



ASHTREE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY



WEBSITE: www.ashtree.herts.sch.uk

21 July 2017

NEWSLETTER 38

Dear Parent/Carer

Welcome to the final newsletter of the school year. Life in school has been so busy and time, as always, has flown by as we have progressed through a lively, action packed year.

The children have enjoyed many wonderful activities and will have fond memories to take forward. We distributed harvest gifts to our local community and collected produce for the "Love Stevenage" project, which was suggested by the Stevenage Schools' Parliament. Many parents came to support their children with our sporting teams and enjoyed their successes. A wide variety of clubs have been enjoyed by our children, ranging from gardening to cheerleading. The community also supported: the British Red Cross Poppy Appeal, Macmillan, the Stevenage Community Food Bank, and Red Nose Day. Mrs Janes visited our partner school – Tafadzwa Primary School in Zimbabwe in October and the Major of Kodoma visited and answered pupils questions in assembly.

Parental help in many aspects of school life has continued to flourish, for example with school trips and maintaining our libraries. The whole school has enjoyed Book Day, our Christmas Performances, Open Evening and visits from Reverend Vivienne as well as parents of the school sharing their work experience. Professor Brainstorm's workshop was a particular highlight of the year as was the increasing opportunities for pupils to represent the school in competitive fixtures both sporting and academic.

Our Year 6 pupils enjoyed another fantastic Kingswood Residential trip. Classes were successful ambassadors for the school when they visited Harry Potter World, Mountfitchet Castle, Shepreth Wildlife Park, and St Albans Museum. The Friends of Ashtree supported the school by running numerous events, including discos, summer and winter fayres and raffles. Special thanks go to the "Friends" for supporting the school and helping us to provide the extra treats and goodies that our pupils deserve. I really hope that this vital group will continue to be supported by parents in the Autumn Term so that we can continue with successful fund raising.

Our Teaching Assistants have continued to successfully support pupils through intervention strategies and Synthetic Phonics. Pupils really enjoy working with them and we are really lucky to have such a fantastic Teaching Assistant team here at Ashtree School.

We will be welcoming Miss Spafford, Mrs Wicksey to our Teaching Assistant team. Miss Flanagan and Mr Allen will be joining our teaching staff for the Autumn Term. We wish Mrs Connolly all the best for her Headship at the start of September. We wish Mrs Goode-Dooher all the best as she starts her maternity leave. We wish Mrs Akers and Miss Smith all the best as they move on from our MSA teams and we welcome Mrs Foley and Mrs Eyles who will be joining the MSA teams in September.

Our Year 6 pupils are moving on to secondary schools and we will miss them greatly. I would like to thank them for their wonderful Leavers' Assembly. We wish you all well for the future and would love to hear how you all get on in Year 7.

Sadly there are a number of families with whom our regular contact will now end as their youngest child moves on. I would like to thank you all for your contribution and involvement in the life of Ashtree School. We will miss you all and hope that you will pop in to see us from time to time.



Sports Day Results

It was lovely to see so many of our families picnicking on the field and I am pleased to announce that Sports Day was won by Epsilon, with 537 points.



Medication in School

Your child will be coming home with any inhalers or Epipens that are kept in school. Please ensure that any medication brought in with them at the start of the next school year, is all in date. Many thanks.

Breakfast Club

There will be sessions available in September from 7.55am – term time only. Please ring 07583615465 for more information, or pop in to Breakfast Club.

Term Time Absence

Headteachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Examples of what might be considered exceptional circumstances would be; unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours, days of religious observance and exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement. Visits to Secondary School open days during school time for Y6 pupils are not a problem, as they are classed as educational visits.

Headteachers are also advised not to grant any leave of absence where the pupil's attendance is below 95% for the preceding 12 months.

Any parent or carer who wishes to discuss the possibility of their child having time off school should complete a 'Leave of Absence' request form which is available from the school office. However, please be aware that these changes to the regulations mean that in almost all cases it will not be possible to authorise the absence.



Gymnastics Tournament - Reported by Ella-Mae A - Yr 5



On the 7 July 2017, Charlie P, Lauren R, Maisy L, Lauren M, Ruby C and Ruby P, Ella-Mae A and Mr Appadoo went to the school games for Hertfordshire 2017. We also strongly appreciated Megan C and Zainabu B for their hard work. Zainabu was a sub and unfortunately Megan C could not come. We represented Stevenage (Orange). There were over 20 sports! We competed in KS2 gymnastics. Mr Appadoo and myself (Ella-Mae) were very proud of the team. When we arrived there was a huge opening ceremony. We saw dancers, famous athletes and an amazing man doing basketball tricks. Then we had a look at some activities and we also went on a crazy course / bouncy castle. We had some pictures taken with a famous hockey star! After lunch we competed - we did amazingly! We came 7th out of 9 groups. We are the 7th best gymnastics team out of 600 schools in Hertfordshire! The team give 500% effort. They behaved impeccably and represented the school well. We also got an award for determination printed on an orange baton which Ms Kirwan has put on display in our trophy cabinet.

