



Ashford Hill Primary School Newsletter



22nd April 2023

We have had a fantastic start to the new term. It was lovely to see children arriving in summer uniform and the sun shining (at points) in the sky. The children will be using the common much more as we move further into the term and the weather brightens. You may have noticed that the conservatories have had a good clean up and are now much clearer. Wellies will be making their way home soon and we will ask you to bring them back for the Autumn term as it should now be much drier underfoot.

The Easter Holidays became a time for some spring cleaning around school and we filled a huge skip within minutes of it arriving. Hopefully you are starting to see a difference around the school grounds and on the outside of classrooms. Thank you to our wonderful PTA members, who came in over the holidays to refresh the chicken coop and clear some of the grounds – as always, we are thankful for all of the time that you give to making the school a wonderful place to be. The chickens are now laying several eggs a day and it is a lovely surprise for the children each day.



Yesterday, Kit Malthouse MP visited the school after Billy had contacted him with some questions that for him. Kit came and spoke to the whole school about the role of a local MP and about his role within the current government. We were so proud to see the quality of questions that the children were curious about. As a result we learned about a MP routines, where Kit was educated, whether Kit would do the same job if he had the chance again, the members of the royal family that he has met, the name of his dog and he gave us a great estimate of the number of kings and queens that there had ever been! I took the opportunity to speak with Kit about the busy road and the crossing outside of school, so I am hoping to have an update for you towards the end of term about a potential way forward with this. Thank you Billy for making this happen.



'Be the Best We Can Be'

We came back to an INSET on Monday and refocused ourselves for the term ahead. The summer term really when we start to see the true progress that the children have made throughout the year and the term where we begin to see the school development plans for the year coming together. We looked again at our shared vision for Ashford Hill and decided on our individual and shared priorities for the term ahead. Here is a reminder of what we strive for at Ashford Hill.

Our Ashford Hill Vision

- Provide a **safe** and secure environment for children to learn and flourish
- Build relationships on mutual **respect** for all
- Aspire to provide the **highest quality teaching** and ensure that **high expectations** are at the centre of everything we do
- Provide an **ambitious, challenging** and fully taught, **rich** curriculum
- Ensure **access** to the curriculum for all children
- Provide a **supportive, nurturing** and **developmental** environment for all
- Promote **opportunities** to gain cultural capital for all children
- Empower children to have their own **self-efficacy**, understand their **moral** and **social responsibility**, along with the importance of their place in society and the world.

Our Focus Value for this Half Term

This half term, we are focussing on our school value of Independence. We aim for children to understand that they can make a difference to the world and they must live out the value of independence to ensure that they are taking responsibility for their actions and their environment every day. The learning environment is pivotal to the success of our

children and our team as this is something that really shows how we value our school and our learning.

We started with an assembly this week about the All Blacks (New Zealand Rugby Team) and the children thought about what made them so successful. We had a look at some of the details about the team and how they behave. So if your children come home and start talking about 'sweeping the sheds', please do find out more and encourage the same at home.

'Everyone is responsible for the smallest details - including cleaning out the locker room after training or a match. "Sweeping the shed" is your job, no matter who you are.'

Legacy: James Kerr



It has been lovely to see children choosing to 'sweep the sheds' around school this week and ensuring that we are working as a team to **'be the best that we can be'**.

Marking and Feedback Procedures

Monday's Inset also saw the launch of our new marking and feedback policy. We have used evidence based research to inform our new procedure and the effective use of this will drive part of our school improvement for this term and beyond.

At Ashford Hill we believe that for effective learning to happen, pupils need to;

- Feel that their work and effort is valued and acknowledged
- be actively involved in feedback discussions with the teacher and each other to build knowledge and understanding of cognitive and metacognitive strategies
- be challenged and supported appropriately by the learning activities, higher order questions and stimulating environment
- see learning modelled by staff
- have chances to connect their learning in many and varied ways
- have planned opportunities to revisit and review their learning at key points
- fully understand the learning intentions for the lesson
- understand, and help develop where appropriate, the success criteria that they can use to assess their own learning against
- learn to self-assess their own and other pupils' learning.

Alex Quigley - Writing Inset

As you are aware, we have been concentrating on improving reading and inspiring young readers over the past year. We have been successful at this and the end of year outcomes are looking particularly strong – 100% of our new year R readers are on track or above age related expectations for reading already. As part of our Trust conference, we were lucky enough to join Alex Quigley for training on the last day of term. As a team, we looked at our current provision in reading and writing and evaluated the effectiveness of both. We were excited to listen to Alex and his tips for improving writing across the school and have been inspired to try some new ideas within our teaching and delivery of the writing process. Alex did continue to promote that great readers, make great writers; reading is a fundamental skill for all children. As we look forward to next year, we will be focussing on the reading curriculum for our Key Stage Two children and the structure of guided reading sessions. I am pleased to say that we will be collaborating with the White Knight English Hub to adapt and renew our current guided reading curriculum. This is a project that I am personally really excited about and I look forward to sharing more with you about this over the coming months.

