



Ashford Hill Primary School Newsletter



March 28th 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

The sun is shining brightly this afternoon and it was lovely to see the children out on the field for their PE lessons. We cannot wait until we can all be out on the common for breaktimes after Easter; it is absolutely glorious.

This week our World Book Day winners had the afternoon in Waterstones and the Ice Cream shop. It was a real joy to see them all reading their books in the shop and on the way home in the minibus. They were a pleasure to take out and represent our school.



As I write this, the PTA are hosting their popular film night! Thank you to all of the volunteers that give up their time to hold events like this for our children.

We have spoken about Mothers' Day this week and about celebrating all of the people in our life who look after us. The children have had some lovely ideas on how to celebrate in style; we hope you have a lovely Mothering Sunday.

This week, our children worked collectively to meet the school reading target and they did brilliantly. They narrowly missed the target by two but they are striving to make the target next week as a team. We are looking forward to seeing them busily complete their accelerated reader quizzes next week for the star prize. Hornbeam's reading diaries are also looking fantastic: It is clear that children are reading everyday and that children are taking accountability for their responsibility to read. There are some stand out diaries that were shared today in assembly. Teacher's will be in touch early next half term to remind parents about homework expectations and how we can help our children's learning over the next term.

Next week brings the last week of term along with the curriculum showcase and the very famous Egg Hunt. My office is already full of Easter Eggs looking for new homes. We will be welcoming parents from 2.45pm into classrooms on Friday to share their children's work followed by the event on the field.

I hope you have a wonderful weekend and hope that the sun stays shining upon us all; we will see you on the gate on Monday morning.

Kirsty Kingham
Principal

Attendance

Attendance % (whole school target 97%)							
Whole School	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
96.7	100	98	96.3	99.4	93.8	96.7	93.3
Well done YR on 100% attendance this week							

There have been a number of children who have been absent due to feeling unwell rather than actually being ill. Please can we remind you of the following. Feeling unwell is not a reason we can authorise. We are only able to authorise certain illnesses. We will not authorise any illness where the child is considered, by the school, well enough to attend.

We will authorise the following illnesses as your child will need to stay off school:

- High temperature
- Flu
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Scabies
- Impetigo
- Measles, Chicken Pox and German Measles
- Scarlet fever or strep throat
- Mumps
- Whooping cough

We will not authorise the following illnesses as your child can go to school:

- Anxiety and Worry
- Conjunctivitis
- Headache, earache, sore throat and stomach ache
- Feeling unwell
- Head lice
- Hand, foot and mouth, warts and verrucae, athletes foot and molluscum contagiosum
- Threadworm

For more information and advice please see <https://www.what0-18.nhs.uk/parents/carers/worried-your-child-unwell/child-unwell-ok-go-nurseryschool>

Research consistently shows a strong link between regular attendance and higher academic achievement, particularly in KS2. Here are some highlights from a [report](#) published by the DfE.

- At KS2, pupils who attended school nearly every day in Year 6 (with an attendance rate of 95-100%) were 1.3 times more likely to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to pupils who only attended 90-95% of the time. This means missing just 10 days of year 6 reduced the likelihood of reaching the expected standard by around 25%.
- Pupils who attended nearly every day were 1.8 times more likely to achieve the standard than persistently absent pupils who only attend 85-90% of the time (relating to 4 -6 weeks more time in school).

Safeguarding – Smartphone Free Childhood Project

Raising children in a digital age brings challenges, and the impact of smartphones on our kids is a topic that stirs strong emotions. This is my third column on this subject, and I want to emphasise that my intention is to raise awareness, not to judge. It's about being pro-childhood, not anti-tech.

Recently, I attended an event with headteachers, smartphone-free childhood campaigners, health professionals, and our local MP. We reviewed the evidence on smartphones and debated a way forward. The sobering evidence of the harms caused by these devices was shocking. We also heard from secondary schools that have implemented bans, resulting in less absence and bullying, among other benefits. There was strong support for a collective ban of smartphones in primary and secondary schools across the county, and we are moving ahead with practical steps to achieve this vision. You can read more about this in the local paper [here](#).

The government issued guidance for schools to prohibit phone use during the school day in July 2023. While implementation has varied, momentum for a smartphone-free childhood has been building. Since the pact launched six months ago, over 121,000 pacts have been signed—double the number since October—endorsed by health professionals, politicians, and celebrities. The Safer Phones Bill has also been debated in parliament.

