

ASHTREE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

WEBSITE: www.ashtree.herts.sch.uk

4 September 2015

NEWSLETTER 1

Dear Parent/Carer

Welcome back to the Autumn Term and I hope that you have all had a wonderful summer holiday. I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our new families and I hope that you will all have a long and happy association with the school. Classes have settled well and have started to meet the high expectations that we continue to set for them. I would like to thank all parents/carers for working so hard to make sure that the children look so smart in their fresh uniforms. We are particularly impressed with the Reception children who came in so beautifully this morning.

Uniform

Thank you for ensuring that your children have the correct uniform. If you want our bottle green sweatshirts carrying the school crest, and white polo shirts with 'Ashtree School' embroidered on them, these may be purchased from the school, between **2.45 and 3.20pm on Thursdays only starting from next week**. This helps us ensure that we have a strong identity as a school and do look very smart. **As already mentioned in previous newsletters, jumpers/sweatshirts or cardigans are bottle green and not black or grey.**

Trousers and skirts can be grey or black. Please ensure that children's uniform is labelled with their name. Jewellery, apart from watches or Medic Alerts should not be worn, **but in the case of earrings, studs are permitted (no bling please)**. Children may wear only one pair of earrings, and these should be removed, or taped over by the child for PE sessions (we provide micropore tape). I would like your support in ensuring that children with shoulder length or longer hair, come to school with their hair up (ponytail, bunches, plaits) any pupil conscious about putting their hair up can put a bandana over the ponytail, bunch or plait. This would help to reduce the spread of head lice around the school, and would meet the Health and Safety requirements of lessons, such as PE, Technology etc. (A plain or school coloured 'scrunchie' would look very smart.)

A number of you are now purchasing our lovely Jackets and Fleeces. These need to be ordered as we are unable to keep a large stock due to lack of space! **May I remind you that these items are outdoor wear.** Please ensure that your child has a pair of indoor shoes as this will help to keep our school cleaner for longer. Pupils should wear sensible footwear to school, high heels are not appropriate for playtimes. **Please see our Dress Code which can be found under the Policy section on our Website – www.ashtree.herts.sch.uk**
The uniform order form and prices can also be found on our website.

I would like to encourage children across the whole school, to take care of the reading books that they bring home. Pupils need to have either a smart bottle green book bag that can be purchased from the office, or a zip type wallet that can be put within a schoolbag. Books should not just be put in with bags containing PE kit, shoes etc. as they will become damaged very quickly.

PE Kit

Thank you to everyone for making sure that your child has the correct kit of white t-shirt and green shorts. PE is equally as important in the curriculum as other subjects and we expect pupils to participate. With Autumn approaching and pupils doing their games sessions outside, please ensure that an old pair of tracksuit bottoms and top, along with an old pair of trainers, are sent in to school with children. As our field gets wetter, pupils could get muddy during these sessions.

Dinner Money – Autumn Term – KS2

Dinner money for next term will be:

£2.30 per day - £11.50 per week - 1st half term - £82.80 - 2nd half term - £80.50 - Term - £163.30

This should be paid in advance and can be sent in weekly, monthly or half-termly. Reception, Year 1 and 2 will receive the universal free school meal offer.

Dinner money is only banked on a Monday (or the first day back), therefore it should only be sent in to school the first day of the week in an envelope marked with the name of your child and their class. We are no longer able to build up any dinner money debt due to Government changes. Any debt is taken out of the school budget, which has a detrimental effect on the education of our pupils. Please do not put us in the position of not paying for a meal but still expecting us to provide one. Thank you for your understanding.

Free School Meals

Parents or carers who receive Income Support, Income-Based Job Seeker Allowance or Child Tax Credit (providing you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and don't get more than £16,190 a year), Income

related Employment Support Allowance, Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit), support under Part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999 may be entitled to claim free school meals. **If you believe you may be eligible to make a claim (even if your child does not want a school meal or is in Reception and KS1), please call 0300 123 4048 for the appropriate information. It is important to the school, statistically, to have the correct percentage of free school meals entitlement.**

Packed Lunches

We have pupils in school who suffer from nut allergies, please ensure that you do not provide nut products for your child's packed lunch.

Late Arrivals

Please ensure your children are in school on time. I will continue to take a tough line on pupils who arrive late, unless there are mitigating circumstances. **If a child arrives after 8.55am they must report to the school office using the main entrance.** Mrs Chambers will be monitoring late arrivals and absence and will be phoning home as necessary as part of her role.

Holidays in Term Time

Due to Government changes, holidays in term time can no longer be authorised. Leave of Absence can be requested using a form from the office but I am only able to sanction up to 5 days in any school year for Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances.

