



Thursday 16th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are loving being back together after the Summer break. We have been busily getting settled into our new classes and welcoming new pupils into classes across the school and into our new Class R. I have already seen some brilliant work from all classes and have been delighted with how our new Class R have been coming into school. The break and lunchtimes are so much happier now classes can play together again. Buddies for Class R and 6 and Classes 5 and 1 are resuming this year to the delight of our pupils and staff. We have a brand new all-weather running track and have renovated our 'smooga' (all weather sports area). Our brand new canopy over the hall provides shade and protection from rain and allows us to have our large door open in the hall. Being back together as a school in daily worship is probably our highlight; I cannot tell you how important this time as a whole school together is for us all each day. We have been able to celebrate together as a whole school in 'Time to Shine' merit assembly in person which is just brilliant. You should all be incredibly proud of your children, they are all working their socks off and shining very brightly and everyone has made a superb start to the year. I could not be more proud to be your Headteacher.

Christian Value in Focus

Our school is focussing on 'Generosity' this term. I hope you get to see your children continuing to show Generosity in action at home; thinking about being generous and kind with their time. Alongside our school vision of 'Shine Bright and reach for the stars' which runs throughout everything we do every day at AKPS, we continue to work hard with our school Christian vision of 'The journey to life in all its fullness' across our whole curriculum and are particularly looking at diversity in its many forms, showing how we are all individual and unique but part of one special family.

Safeguarding- E-safety, anti-bullying and PANTS rule

Every class will be learning about these three vital areas this term, as we do every year in our 'AKPS 'Shine Curriculum' and will continue to do throughout the year in order to help keep our children safe. Excellent parent resources to support with these areas at home can be found on NSPCC and Anti-Bullying Alliance in the links below. Just head into the Parent and Carer sections of these. Anti-bullying week is 15-19 November.

[Online Safety for Children - Tips & Guides | NSPCC](#)

[For Parents and Carers \(anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk\)](http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

[Talk PANTS & Join Pantosaurus - The Underwear Rule | NSPCC](#)

Safety at school drop off and pick up - Ellison's Bus area and parking

Morning drop off, once your child/ren are at the gates and directed into school by the teacher, please could you move swiftly away from the entrance. There is a bottle neck at the main entrance and this would help us enormously and ensure a swift flow of children into school via the main gates. We will be slightly staggering Reception start to 8.55am to ensure a calm experience for our youngest pupils as they experience school for the first time as a whole class. On collection, the Class R team will open the gates at 3.00pm for Class R parents and carers only to collect their children. The gates will then be relocked until 3.15pm for general collection of pupils from the rest of the school. Thank you so much.



Secondly, I totally understand parking is a challenge in the village but for yours and your children's safety please could I politely remind parents not to park in/ directly opposite the entrance to Ellisons' garage (next to the village shop). There are often large coaches coming in/out of there and parking in the entrance/ directly opposite/very near, blocks visibility and could cause an incident. There are usually spaces further down/ round the back by the village hall or in roads close by and these are much safer. Thank you for your cooperation.

Attendance

I will be sending out another separate update on COVID 19 shortly for clarity.

Attendance in school is so important, any missed time will result in missed learning and could result in a shortfall in expected progress. Whilst we know COVID 19 is still very much here, we cannot afford for children to be off school where not COVID related or really unwell.

In terms of reporting any child absent from school in term time for any reason, please DO NOT EMAIL but telephone the school on 01285 861436. There is an answerphone for before school hours and when the office is manned you can speak to a member of the office team. We have to respond quickly to our registers if a child is not in school and we do not have time to trawl through many emails to find this information. My office team will call you if they do not hear from you, for safeguarding reasons.

We are entering the season of colds again. Your child can be in school with a cold but if unsure please do not hesitate to do a PCR test. I do not want parents to feel uncomfortable sending in a child with hayfever/ a cold. However, please do not send them in with a temperature, persistent cough, and/or a loss of taste and smell, and in the event of doing a test, please ensure that you do a PCR test not a lateral flow.

If you do PCR tests, please use the drive through centres (Agricultural College in Cirencester and in various sites in Swindon are close by) as they are quick and postal ones take longer. We need your children to not miss school unless they absolutely have to (eg isolation due to a positive COVID test, Sickness and Diarrhoea, or generally feeling really unwell). Thank you for supporting us with this.

AKPS Shine Party

We have been working our socks off ready for the Shine Party- Saturday 25th September, (2-8.30pm) to celebrate 150 years of AK school and officially open the new build- this is a very special one off event ! I so hope you can join us! The event is largely outdoors with guided tours of the hub. There will be many refreshments to purchase, entertainment and much musical entertainment from the community. We have the Bishop of Swindon coming to bless our new learning hub at 3pm-3.30pm for the official opening. We have an exciting samba workshop for every class on Thursday 23rd September in preparation for the shine party and a procession of a few children from this will lead everyone in for the start of the part at 2pm. During the day of the party, children across the school will be involved in many ways including: samba procession, class entertainment stalls, glitter star tattoos, serving in the tea tent, being a Shine Marshall, being a Hub Tour Guide, singing in the choir, playing instruments. They will all be clear about what they are doing and you will receive letters/ slips informing you. Staff and parent and community volunteers will also be on rota during the day ensuring that everyone can help but also enjoy the day fully. I am very much looking forward to the day. Fingers crossed for some good weather! As you've been reminded before, for safety reasons, there will be no parking in Gosditch or around the school so please park in the village and walk down and come dressed for all weather and maybe bring a foldable chair for your comfort.



