



# Ashford Hill Primary School Newsletter



October 25th 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Half term has arrived after a eight weeks of being back to school. The children have worked so hard this term (as have the team) and they all deserve a rest. Children will normally be very tired at this point of the year – particularly our new starters. So, we hope that you have some relaxing family time over the next week.

There are lots of updates in the newsletter this week, so please have a read through. If you have any queries at all, please contact the school office and they can point you in the right direction for your query.

I hope that you have a fabulous half term and I look forward to seeing you all on Monday the 4<sup>th</sup> November ready to count down to Christmas (our favourite term)!

Kirsty Kingham

Principal

## Attendance

Attendance % (whole school target 97%)							
Whole School	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
97	100	94	99	92	100	96	100
What a fantastic Attendance for YR, Y4 and Y6 this week.							

## Huge Success in Academic Achievement for Ashford Hill Primary School:

October brings the publication data that Ofsted will use for their inspection. This is a national data set and we are so proud with what we have achieved.

The main headlines are the following.

Our 2023-2024 SATs results placed us in the following positions nationally:

**Top 1% of schools nationally for Greater Depth Reading**

**Top 3% of schools nationally for Greater Depth Writing**

**Top 5 % of school nationally for Greater Depth Maths**

This just exemplifies the hard work that our staff team and children have put into being the *best we can be* every day. We are so proud to share this with you and hope this kind of information brings new people to have a look around our lovely school as we go from strength to strength. We are working towards achieving similar results this year.

This week I have been approached by the Maths Hub to become a Head Teacher Advocate regionally – this will mean that I will support schools with their school improvement alongside the Regional Maths Hub. I am honoured to have been offered this role and to be able to support other headteachers who are working towards excellence in mathematics. This will only take a couple of days of my time over the next year and will bring in a small extra source of income for our school.

## INSET DAYS:

The term ended with two inset days for the staff team. These days are extremely important for us to work together as a team on areas of our school improvement plan. Over the last two days, we have self evaluated our school, as a team, and celebrated our areas of strengths and areas that we would still like to work on further. The priorities that we have identified for our school improvement this year are the following areas:

- 1) Writing Curriculum – designing an engaging and adapted curriculum so that all students can achieve their targets in some cases exceeding them
- 2) Maths Curriculum and pedagogy development. This includes championing the retention of known facts including times tables for all children
- 3) Continuing to embed and develop our Reading curriculum
- 4) Outdoor area for year R to enhance learning opportunities
- 5) Working with parents in partnership so that all children can thrive.

We are so proud of the behaviour and learning behaviours of our children and we are least good in this area of the Ofsted framework. We worked together as a team to consider areas that would develop attitudes for learning even further.

We then looked together at the new Times Table strategy that we will be using across the school. We are very much looking forward to implementing this and children in key stage 2 will be introduced to this the week after half term and KS1 later in the spring term. Year 4 have a multiplication test in June and results are shared nationally- this new strategy will support their

recall of tables for the test but fundamentally will underpin their knowledge of the tables to support their fluency across the maths curriculum.

On Friday, we were joined by a PE Improvement leader. He came in a we all took part in a PE lesson. This was very much geared to a culture of being active and healthy lifestyles. We worked together to consider the best way to achieve the best learning from each PE session and how we can use some of these techniques across the curriculum.

As we continue through the school year, I will update you with our school improvement initiatives and the progress that we are making in each of the areas.

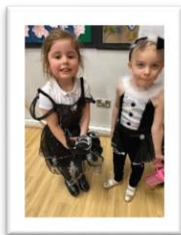
### 5 Star Rating for our Kitchen Team

Huge congratulations to our brilliant kitchen team who achieved a five-star rating from the Environmental Health Inspector this week. They do a fantastic job every day and the food from the kitchen always looks delicious. This week we had a special treat of Halloween biscuits on Wednesday; they were delicious. Well done to our amazing team!



