



Friday 19th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Shining Brightly:

Happy New Year! We've had a fantastic start back to school already, with some exciting visitors popping in to both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2: both a baby dinosaur and a gorilla, which of course wowed the children!

Baby Dino Visits KS1

Key Stage 1 were lucky enough to have a workshop, where they found out lots of amazing information about dinosaurs, and were able to share their own facts too! Later, the children were then able to roll up their sleeves and have a go at being paleontologists: uncovering fossils and making discoveries. The children had to use brushes to carefully remove the soil, sand and dust. It was explained to them why this was important and how it helped to preserve the fossil.



Here are some of the comments made by the children:

'The fossilised poo was the best, I gave it to Miss Igoe to hold and she made a funny face when I told her what it was.'

'I loved the allosaurus skull, it was so, so big.'

'I loved brushing off the dust and seeing what was underneath.'

Then, in the afternoon, the children got to meet the baby dinosaurs: a tyrannosaurus rex, a triceratops and a parasaurolophus.



Gorilla arrives at AKPS! Yes you heard right!

As if that wasn't enough, both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were then treated to an assembly with Thomas the gorilla – we were told Thomas' life story and explored both the positive and negative impact that humans can have on the world around us. The children were alerted to ways in which they can look



after the planet: making small changes such as turning off lights when leaving a room or turning the tap off whilst brushing teeth.

They were captivated by both Thomas and Sam, who told the story excellently. They learned about how Thomas had struggled poachers and deforestation to survive. The children reflected on their learning about rainforests and conservation and made a pledge to make a difference from the visit which they wrote in letters. Key Stage 2 then had workshops, where they were taught how to make videos using a greenscreen and an app. They were shown what each section of the





video app was for and had such fun starring in their own movies, which were then sent on to teachers to share with their classes.

This is what some of the children had to say about the visit:

'The gorilla visit was so fun! I really enjoyed the assembly to the whole school and finding out the problems some gorillas face in some jungles.'

'The screen workshop was amazing! It was really fun making a video with my friends and then getting to watch all of the videos we had made. I want to make my own green screen at home now using green card or a curtain.'

This will be an excellent introduction as we have a green screen incorporated within our new STEM learning lab being installed at AKPS this year so children will be able to use it regularly. For hours afterwards, even the older pupils were debating if Thomas was real- I will leave this there as creativity and wonder for our amazing in a primary school!



Mental Health and Wellbeing Week Save the date 6th-10th February 2023

In the recent email from the wellbeing ambassadors, they told you about how they are helping to organise the Mental Health and Wellbeing week

and the dress to express day on Friday 10th to end the week and raise some money for Place2be charity, supporting children's mental health. We have just finalised the workshops which will be on offer for families after school each day around the five ways to wellbeing:



Dear Parents and Carers,

As promised here is a guide to the family workshops planned for you for our mental health and wellbeing week 6th-10th February. All of these are based around our 5 ways to wellbeing (Connect, Give, Notice, Learn, Be active) and all contributing are volunteering their time for free. I thank them all. We hope you can support us and attend where you can and we hope you enjoy the sessions. Note Monday is earlier (2.30-3.15) before end of school to give parents a chance to connect with a cuppa while your children are in school.

Monday 6th February 2.30-3.15 CONNECT in the hall

Connect- chat with a cuppa. FOAKs are providing a self-serve coffee and tea station (donations in honesty box) so please come along and enjoy a cuppa or have a connect and chat in the hall before pick up. You could help the environment and bring your own travel mug to save paper cups or washing up!

Tuesday 7th February 3.15-4.00 GIVE in the hub

MISP (Massage in schools programme session)

Positive Touch session. Mrs. Saville is a qualified instructor (of 20 years) for the massage in schools programme. [Massage in Schools Programme \(MISP\) - Touchline Training](#). Join Mrs. Saville with your children and experience





together the very simple and practical positive touch routine which can be used at home as it is in school as a peer massage routine to relax and restore.