Whole School Trip to the Pantomime for Christmas 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at the Wyvern- advance notice for your diaries 7th December in the school day

The Wyvern is open to schools for special bookings (for schools only) for their festive edition of Jack and the Beanstalk. We usually attend the pantomime every year as a whole school treat and since we have not been able to do this over the past years we would very much like to take this opportunity now we are able to do so. We will send a letter with the finer details for this soon as we will need to ask for a voluntary parent contribution as this is an additional event for all children which we are not able to fund as a school. We do fund the annual theatre company visit to the school for all children in the Summer; this is a very different experience and often focusses on dramatic adaptations of Children classic books – this year it will be 'the Railway Children in the Summer'. The pantomime is a fun, engaging whole school treat experience which is thoroughly enjoyed by our school. This year it stars 'Louie Spence' which may excite many of you! I have particularly enjoyed Ian Beale and Keith Chegwin over the years! Letter to follow with the finer details for you.

Fencing at AKPS and an extra opportunity for KS2 pupils for free!

Last year we set up a new experience for our Year 6 pupils and now every pupil in our Year 6 class will engage in a fencing course at school (funded by school) so that they all achieve their first level certificate in our Year 6 class which is really exciting. The children absolutely love this and we love working with Neil Bromley to provide this opportunity. Neil has just told me about 4 weeks fencing club for junior pupils in nearby Cricklade which he is offering to our pupils. Here are the details – please contact Neil directly if you would like to find out more/ take this offer up!

En garde for Sword Fencing - join Cricklade Fencing club for 4 weeks FREE!

Each year our sword fencing coach comes in during term 1 to teach Year 6 at AKPS how to duel with swords! Imagining themselves as Captain Jack Sparrow, Princess Leia or one of the Three Musketeers they learn the stance, movement and different blade strokes to enable to engage in safe sword play.....

It has become so popular that he has opened Cricklade Fencing Club and all AK pupils in Year 3 upwards can join for 4 weeks FREE. See the flyer enclosed for more information - we hope as many children as possible would like to take up this offer. Please give Neil a call or text on 07527 546164 for more information. En garde!

Minety Rugby did fun sessions with many of the children during last term's sports week and were really impressed by the potential of lots of boys and girls at the school! At the time, lots of children expressed an interest in coming to the fun training sessions at 10am each Sunday morning at Minety playing fields, just a couple of miles away from the school. Attached is a flyer with more information and Minety RFC would love to see you and your children (aged 5 upwards) at their small, friendly club.

Fencing in Cricklade

4 weeks FREE with this flyer

Fencing is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK. In the age of chivalry, duelling was favoured as a method of settling matters of honour, because of its grace & simplicity. These remain the most attractive aspects of the sport today where both men & women practice on equal terms. It's very rewarding; developing all round fitness, flexibility of movement, stamina, mental agility, co-ordination, balance & self confidence. Fencing's unique mix of physical & intellectual stimulation can burn over 400 calories per hour.

Above all, it's great fun learning to duel using swords!

Classes run each Friday following a structured course to challenge & develop future fencers.

Venue: Cricklade Manor Sports Hall, Calcutt Street, Cricklade SN6 6BB

The Club provides professional coaching & all equipment: mask, jacket, plastron, glove & weapon. Wear T-shirt, tracksuit bottoms (compulsory) & trainers.

To register email: neil.bromley@ntworld.com or call 07527 546 164

Fridays: Age 8+ 7pm - 8pm





If you have any questions, please do discuss them with one of George Kingsnorth, Andy Williamson or Nick Plummer, who are all coaches at Minety and parents in the school. A number of children at the school already play, so ask them what it's like too!

October half term iCan multi-sports activity club – advance notice

We return at both our brilliant venues:

Ashton Keynes Primary School (9.00-3.00pm)

Friday 22nd October (Wiltshire Schools)

Monday 25th October

Friday 29th October

Cirencester Deer Park School (9.00-3.30pm)

Tuesday 26th October

Wednesday 27th October

Thursday 28th October

We hope as many families can benefit from our services as possible and please do make use of our Early-Bird Discount (2 weeks in advance). If you have any questions please do get in touch and we look forward to seeing you.

Stay Safe & Stay Active, *The iCan Coaching Team*

It is brilliant to be back in school. All systems are go in school and we are all making the most of every minute. Thank you for your ongoing support

Your very proud Head teacher,

S.L.Saville

Mrs Saville

Head Teacher

All dates for the year are on the calendar on the school website on www.akps.org.uk to help you plan ahead

Date	Event
Sunday 19 th September	Ashton Keynes Church Fete
Saturday 25 th September	Shine Party Community Event
Wednesday 29 th September	School Photographs
Tuesday 19 th October	End of Term
Wednesday 20 th October	TD Day

ASHTON KEYNES

Church of England VC Primary School

SHINE BRIGHT ★ REACH FOR THE STARS



Gosditch, Ashton Keynes, Nr Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 6NZ Head Teacher: Mrs S Saville Tel/Fax: 01285 861436 Email: office@ashtonkeynes.wilts.sch.uk www.akps.org.uk