Free School Meals and Music

- Parents/Carers do not need to re-apply for a school meal for Sep 17
- Any child receiving a free meal as well as 100% music remission will be renewed for both.
- Letters will only be sent to families whose children are no longer entitled to receive a meal.
- During August, schools will receive confirmation of who is entitled to receive a free meal and 100% music remission.
- Anyone currently receiving 50% music remission will still need to re-apply at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals from the 7th June 2017.
- We will work with our admissions team to identify children who will be starting a new school from September 17. No contact or renewal is required. Our customer service team will be dealing with any duplicated applications. No contact is required.
- We would ask schools to contact us at howcanwehelp@hertfordshire.gov.uk to advise of any changes we may not have identified, including in-year admissions.



Dinners



We are having to chase an increasing number of parents/carers for KS2 dinner money. Dinners **must** be paid for in **advance**. Dinners cost £2.40 per day, £12.00 per week payable on a **Monday**. Dinner will not be provided unless paid for. If you would like to check your free school meal entitlement please call 0300 123 4048. Our debt currently stands at £230.00 (only a reduction of £20 from last week's newsletter). I'm sad to say that Mrs Stevens' attempts to contact parent/cares with outstanding debt have simply been ignored. I will now need to cut another budget by this amount).



Dinner Money Payments



Dinner money for next term will be:

£2.40 per day	- £12.00 per week
1 st half term	- £81.60
2 nd half term	- £86.40 - Term - £168.00

SchoolComms

If you haven't already done so please can you let the office know, your up-to-date email address. Thank you.



Summer Reading Challenge 2017 – Animal Agents



This Challenge takes place in all Hertfordshire Public Libraries during the Summer Holidays. We really enjoyed our visit from the School Librarian, who explained this year's challenge to us. Children choose books to read with family and friends, then talk to Library staff about their reading. They collect incentives to mark their progress and a Certificate and Medal are presented to all children who complete the Challenge by reading six books. I will be delighted to award a Headteacher Sticker to every pupil who comes and shows me their Certificate in the Autumn Term. Children will get a special mention in the September Newsletters.



Ms Kirwan's Summer Writing Challenge



I am definitely going to have to order more Headteacher Stickers because I am hoping as many pupils as possible will have a go at this challenge. If your child would like to write either a 500 word story of their own subject choice or keep a diary of the exciting things they got up to this summer, then I would be delighted to receive these in September and have the children share them with me. This can be handwritten or typed. I would prefer, of course, for the work to be of the children's own doing, however, I am sure the odd bit of adult help may be required. **Please ensure any work has reached me by Friday 15 September.** Children will get a special mention in the September Newsletters. We have been extremely proud of the pupils' achievement in writing across the school this year, and this will be another way to celebrate their love of writing.

Class Homework for the summer

In addition to the reading challenge and my writing challenge, pupils will be set homework by their teachers, to be returned in September, (with the exception of Y6 children). Please ensure that the homework is completed and returned to their new class teacher in September. It is important the children keep active, academically, over the summer break in order to make sure that they haven't lost ground for September.

Term Dates for Academic Year 2017 - 2018

Dates for 2017/18

Autumn Term 2017:

Occasional Days	-	Wednesday 30 August – 31 August - school closed to children
INSET Day 1	-	Friday 1 September - school closed to children
INSET Day 2	-	Monday 4 September - school closed to children
First day of term	-	Tuesday 5 September (pupils return back to school)
Half-term	-	Monday 23 October - Friday 27 October
INSET Day 3	-	Monday 30 October - school closed to children
Last day of term	-	Tuesday 19 December at 2.15pm

Spring Term 2018:

First day of term	-	Wednesday 3 January
Half-term	-	Monday 12 February - Friday 16 February
Last day of term	-	Thursday 29 March at 2.15pm

Summer Term 2018:

First day of term	-	Monday 16 April
May Day	-	Monday 7 May - school closed to children
14 – 18 May	-	KS2 SATS week (No holiday will be authorised during this week)
Half-term	-	Monday 28 May - Friday 1 June
10 -15 June	-	Y6 Kingswood Trip – Isle of Wight
11 - 15 June	-	Y1 Phonics Test Week (No holiday will be authorised during this week)
INSET Day 4	-	Friday 6 July – school closed to children
Last day of term	-	Friday 20 July at 2.15pm
INSET Day 5	-	Monday 23 July – school closed to children
Occasional Days	-	Tuesday 24 July – Friday 27 July - school closed to children.

Finally, Mrs Wasley deserves special mention for being my right-hand person this year. She has had a truly amazing first year as our school secretary and cannot thank her enough for keeping me on the straight and narrow – Well done Mrs Wasley

May I wish you a very happy and restful summer break. Ashtree Primary School and Nursery is a very caring community and I thank you for your support, which helps to make it so special. In particular may I thank our wonderful and dedicated Board of Governors who work tirelessly for the benefit of the pupils and all that they do is greatly appreciated. I know you would also wish me to thank all our lovely teachers, support staff and office staff for their continued hard work and commitment. On behalf of us all, may I thank you for all the end of year gifts and donations that are coming into school. They are all gratefully received and will be put to good use.

If you are heading off to the sun, have a great summer. If you are staying at home, enjoy the stillness.

I look forward to seeing you all again on Tuesday 5 September, when no doubt we will launch into a busy, lively and exciting year.

Attendance Cup

Well done to Rainbows who won the weekly Attendance Cup last week with an amazing 99%.



Governors' Cup



As of Wednesday 19 July, the winner is Class 8 with 97.2% for the last half term. Class 9 gave them a run for their money with 97.1%

E. Kirwan