Wednesday 8th February 3.15-4.00 NOTICE in the hall

Join Mrs. Marsh (one of our TAs and a qualified practitioner) in this session where she will share some excellent techniques for mindfulness and calming including breath work which we use with pupils in school and can be used with families at home.

Thursday 9th February 3.15-4.00 KEEP LEARNING in the hall

Would like to improve your child's: bedtime, sleep or mornings?

If you are struggling with your child's sleep or would like some support with bedtime come along and hear Michelle Cyril, The Family Sleep Specialist, talk about sleep.

Michelle will be helping us understand what happens when we sleep, our sleep hormones and the 24 hour sleep wake cycle. She will also explain five very practical ways you can improve your child's bedtime, night and mornings.

Join Michelle on the 9th Feb at 3.15pm in the hall.

Friday 10th February 3.15-4.00 BE ACTIVE in the hall

Our wonderful Meryl is back to give us an energy boosting, smile making session of family friendly Zumba for you and your children. So come in your trainers and boogie on down. This is also our charity dress to express day (raising for children's mental health charity Place2Be.) Feel free to come in some bright sports-wear or expressive colours- or not, just come!

We hope to see many of you at some point throughout the week. We also have activities planned in school for the children around the 5 ways to wellbeing including very creative activities from our ELSA (emotional support) team Mrs Lang, Miss Harrold and Mrs Marsh, workshops on resilience from Caroline Sidell, Health and nutrition with Mel Tim, taking part in a taskmaster challenge for mental health and activities from our very own wellbeing ambassadors at lunchtimes. I hope you and your children enjoy the week and thanks to all who are giving to make the week happen. We are really looking forward to it. Remember the week ends on Friday with 'Dress to Express' day and 50p voluntary donation to Place2Be children's mental health charity if you can manage it. (See previous parent mail)

Mrs. Saville and The Wellbeing Ambassadors

How your child can earn their wellbeing star- The 5 ways to wellbeing challenge!

You will have heard from our Year 6 wellbeing ambassadors this week where they wrote to you about the amazing 5 ways to wellbeing challenge to enable children to learn to take care of and responsibility for their own wellbeing. (connect, be active, keep learning, notice and give) and in the email it told you how the children can do a challenge to earn a unique stretchy person and ultimately their special orange wellbeing star. In worship this week, the ambassadors explained the challenge to the children and they will have their book marks very soon. I am ever so proud of these wellbeing ambassadors, we regularly meet at lunchtimes and they are so passionate and supportive and work really hard.





Stay and share Dates

Due to the success of our first stay and share sessions last term, we have set them up again for this term. Teachers have emailed the specific dates to their classes now so you can save the dates in your diary. It is an excellent way to see your child in action or to have a learning conversation with your child and find out just how well they have been learning in all subjects across our shine Curriculum. I sent a parent mail on Monday to you with specific dates on it for you.

There are so many amazing things happening at our school and we love ensuring our children thrive while they are here. In recognition of this we are delighted to announce, hot off the press, that Ashton Keynes CE Primary School, is 6th Best school in the South West region (this will be published in the Wilts and Glos standard) and as you know we were 125th in the whole country according to the Sunday Times league tables. You can read the article here:

[Ashton Keynes Primary School in Sunday Times Parent Power | Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard \(wiltsglosstandard.co.uk\)](http://wiltsglosstandard.co.uk)

This is a real achievement and representative of how hard everyone at the school works every single day, the whole staff team and of course our fabulous children. We are thankful for the excellent support of our parents, Governors and of course the local community for supporting the school in this community. We hope you are proud of your village school for shining so brightly both locally and nationally.

Your very proud Headteacher,
Mrs. Saville

Thursday 2 nd February	9am in hall and canopy Heroes and Heroines *This is a new date, changed to a week earlier due to mental health and wellbeing week and Challenge Partner visitors in school (Wed-Fri)
Monday 6 th -Friday 10 th February	Mental Health and Well being week including daily parent and family workshops
Friday 10 th February	'Dress to express' day for Place2Be charity (Parentmail sent) Term 3 ends at 3.15pm
Monday 20 th February	TD day – School is closed
Tuesday 21 st February	8.45am Term 4 starts for all pupils

