Nursery and Reception – September 2027 Intake is on our website [here](#).

If you would like to book onto a Reception tour, please use the links on the website.

Deadline for applications – 14/1/27

Allocation Day – 15/4/27

All admissions are via:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

Nursery – Current

*PLACES STILL AVAILABLE for our September 2026 Nursery Cohort.

On-Line Application Form

Nursery - September 2027 Intake

If you would like to book onto a Nursery tour, please use the links on our website

Deadline for applications – 8/2/27

Allocation Day – 8/3/27



Black History Month

October is Black History month. Children across the school spent some time reflecting on what this means to us and looking into historical figures and events that they could learn from.

During a whole school assembly to launch the month, we looked at children's current knowledge and what they could build on during the month of October.

During October, teachers planned activities around this theme across their curriculum. For further information please see: <https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/>



Healthy Eating / Drinking Policy

At Ashwell we do our best to promote a healthy lifestyle. We have recently had a huge increase in playtime snacks coming into school that do not fit within our policy.

A reminder of our Health Eating & Drinking Policy at Ashwell:

- Children should always have a water bottle in school that contains water only.
- ALL break time snacks **must** be a piece of fruit or vegetable (fresh/dried) or a healthy alternative.
- Children **must not** have any form of sweets or chocolate bars in their packed lunches.

We also have a number of children with various food allergies in school and ask that parents **do not** include food items with nuts or sesame seeds in your child's packed lunch or snack.

Thank you for your support with this.

We actively encourage children to come to school with a water bottle each day. Can we please ask that the water bottle is named and that children only have **water**. We have already noticed some children bringing in bottles of juice.



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 and Mrs. Aspis.

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



Safeguarding Theme - Prevent



What is PREVENT?

PREVENT is part of the Government's safeguarding strategy and aims to protect children and adults from being drawn into extremism or radicalisation. Just like other aspects of safeguarding, it is about keeping children safe and helping them develop the skills to think critically, make positive choices and stay safe both online and offline.

At our school, we are committed to promoting tolerance, respect and British values, while providing a safe and supportive environment for all pupils. We encourage parents and carers to remain aware of any changes in behaviour, language or online activity that may cause concern. Spotting and reporting potential signs of vulnerability is everyone's responsibility, and by working together we can help keep children safe from harm.

If you ever have any safeguarding concerns about a child, please contact the school so that we can offer support and guidance.

Children In Need 2026

This year we will again be supporting Children in Need. Please do read the letter with full details of how we will be raising funds during this event. Our school council are in the process of organising it!

A reminder to sign up for the runPudsey26 challenge that your child can take part in from home and then showcase what they have done on Friday 13th November.



Donate a Book to our Library

LIST UPDATED - 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/OR6HXLXLA>



School Development Priorities



This year our main school development priorities are:

Main Priority 1: To further refine and embed provision that effectively supports the progress of learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), fostering greater independence and self-motivation.

Main Priority 2: To continue to raise attainment and improve the quality of writing across all curriculum areas.

Main Priority 3: To collaboratively design and implement a coherent whole school behaviour curriculum that promotes positive attitudes to learning, strengthens consistency in practice across the school, and supports pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to be successful learners and responsible citizens.

Year 5/6 Netball Friendly

Last week our Year 5 and 6 pupils took part in their first netball friendly of the year. It was a fantastic opportunity for the children to experience match play ahead of the upcoming competitions and tournaments later this term. All players showed great teamwork, enthusiasm and skill throughout the game. It was wonderful to see them put their training into practice and enjoy the chance to play together. Well done to everyone who took part!



Attendance

Our current whole school attendance figure so far this year is 96.7%. This is slightly below this time 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 2	98.1%
Year 1	98.0%
Year 3	97.9%
Reception (Oak)	97.6%
Year 6	97.5%
Year 4	97.3%
Acorn (Nursery)	96.5%
Year 5	96.5%



Attendance Matters



Year 6 Ancient Greek Workshop

Our recent Greek workshop was an exciting journey back in time to ancient Athens! We spent the morning experiencing life as true Athenians, exploring the bustling marketplace and trying our hands at a variety of crafts.

Everyone enjoyed making and decorating clay pots, inking intricate designs onto mosaics, carving traditional Greek symbols, and even mixing herbal potions to cure some of the children who developed sudden illnesses!

In the afternoon, we learned and performed two tragedies, and a comedy based on well-known Greek myths, bringing legendary characters and stories to life.

It was a fantastic day full of creativity, teamwork, and hands-on learning, which was a wonderful way to discover more about our Ancient Greek topic this term.