Curriculum Design

This academic year we have invested in a curriculum programme called Cornerstones. Over the year, we have worked hard to implement our new learning journeys along with some interesting hooks and outcomes. The end of last term saw parents invited in to share their child's learning in the classrooms. It was fabulous to see parents being taken on taxi rides through the streets of London by our chestnut children, showcases of stunning homework and workshops on child development from Hornbeam class, exploding volcano experiments in Oak and a focus on the inspiring movers and shakers from the past in Maple class. The knowledge our children have gained during these projects is impressive. Teachers have worked hard on this term's learning journeys and we are going to continue developing the cornerstones curriculum for our children to achieve the best outcomes in all areas of their learning. We can not wait to share this with you at the showcase in July.

SEN Update

Barbara Hunter will be continuing in the role of SENCO for this term as well as in her role as our School Improvement Partner. She has worked extremely hard over the last half term with Mr Roberts to ensure that all of our children have been assessed for any potential barriers to their learning. This has been a huge undertaking and the result is going to ensure that we have good systems and processes in place to support all children in their learning. The team have been trained in the new SAP reports and they will be contacting you shortly to share summer targets with you if your child is on the SEN register. If you do have any queries regarding your child, please speak with the class teacher or you can contact Mrs Hunter via admin@ashfordhill.hants.sch.uk.

Attendance and New Attendance Policy

Attendance is high on the agenda nationally. Although our attendance rates are consistent, as a whole school our attendance rate is only just in line with the national average at 94.7%. We aim to achieve at least 97% attendance each year. We also have a high rate of persistent absentees – we aim to reduce this by working with families also. As a result, we have implemented a new attendance policy. Here is some further information.

The Strategic Approach

Ashford Hill Primary School adopts the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice framework, this is modelled on the work of Professor Katherine Weare. The emphasis is on developing a school culture and climate which builds a sense of connectedness and belonging to ensure all children can attend school and thrive. The approach ensures we prioritise building solid working relationships with children, and parents, prior to escalation. The staged approach we follow ensures we identify triggers early that can lead to poor attendance issues such as mental health issues, lack of trust, communication and relationship breakdowns and the possible lack of networking opportunities both internal (in-school) and external (external agencies).

Aims of the 5 Foundations strategy

- Increase school Attendance and reduce Persistent Absence to meet set targets.
- Ensure Attendance is well managed within the school, with the appropriate level of resources allocated.
- Enable the school to make informed use of attendance data to target interventions appropriately, focusing on the key demographic groups highlighted in the 2022 DFE attendance paper.

The full policy can be found via the following link:

[download.asp \(ashfordhillprimary.co.uk\)](https://www.ashfordhillprimary.co.uk/download.asp)

arrives at school from 9.05 am they will be U coded. The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if a child has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

Leave during term time

From 1st September 2013, the Government amended the England (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Head teachers may only grant leave in 'exceptional circumstances' only. Ashford Hill Primary School observes Hampshire County Councils attendance guidance and penalty notice policy. Parents wishing to apply for leave during term time must send a written request for the attention of the Headteacher before making any arrangements. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

Each leave during term time request will be considered on an individual basis. If a child fails to return and contact with the parent has not been made or received, school may take the child off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil registration, England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child may lose their school place. If the permission to take leave is not granted and the child is still absent from school, the absence will be unauthorised. In such cases the school may consider legal action.

Only in exceptional circumstances will absence be agreed. In such cases, consideration will be given to the cultural needs and the family circumstances, such as minority ethnic children returning to their country of origin. In these cases, granting leave for longer periods than normal may be considered justified. In all cases though, parents will be required to justify why the leave needs to be taken during term time.

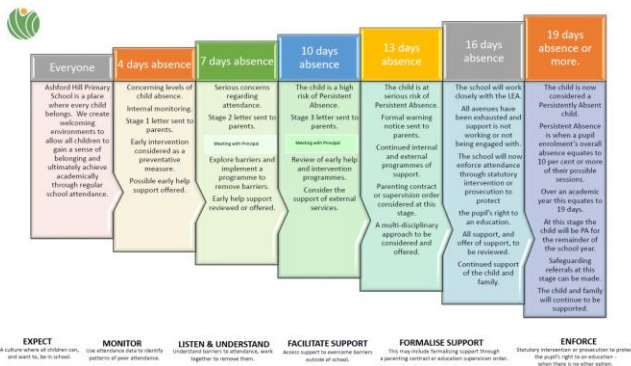
If you do have any questions regarding this information or around attendance, please do not hesitate to contact us via the school office.

Admissions 2023-2024

We have had a large number of applications for year R for September. This has been so pleasing to see. We have even had late applications from families who have heard about us and would like to add their children to our admissions list. It will be an exciting start for our year Rs next year as we are beginning to refurbish and update the year R classroom. Thank you for sharing all of the great things about our school – it really makes a difference. We look forward to sharing this with you in September.