Sickness absence

Genuine absence due to sickness, for example vomiting, diarrhoea, chickenpox etc. is authorised. For extended periods of sickness we require you to provide a copy of your GP's certificate or appointment slip. **You must inform the school on the first day of absence using Option 1 on the answerphone or Schoolcomms.**

Parking

I would like to remind you that parent vehicles are not allowed on site unless in cases of emergency or through prior arrangement with the office due to medical reasons. Green passes are issued on these occasions, and a log of vehicle registrations is kept. If you have a green pass, please inform the office if your vehicle registration has changed, as we do carry out spot checks. I am sure you understand that the safety of your children is our prime concern. Please also be considerate to our neighbours and do not park across their driveways.

Safety Reminders

A reminder that this school does not allow dogs on site. We are also a smoke and alcohol free zone. Please ensure that you observe these points. **Adults should not sit on the junior wall**, by the quiet area, or the Infant wall by the side of the Reception Classroom when collecting pupils. My office staff have also requested that children do not play on the disabled access ramp by the main entrance or throw stones at the windows! Please discourage your child from using the door buzzer as a game. Please do not allow your children to play on the playground equipment before or after school, including the area outside Class 4. Children and adults are not to ride their scooters or bicycles in the school grounds. Thank you for your support.

Breakfast Club (7.55 – 8.55am)

We have a wonderful, vibrant breakfast club to Ashtree pupils based in the Junior Dining Room during term times. Please contact Mrs Marlor on 07583615465 to book your sessions as we will have to turn you away at the door, without a booking, if the session is full. Mrs Marlor has asked that children arrive by 8.15am when breakfast is served.

After School Club (SPLAT)

To book a place for your child or for more information, please contact the team on 07514188258 or contact at splatstevenage.co.uk. This club is also based in the Junior Dining Room.

Holiday Reading Challenge

All pupils who can demonstrate that they completed the Library Summer Reading Challenge: Record Breakers, will have their name mentioned under pupil achievements in subsequent newsletters and be awarded a Head Teacher's Sticker. I am really looking forward to seeing how many children can be rewarded in this way.

I am also very keen to see the 500 word stories or diaries, which was my 2nd holiday challenge.

Pupils have already started to come and see me and I will start a role of names in next week's newsletter. I am really impressed with the diaries and stories I have received so far – well done children. The deadline for the writing to be in school is Friday 11 September.

Class teachers set holiday homework which the children should be bringing to their class teachers now. I am looking forward to working with you all this year, and building on the successes that the school enjoyed last year.

Please note: We have changed our system from Parentmail and Wisepay to Schoolcomms, which uses Gateway for their payments. We will be having our training on Monday and hope to be set up ready to start on Tuesday next week. You will be receiving letters/emails with instructions for you to set this up. All information comes directly from our school database so please let us know of any changes as soon as possible.

Dates for 2015/16

Autumn Term 2015:

INSET Day 1	-	Wednesday 2 September - school closed to children
INSET Day 2	-	Thursday 3 September - school closed to children
First day of term	-	Friday 4 September
Half-term	-	Monday 26 October - Friday 30 October
INSET Day 3	-	Monday 2 November - school closed to children
Last day of term	-	Friday 18 December at 2.15pm

Spring Term 2016:

First day of term	-	Monday 4 January
Half-term	-	Monday 15 February - Friday 19 February
Easter Weekend	-	school closed on Friday 25 March and Monday 28 March
Last day of term	-	Friday 1 April at 2.15pm

Summer Term 2016:

First day of term	-	Monday 18 April
May Day	-	Monday 2 May -school closed to children
INSET Day 4	-	Friday 27 May – school closed to children
Half-term	-	Monday 30 May - Friday 3 June
INSET Day 5	-	Friday 8 July – school closed to children
Last day of term	-	Friday 22 July at 2.15pm
Occasional Day	-	Monday 25 July – school closed to children.

Diary Dates for Autumn Term

Friday 11 September	Swimming starts for Year 4 children
Friday 25 September	Crucial Crew for Y6 at Bowes Lyon House - am
Thursday 1 October	Individual School Photographs
Thursday 15 October	Harvest Assembly – 2.15pm
Friday 16 October	Y6 to Silkin Court with Harvest Produce
Monday 19 October	Parent Consultations 5.00 – 7.30pm
Tuesday 20 October	Parent Consultations 3.30 – 6.00pm
Week Beginning 7 December	Christmas Concerts
Friday 18 December	End of Term for pupils. School finishes at 2.15pm

Please note: Key Stage 2 SATs week; 9 – 13 May 2016. The Y1 phonics test will be held during the week of 13 June. KS1 (Y2) SATs process will start after Easter and be finished by the middle of June. Please ensure pupils do not book any family holidays during these times.

E. Kirwan