SEND Spotlight

NAVIGATING THE EARLY STAGES OF A CHILD'S SEND JOURNEY

Families who are beginning to explore support for a child or young person with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can often feel unsure where to start.

To help make the process easier, Hertfordshire's New to SEND resource provides a simple introduction to the support, advice and services available locally. This helpful one-page guide includes:

- advice from families who share their experiences of starting their SEND journey
- information about local organisations, community groups and support networks
- guidance on seeking support from schools, health services and other agencies
- signposting for parents and carers looking for advice and support for themselves

The resource is intended as a starting point for families who are new to SEND and may not yet be familiar with the wider range of information available.

When families are ready to explore support in more detail, they can access comprehensive information through the Hertfordshire SEND Local Offer website. Schools are encouraged to share this resource with parents and carers through relevant communication channels and networks. Access the New to SEND guide at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/newtoSEND

Online Safety Newsletter

The autumn 1 HfL parents and carers online safety newsletter can now be found on our website and includes:

- Internet matters: guides for setting screen time
- How Facebook can use the photos you don't share: what parents need to know
- AI, chatbots and deepfakes
- Gaming
- Livestreaming

This essential reading can be found here:

<https://www.ashwell.herts.sch.uk/online-safety>



Be Bright Be Seen

Be Bright, Be Seen! Parent Information Guide

Keep this handy to help your child stay safe on the roads this winter.

The Core Rule: Day vs. Night Visibility

Many winter jackets are dark and make children invisible to oncoming drivers. Ensure your child wears something bright and/or reflective depending on the time of day:

- **Daytime & Dusk:** Wear **Fluorescent** colours (e.g., bright yellow, pink, or green).
- **Nighttime & Darkness:** Wear **Reflective** materials (e.g., silver strips, reflective tape, or badges).

3 Simple Ways to Upgrade Your Child's Gear

You do not need to buy a completely new winter coat to keep your child safe. Use these quick fixes:

- **High-Vis Bag Tags:** Clip fluorescent tags or reflective smiley face stickers onto school rucksacks.
- **Snap Bands:** Slide high-visibility snap bands over dark coat sleeves or trouser cuffs.
- **Bright Footwear:** Choose shoes with reflective strips or add neon laces to sports kit bags.

If Your Child Bikes or Scooters

- **Check the Law:** By law, bikes must have working white front lights and red rear lights after dark.
- **Keep it Clean:** Regularly wipe road grit and mud off your child's bicycle reflectors.
- **Helmet Upgrades:** Add strips of weather-resistant reflective tape to scooter frames and helmets.

The 2 Biggest Winter Walking Hazards

- **The Distraction Trap:** Remind your child to put smartphones away and remove headphones before crossing any road. They need both their eyes and ears to judge traffic speed.
- **Parked Cars:** Wet winter roads increase breaking distances for cars. Teach your child never to step out from behind parked cars, vans, or buses where drivers cannot see them.



In the West End!

Congratulations to Grace W (Year 5). Last weekend, Grace performed in the play 'Across the Line' at His Majesty's Theatre, West End London alongside 200 other children from the Pauline Quirke Academy of Performing Arts. Grace played a 'Tunnel Town child' who were being held in the underground by a nasty man named Johnny Toxic. Well done Grace, what a super experience.



Year 1 Learning Summary

What a fantastic start to the year it has been in Year 1! The children have settled into their new classes wonderfully and have embraced all aspects of their learning with enthusiasm and confidence.

Our topic this half term has been Castles and Dragons, which has captured the children's imaginations. They have enjoyed learning about the different features of castles, discovering who lived in them, and even designing and creating their own castles.

In PE, we have been exploring how dance can be used to tell a story. Using animals from the African safari as inspiration, the children have practised counting in time to music, moving in unison with others, and creating different pathways as part of a dance routine.

In Computing, the children have been developing their mouse control skills, including clicking and dragging, as well as learning how to log in independently.

We are so proud of how well the children have settled into Year 1 and the positive attitude they have shown towards their learning. Well done, Year 1!



PTA Updates

A huge thank you to everyone who attended this year's AGM and to all those who helped organise, run or support our fantastic Spooky Disco.

Don't forget to secure your tickets for the upcoming Fireworks Event, which promises to be another fantastic evening for families. Parents are also encouraged to revisit previous PTA communications outlining the significant funds raised during 2025-26 and the exciting plans for how funding will be used to benefit pupils in 2026-27.