Staffing

I am pleased to announce that we have successfully recruited a new Vice Principal and SENCO from September. She has over 20 years of experience in teaching and is going to be a real asset to our team. I will bring you more details towards the end of this half term.



Punctuality

Doors open for children at 8.45 am, the class register will close at 9 am. Children arriving after the close of registration will be recorded as late. Late marks will not be authorised and will count as an absence for the school AM session.

Punctuality is recorded and this will be added to your child's record of attendance, a letter will be sent to parents every half term regarding attendance concerns of a child. If a child

Welcome to Mr Davies who will be teaching in Oak class this term. Mr Davies is an experienced primary school teacher and he is a lovely presence to have around the school already. Please give him the normal Ashford Hill welcome if you see him around. The children have enjoyed their first week with him.

Matilda and Lion King Workshop Last Term

The children had the most amazing time at Matilda in the West End: It was wonderful to watch our children demonstrate great theatre etiquette and enjoy bopping in their seats during the finale. I was told that the Year R and 1 children loved being animals for the afternoon with their very own Hyena from The Lion King, West End in school. Thank you to all of the volunteers and the funding from the PTA that made this happen. An experience to remember for all of our children (and adults).

Easter Extravaganza

What a hit this was - so many happy faces searching the school grounds for their chocolate rewards. It seemed that lots of chocolate eggs may have disappeared into the bellies of children on the way home! Thank you to our volunteers for organising this event.



PTA Meeting – Tuesday 25th @ 7.30pm George and Dragon

The next PTA meeting is on Tuesday 25th May at 7.30pm at the George and Dragon. If you would like to join in and volunteer, or join to socialise, please join them for the evening.

Matilda Production Meeting -

We will be starting our Matilda rehearsals at the end of May with the children but before then, we will need a group of willing parents and staff to become the production team of our first show. Amazingly, we have managed to secure set, costumes and props from other schools in the area. So I am looking for a team of people to coordinate the background bits for the production itself. If you would like to be involved, there will be an initial meeting on Monday 22nd May at 7pm. I look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

Matilda Production – Thursday 13th July

The production will take place on Thursday 13th July at 5.30pm at the Haymarket Theatre, Basingstoke. Children will be there most of the day but will need to be collected from the stage door at the end of the performance. Tickets will go on sale nearer the time and will be £12.50 per ticket. These will be purchased through the Haymarket box office. The show costs/theatre costs will be completely funded by ticket sales which is how we have made this experience possible.

Lunches and New Menu

A mobile kitchen team has started this week and the menu can be found via this link [Primary Schools and Nurseries | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/primary-schools-and-nurseries). The HC3S team have successfully recruited a new kitchen assistant and are currently recruiting a new cook. We look forward to them starting with us in the near future.

Swimming

Unfortunately, Tadley swimming pool have had a problem with their pool so swimming lessons have been postponed until the 23rd May. Year 5 and 6 will continue with swimming until the end of the term.

Charlie's comic relief project

It is always great to see when our children have lived out the school values at home and I really enjoy receiving emails from parents about projects or challenges that the children have set themselves at home. Charlie was inspired by comic relief and wanted to raise some money so he suggested he could take requests for some drawings. Here are some of the drawings he has completed. So far, he has raised £150 - he had a target of £50. Congratulations Charlie, what a talent!



Coronation – Friday 5th May

We will be having a family coronation picnic event on the school field on Friday 5th May. Please save the afternoon and further information will follow from the PTA.

PTA Events Coming Up

Ice cream Fridays are back – please bring some money and enjoy the fresh taste of ice-cream on your way home on a Friday.

Friday 12th May - Quiz Night at the church. See PTA for more details.

Topic Showcase – Tuesday 18th July at 2.45pm

Our end of term topic showcase will take place from 2.45pm for all classes. Willow class parents are also invited to spend some time with their children in class.

Clubs for This Half term

Hockey: Monday with Mrs Lang

Thursday: SATS booster with Mr Dixon (4th May only)

Thursday: Fun Fitness with Mrs Yeo

Choir: Lunchtime with Mrs Dixon

GOL and Breaking Barriers can be contacted directly to confirm your child's place.

Mental Health and Wellbeing for Children

We spend a lot of time speaking with the children about healthy minds and healthy bodies. If you would like to learn more about mental health for children and healthy minds, please follow the link to explore further [Child mental health: recognising and responding to issues | NSPCC Learning](#).
[Promoting mental health and wellbeing | NSPCC Learning](#).

Uniform

If you are thinking about uniform for next year it is never too early to get prepared. Final dates for ordering this year are the 22nd July. PE Uniform must be strictly as per the website from Septmber – including hoodies/zip tops. Please contact the PTA if you would like to view any pre-loved uniform. Here is the link [Ashford Hill Primary School - Uniform](#).

Kirsty Kingham

Principal

Dates for your Diary:

The school website now has diary dates included – you are also able to subscribe to this to ensure that you are always up to date on dates coming up over the term.

Please follow the link to view the calendar. [Ashford Hill Primary School - Calendar](#)