Here are some statistics that highlight our concerns:

- **94% of primary school parents** think smartphones are harmful (Parentkind poll, April 2024).
- **70% of parents** believe smartphones negatively impact family life (HMD poll, June 2024).
- **67% of 16-18 year olds** think smartphones are harmful (Parentkind poll, 2024).

- **1 in 5 of 16-18 year olds** have felt "life is not worth living" due to social media (Parentkind poll, 2024).
- **53% increase** in children referred to emergency mental healthcare in England in the last 3 years (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2024).

These statistics are alarming and underscore the need for action. I will be hosting a webinar to provide more information, support, and strategies. The details are as follows:

- **Date:** **April 23rd**
- **Time:** **7pm**
- **Link:** **This will be sent on the day to parents**

Let's continue this conversation and work together to ensure our children have the best possible childhood, free from the negative impacts of excessive screen time. Thank you for your support and understanding.

Tania Jesney

Moment to Share and Egg Hunt Event – 4th April from 2.45pm

On a lighter note, there will be the termly curriculum showcase/moment to share at 2.45pm on the last day of term. This will be followed by the famous PTA Egg Hunt. There will be more information on how to buy tickets nearer the time.

Non-School related Items.

A reminder that children are not allowed to bring any non-school related items into school, such as toys, fidgets, jewellery etc and that all mobile phones/smart watches must be switched off and handed into the office on arrival and collected at the end of the school day.

Frozen Photo Books

We still have Frozen Jr photo books available to purchase in the office at £15 each- if you would like one, please get in touch with the school office.

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.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads are as follows:

		
Mrs Kirsty Klingham	Miss C Hudson	Mr B Dixon
Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Vice Principal and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)	Class Teacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Dates for your diary

4th April – Moment to Share and PTA Egg Hunt

20th June- Sports' Day

Summer Fayre and Car Show – 6th July 2025

3rd July – Performance at the Haymarket Theatre (year 2-6)



There will be a Church Service at St Paul's Church on Sunday 30th March to Celebrate Mother's Day.

PAY BY CHILDCARE VOUCHERS

ULTIMATE ACTIVITY CAMPS

GET SET FOR ULTIMATE HOLIDAY FUN!

EARLY BOOKING OFFER

Outstanding activity day camps for 4 to 14 year olds from 8am to 6pm during the Easter and Summer holidays

ST. GABRIEL'S SCHOOL, NEWBURY

book now at ultimateactivity.co.uk

OFSTED REGISTERED • FLEXIBLE BOOKINGS • MON - FRI | 8AM - 6PM

Message from GOL Elite Coaching:

Gol Elite are now taking bookings for our popular football club sessions for the summer term!

To register your child for one of our after school football clubs, please follow the link below and complete the form.

[School Clubs !\[\]\(2bae76de5ebbd5c4d7d47162f1673734_img.jpg\) - Gol Elite Coaching](#)

Stagecoach Performing Arts

Stagecoach Performing Arts Newbury are excited to be running our Mad on Musicals Easter Workshop for 4-18 year olds during the Easter holidays!

Come and join us on from 9th-11th April for three days filled to the brim of musical theatre and musicals!

No experience is necessary, our super-creative team have put together this course suitable for the total novice through to those that live and breathe the performing arts - expect plenty of singing, dancing, musical theatre, plus heaps and heaps of fun!

This will sell out so don't delay in booking your places now.

MAGIC OF THE MUSICALS WORKSHOP (9-11th April)

The Clere School, Burghclere, Newbury, Berkshire, RG20 9HP

10am-4pm daily (9am-5pm wraparound care available)

£126 first child (£113.40 for siblings)

We are pleased to accept childcare vouchers.

HOW TO REGISTER:

If you would like your child/children to join us, please head to www.stagecoach.co.uk/newbury#workshops

KINGSCLERE SWIMMING LESSONS

KINGSCLERE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, RG20 5RE

JUNE 2ND - JULY 18TH

MONDAY - FRIDAY 3:30-6PM

£13 PER LESSON

£10 PER LESSON IF BOOKING 2 OR MORE DAYS A WEEK

calikidsswimming@gmail.com