



Gosditch, Ashton Keynes, Nr Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 6NZ

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Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to begin this letter by expressing my thanks to you for attending the recent parent consultation evenings and for your positive feedback about the recent changes that have taken place in school. I know my staff and pupils have been working incredibly hard in school and I hope you could see evidence of this in your child's books. Thank you for your support and your feedback, it is really appreciated.

### **AK Firework Evening**

On Saturday night I attended the AK fireworks evening to support, but also to experience it for the first time. I have to say I was totally overwhelmed by how fantastic it was, I am still smiling now. The amount of work that went into planning and organising the event, before-hand preparation, work on the evening to ensure it ran smoothly and safely and the clear up afterwards must be acknowledged. Without every one of the volunteers, the event would not have been able to take place, thank you to all who helped make the evening happen. A special thanks to the FOAKS team whose vision, drive, forward planning, sheer hard work enabled the evening to be the success it was. On behalf of the school, I thank you. As well as being an excellent event for the community, this event is so significant for raising money for the school, for our children to benefit from and for that we are very grateful. We are a very lucky school. On behalf of the school community I would like to thank key members of the FOAKS team, Sara Fielder and Sam Slade who have given their time fully over the past few times and have made the decision to end their time, giving other parents and friends of the school an opportunity to lead. I know they are happy to support the arrival of the new FOAKS members Sarah Edmunds and Kim Olden who come full of some exciting ideas for forthcoming events and fundraisers for our school.

### **Firework Poster Competition**

Thank you to all of the children who entered the poster competition, all of them were awarded small prizes. The standard was very high but two children were chosen as overall winners and got to meet the two fire jugglers from Giffords circus on Saturday evening as a treat. These children were Finley Whitman (Year 1), Kirsten Powell (Year 5). A special congratulations to both of them. The posters and some of the beautiful lanterns are on display this week in Ashton Keynes shop window.

### **FOAKS Christmas Pocket Money Stall**

On December 3<sup>rd</sup> during the afternoon there will be the annual pocket money stall for children. This is an excellent annual event organized by FOAKS which gives the opportunity for your child to buy gifts for their family for Christmas, developing their independence. FOAKS source a range of gifts suitable for different family members and each gift costs £1. Children can bring up to £5 for 5 gifts. This year, we will be sending children in with their Buddies to help them choose their gifts and pay for them. FOAKS are writing separately to you to ask for donations of wrapping paper and offers of help to wrap the children's gifts with them on one evening. I have heard how much the



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children enjoy this event and I am really looking forward to seeing how using the Buddy system can make it even more successful.

### **AK School Improvement Plan**

You may have already noticed the display in the hall which shows the 9 key areas for school improvement for this academic year. Mrs. Thompson and I started to work on this during the summer term, meeting with staff and governors, including parent governors to get a good analysis of the school and ideas to future improvement from all perspectives. The changes that you will have noticed are all with this plan in mind. The AK 9 key areas are:

1. To improve writing across the school
2. To improve reading
3. To improve mental mathematics and calculation
4. To further develop the role of subject leaders
5. To further develop SEND (special Education needs and disability) provision and effective tracking of SEND and pupil premium
6. To develop and establish an effective assessment and monitoring system
7. To further develop church links.
8. To develop the monitoring role of Governors
9. To develop a valuable Early years (Class R) outside area.

As we develop these areas, I will update the display in the hall with examples and the Governors will help me monitor the impact of the plan and actions in place. This plan will focus all we do and I shall look forward to reviewing it at the end of the year to feedback to what impact the changes and actions have had for our school and most importantly our children.

### **Governor of the month**

I would like to introduce a new system to you called Governor of the month. It is key action 8 on our school improvement plan to develop the monitoring role of our governors which is why we are introducing this new system. Each month, a Governor will be in focus and they will be visiting the school to work with the staff and children, experience the life of the school in order to keep them fully involved with the school. Each governor will have a specific focus for their time with our school improvement plan as a key priority. The Governors have always visited the school and written reports to keep one another informed, however, this will ensure all areas of the school improvement plan are monitored and our Governors are more visible to our children, staff, parents and carers. Each month on our website, the Governor of the month will be introduced with their focus area. They may visit a couple of times or more frequently. Other Governors will continue to be around the school in addition to the Governor of the month who is in focus.