We are delighted to welcome Ali Everington as our new PTA Chair and look forward to working together over the coming year. We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to Hannah Vincenti for her dedication, commitment and hard work during her time as Chair.

Future Events

- Fireworks – Saturday 7th November
- Wreath Making – 30th November & 1st December

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

If you would like to contact the PTA: info@ashwellpta.co.uk



ANTON – Free Learning Platform

ANTON The free learning platform for all. ANTON makes learning easy and fun. The platform offers personalised learning that enables you to progress at your own pace and level, unlocking games and rewards along the way. ANTON strives for equitable digital learning. Our core teaching and learning content is always free for everyone. https://anton.app/en_gb/



PE Kit & Uniform Reminders

We know that many of you will be looking to purchase new school uniforms over the summer. Please can we ask that you check our uniform policy carefully prior to ordering or buying new uniform.

<https://www.ashwell.herts.sch.uk/uniform>

IMPORTANT – PE Kit

A reminder that PE kit should comprise of the following ONLY:

- ✓ Navy tracksuit bottoms / leggings / shorts* / skort
- ✓ Plain white T-shirt
- ✓ Plain trainers
- ✓ Navy tracksuit top

****Please note that shorts should NOT be cycling or gymnast type shorts and need to be of an appropriate length (see below the expected style)***



A reminder that children DO NOT need bags or rucksacks. A simple book bag and drawstring PE kit is all that is needed. This will help keep our classrooms clear and tidy.

Meet our Wellbeing Ambassadors

We are delighted to introduce our Year 6 Wellbeing Ambassadors for this year: Jack, India, Tilly, Kiran, Cora, Eleanor, Imogen P, Martha, Bea and Olwen.

Our Wellbeing Ambassadors have an important role in helping us to promote kindness, inclusion and positive wellbeing across the school. They will be a friendly and approachable presence at lunchtimes, supporting our Chill and Chat sessions and being available to children who might need someone to talk to, play with or simply help them find a little extra support.

As part of their training, the ambassadors have been learning about active listening, the difference between empathy and sympathy, staying calm and approachable, and how to respond helpfully when another child shares something with them. They have practised these skills through role play and will also use our Zones of Regulation language to help younger children recognise and talk about how they are feeling.

A huge thank you to Miss Sohal, who has supported us in setting up this year's Wellbeing Ambassador programme and provided the children with their initial training. Our newest group of ambassadors have approached the role with such enthusiasm and pride, and they are having a positive impact already!

Making Soup – Year 2

In September, Year 2 enjoyed carefully harvesting ripe tomatoes, peppers and courgettes from the raised beds in our school garden. The children then used the freshly picked vegetables to make a delicious homemade soup. They all helped to prepare the vegetables ready for cooking before having the opportunity to taste the soup they had made together. Most of the children were delighted by how delicious it tasted! Year 2 also enjoyed learning more about where food comes from and the importance of healthy eating through this fun, hands-on experience.



Developing Wellbeing Support

We are also working closely with Mrs Aspis, our new Family Support and Pastoral Lead, to further develop the wellbeing support available to children during lunchtimes. Alongside our existing Chill and Chat and Year 6 Mindfulness Club, we are looking to introduce two further lunchtime opportunities. These are yet to be finalised but may include a mindfulness drop-in open to all children, as well as an additional quiet, supportive space where children can spend some time away from the busy playground, talk to a trusted adult and access support when they need it. This is all part of our continued focus on creating a school environment where children know that there is always someone to listen, somewhere to go and support available when they need it. See poster at the end of this newsletter for full details.

SEN Spotlight: ADHD Awareness Month – October

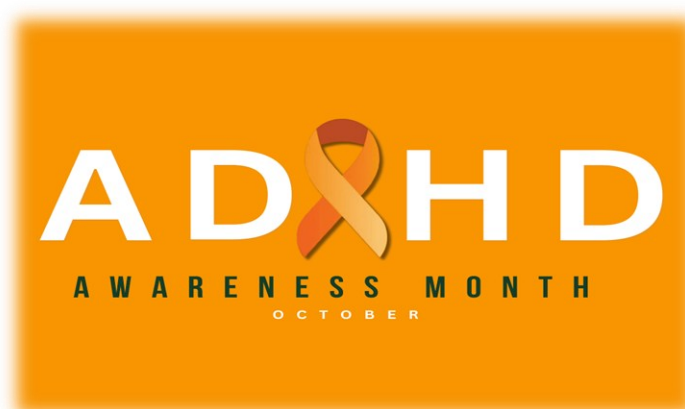
October is ADHD Awareness Month, and we wanted to take the opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of ADHD across our whole school community.