### Halloween Disco – What an event!

The hall was filled with spooky goings on on Wednesday afternoon. There were over 90 children in attendance and it was the most fantastic whole school disco that we have ever had. It was wonderful to see all of the children dressed in their favourite Halloween costumes, dancing away and singing their hearts out. Thank you to all of the parent helpers and teachers for their time to supervise and run the event. What a success!



### Technology Safety and Smartphone Project Launch

This week we have met with Mrs Jesney (Parent from Oak class); she is passionate about the use of smart phones and their affect on the mental health and wellbeing of our children. She will be working alongside myself and our student digital leaders this year to help educate our community about the mental health and wellbeing of our children. This is an exciting project to be working on and she will be updating us through our newsletters of our progress with this project.

### Making Smart Choices About Smartphones

We live in a world where internet devices—whether smartphones, tablets, or gaming consoles—are a regular part of daily life for both adults and children. However, a growing body of evidence shows that excessive screen time and early exposure to social media can significantly affect the developing brains of children and adolescents.

Research has linked prolonged screen use and social media engagement in children to sleep deprivation, reduced social interaction, attention issues, and devastating impacts on mental health. Additionally, children are often exposed to inappropriate content and face the risk of cyberbullying.

As a parent, I understand the concerns many of us face, and yet, we may feel powerless to say no when "everyone else" seems to have a smartphone. Our school has already taken an important step to protect our children's learning and focus by implementing a smartphone and watch ban during school hours, but there is still more we can do. That's why I'm partnering with the school to raise awareness of these risks and how to mitigate them.

There is a growing movement of families making a pledge through the [Smartphone Free Childhood Pact](#) to delay giving children smartphones until they are better equipped to handle them. Over 70,000 parents across the UK have already signed on, including 12 families from our school. If you feel the same, I encourage you to sign the pact and show other parents they're not alone—we do have a choice.

This is just the beginning of our conversation. We are in the process of developing a project plan and over the coming months, I'll be sharing more about what we are doing as a school and how we, as a community, can work together to support our children's well-being. Together, we can help them thrive in an increasingly digital world while still protecting their childhood.

Tania Jesney.

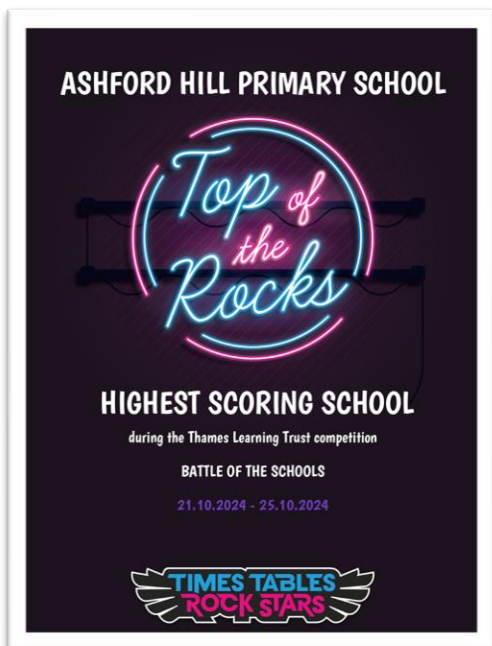
## Frozen Photo Books

These incredibly beautiful books have now arrived in school and children have begun to take them home. In our initial survey 53 books were ordered; Only 27 have been claimed therefore, if you have not paid for yours yet, please pop onto the following link and we will send the book home once payment has been received.

<https://ashford-hill-pta.sumupstore.com/product/frozen-the-musical-photobook-pre-order> .

We would not have been able to have created this book without the talents of Martin Taylor and Roger Quant without their patience and photography skills. I am sure that you agree – it is extremely special for our children to have a memory of this quality as part of their Primary School career.