I would like to introduce you to November's Governor who is Mr. Tarr.



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Mr. David Tarr is a foundation Governor who will be working on Key action 7 (developing church links) and 4 (developing subject leaders) of our school improvement plan. He will therefore come into school to work with Miss. Thomas our RE and worship leader and Miss Kibblewhite our PSHE leader to monitor how RE and PSHE are planned for; how the children learn in these lessons; meet our new worship council; observe a range of worship led by different people across the school and observe the Buddy system in practice. We warmly welcome Mr. Tarr into the school and look forward to sharing with him what we are doing.

He will help us evaluate how well we are working on the plan and feedback to the Governors to keep them informed.

If you would like to speak to Mr. Tarr about RE, worship or PSHE during his focus month, please make contact via the school office or do approach him if you see him in school during his visit, I know he would be delighted to meet you.

We would like to warmly welcome on board our Governing body one of our parents, Mr. Cryer who has been nominated as a parent governor and Mrs. Jan Thompson who has agreed to be part of our governing body to support the school in its future journey. With this, we say Goodbye and a huge thank you to Mrs. Shirley Palmer who has been a key member of the Governing body for many years, supporting the school and giving so much of her time to AK. On behalf of the whole school community, I thanks Shirley and wish her well for the future. Her wealth of experience as an educational professional and her enormous passion for the school has been appreciated by all. I am delighted that she will be keeping in touch with the school and continue to be a point of contact for us in the future.

### **Breakfast Club**

I am really impressed with how the breakfast club is going so far. Numbers are growing and as a result, the Governors have agreed that we can extend our trial time to the end of the Summer term. It is of course our ultimate aim to have a Breakfast club permanently as part of our school day but we need to justify this financially. Things are looking promising at the moment, but we will be monitoring it closely. I know Sarah Harris, our chair of Governors thoroughly enjoyed her visit to the club a few weeks ago where she had breakfast with the children to experience the club fully. Thank you for the support. Also thank you to both Sharon Sampson and Sarah Morton who are running the breakfast club so well.

### **Children in Need and Type 'Onesie' day**

I would like to thank my school council, Miss Redman and Holly Loveridge for planning, organising and presenting an excellent day of fundraising and raising awareness. I was so proud of them all. We will let you know how much we have raised when the final amount is counted but so far we made £200 without the jumble sale, which is fantastic! Thank you for your donations.



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### **WWI remembrance at AK**

On Monday we had a remembrance focus for our worship followed by a 2 minute silence in circles where we focused on a poppy which Class R had made (see the website for photographs). The junior children had a WWI workshop from a lottery funded company called Crewe and I would like to thank one of our parents, Mrs. Clarke, for her link to this company and also to the company 'Crewe' for fitting AK in. I have to say the man who ran the workshop was outstanding. All of the children and staff were fully engaged and absolutely buzzing! Lots of follow up work is happening as a result of this workshop and I hope I can bring them into school again in the future and involve our infant children.

### **Sporting news...**

Mr. Brown is delighted to tell you that the Year 3 and 4 children came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the sports hall athletics option. He was really impressed with their attitude, athletics skills and how they represented the school. Go team AK!

### **A Plea from Mrs Crowley and Mrs Serle**

This year Class R are developing their outside area. One aspect of this is to install a mud kitchen! We would be thrilled to receive any unwanted safe kitchen utensils: wooden spoons, spatulas metal whisks, sieves, bowls, pots and pans would all be ideal. We are trying to keep it as natural as possible so no plastics please. We also need any old shelves or bookcases to store wellies! Many thanks in advance. We are really looking forward to developing the outside even further for the children so that they can spend even more quality time learning creatively outdoors.

Also, this term we will be updating and replacing many of our phonic resources for classes R, 1 and 2. This requires lots of laminating and cutting of sounds and words. We would be very grateful if there are any parents who could spare an hour or even half an hour during a school day to help with this. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be supplied! Please see Mrs. Crowley for more details.

Thank you for reading my comprehensive newsletter, it is a real pleasure to keep you informed about life here at AK and fantastic to have so much news to tell you.

Yours sincerely,

*S.L.Saville*

Mrs. Saville

Head teacher



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