With increasing numbers of children across our school either diagnosed with ADHD or showing characteristics which may be associated with ADHD, it is important to us that children, families and staff develop a greater understanding of what ADHD can mean for a young person. ADHD can present differently from child to child and may affect areas such as attention, organisation, impulse regulation and activity levels. Importantly, we also want to recognise and celebrate the strengths, individuality and different ways of thinking that our neurodivergent children bring to our school community.

As part of our continued commitment to inclusion, after half term all school staff will be undertaking Level 2 training in Understanding ADHD, provided by the Local Authority. This will help us to further develop staff knowledge, ensure our approaches reflect current understanding of ADHD, and strengthen the support we provide for children across the school.

Further information and support for parents and carers:

- **NHS:** Information about ADHD, including signs, assessment and support: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/>
- **ADHD Foundation:** Information, resources and support for children, families and education settings: [ADHD Foundation](#)
- **YoungMinds:** Accessible advice specifically around ADHD in children and young people: [YoungMinds – ADHD and mental health](#)
- **ADHD UK:** Information and support for people with ADHD, families and education professionals: [ADHD UK](#)





INTRODUCING AN EXCITING NEW ROLE AT ASHWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL!

**WE ARE DELIGHTED TO
WELCOME MRS ASPIS
INTO HER NEW ROLE!**




**INTRODUCING A NEW STAFF ROLE
SCHOOL & FAMILY PASTORAL SUPPORT LEAD**

 PASTORAL & WELLBEING Building positive relationships with children to boost their self-esteem, confidence, resilience and regulated behaviour across the school.	 SAFEGUARDING & SUPPORT Joining our Safeguarding team as a DSL to add capacity, ensuring a safe and nurturing environment for every child.
 FAMILY LIAISON Strengthening home-school partnerships and providing a vital point of contact for parents and carers.	 ATTENDANCE Working with families to improve child attendance and reluctance to come into school so every child can make the most of their school day.
 INCLUSION & SUPPORT Joining Mrs Andrew's Inclusion team to add capacity and support to meet our growing SEND needs across the school.	

This role focuses on these key areas and is not intended to provide direct classroom cover/support.

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

We're here to help!

✉ **CONTACT MRS ASPIS:** caspis@ashwell.herts.sch.uk
or pop in for a chat

SHAPING FUTURES: TOGETHER WE LEARN, CARE AND GROW

Wellbeing Clubs at Lunchtimes

Take time for you

Monday 	Y6 Only Mindfulness Club 	 11.45 – 12.15	Year 6 only 	Run by Mrs Andrews
Tuesday 	Chill and Chat 	 12.00 – 12.45	All welcome 	Run by our Wellbeing Ambassadors and Miss Sohal
Wednesday 	No club today 	Our Wellbeing Ambassadors are available on the playground and in the dinner hall. 		
Thursday 	Mindfulness Drop In Club A quiet space for calmer minds	 11.45 – 12.45	All children welcome 	Run by Mrs Aspis
Friday 	Ash Lunchtime Club A quiet space for activities and relaxing	 11.45 – 12.45	A calm space to be you 	Run by Mrs Aspis

Small moments make a big difference

Kindness
Friendship
Positive Minds
Brighter Days



ASHWELL
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learn • Care • Grow



NURSERY & RECEPTION TOURS

SEPTEMBER 2027 STARTERS

Come and discover a nurturing school where children learn, care and grow.



Nursery for children aged 3+
Core morning sessions
8:45 – 11:45 with
extended provision
through 3:15



**Full-time
Reception**



**Welcoming
Early Years team**



**Gold Early Years
Quality Standards
Award**



**Outdoor learning
and a smooth
transition into school**

ns Fest Fundraising



BOOK A TOUR



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01462 742297



info@ashwell.herts.sch.uk

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for every child*



Ashwell School PTA

FIREWORKS

SATURDAY 7TH NOVEMBER

AT ASHWELL TENNIS CLUB 4.30 to 7PM

HOT FOOD • BAR
MUSIC • FAIR RIDES

FIREWORKS ESTIMATED START TIME 5.45PM

ADULT £10 CHILD £5 AGE 3 & UNDER FREE

FAMILY 2X ADULTS 2X CHILD £26

FAMILY 2X ADULTS 3X CHILD £30

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW AT:

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ANY QUESTIONS EMAIL US AT FIREWORKS@ASHWELLPTA.CO.UK



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and build resilience



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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.