## Times Table Rockstar Competition



This week brought us high success in the Times Table Rock Star world. We were challenged to a Battle of the Bands against three other schools from Thames Learning Trust. Our children were so engaged with the competition and we rose to the top and were the overall winners!! Congratulations to the whole of year 2-6 for the effort that they put in. The following children have also won the following awards:

### Top Classes in the Trust:

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Hornbeam Class (AHPS)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Oak Class (AHPS)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Austen Class (Battle Primary Academy)

### Most Valuable players in the trust:

1<sup>st</sup> Place: George L (AHPS)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Olivia J (AHPS)

3<sup>rs</sup> Place: Olly L (AHPS)

What a fantastic result. We also held 28/50 places in the top 50 leaderboard for the Battle of bands. Well done Team Ashford Hill! We are looking forward to our next Battle of the Bands.

## PTA AGM:

It was great to see so many parents at the PTA meeting earlier this week. The new committee has been voted in and the PTA will update you over the next couple of weeks. Becs Lapham and Anna Liddeatt will be stepping down from the co-chair role this year but will remain on the committee. During the meeting, we said a big (and quite emotional) thank you to them for their hard work and dedication to the school over the many years that they have been involved. Without their unwavering support, ambition and dedication, Ashford Hill would not be the school that we see today – they will be sorely missed as they move onto secondary school with the youngest of their children but we are lucky to have them for this final year. They have promised that they will go out with a BANG and the summer event will be the best yet! We look forward to this in the summer term.

## Scholastic Book Fair – 6, 7 & 8 November



Following the great success of the book fair last year, we will be running it again.

The book fair will be open on:

Wednesday 6, Thursday 7 and Friday 8 October  
08:30 – 08:55, 12:30 – 13:00 and 15:15 – 16:00


Classes will also be allocated a set time during the 3 days in which to visit the fair. During this time, children will be able to write the names of the books they would like on a wish list so parents/carers can buy them during the times above. We will have a card reader so can accept card payments and you are also able to pay online by scanning the QR codes and searching for Ashford Hill Primary School. Please remember we are a cashless school so are unable to accept payments via cash.

We look forward to welcoming you to school to browse and buy some books, and hope the fair is as successful as last year.

## Safeguarding:

Safeguarding is our number one priority. Together we want to ensure that all children are safe, happy and secure at all times. If you have any concerns about another child or your own, please do not hesitate to contact one of our Safeguarding Leads.

This year our Designated Safeguarding Lead Team are as follows:

		
Mrs Kirsty Kingham	Miss C Hudson	Mr B Dixon
<i>Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead</i> (DSL)	<i>Vice Principal and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i> (DDSL)	<i>Class Teacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</i> (DDSL)

## Dates for your diary

28<sup>th</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> November - Half Term

10<sup>th</sup> December – Whole school trip to Pantomime

11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December - Nativity Performance

18<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Lunch and Parties

19<sup>th</sup> December – 2.45pm Curriculum Showcase for Parents

20<sup>th</sup> December AM – iRock concerts

20<sup>th</sup> June- Sports' Day

Summer Fayre and Car Show - TBC

3<sup>rd</sup> July – Oliver! Jr Performance at the Haymarket Theatre (year 2-6)

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**Kingsclere Players** PRESENTS  
**Babes in the Wood and Robin Hood**

Act Fast!  
Last year's sell out awaits!

AT THE FIELDGATE CENTRE, KINGSCLERE

Friday 29th November 7.30pm  
Saturday 30th November 2.30 & 7.30pm  
Sunday 1st December 2.30pm  
Friday 6th December 7.30pm  
Saturday 7th December 2.30 & 7.30pm  
Sunday 8th December 2.30pm

Adults £12.50/ Children £7.50  
Also available at  
[www.kingsclereplayersgroup.com](http://www.kingsclereplayersgroup.com)  
or the Fieldgate Centre

**BOOK NOW!**

In partnership with Kingsclere Community Association

Where the legend begins...

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