



4th October 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Shining Brightly:

We have been super busy in school. All classes have settled well and we have been particularly impressed by the arrival of our new Reception class who have already formed such a good bond and are making the most of every minute in school, supported beautifully by their wonderful Year 6 Buddies. As Headteacher, I am very lucky to be able to visit all classes daily and see them so fully engaged and working hard whilst also having lots of fun. We are very excited about our upcoming Quidditch launch day on 6th November!



As you are all fully aware our school vision is **'Shine Bright, reach for the stars'** recognising and celebrating what is going well to inspire, shining a light on others to help, being guided by stars in our daily school life and learning and the 'reach' to challenge ourselves to go even further and do even better. This is underpinned by our school Christian vision **'Life in all its fullness'** John 10:10, *"That they shall have life, life in all its fullness."* We believe that all children and adults, no matter their circumstances, have a right and deserve to experience all that life offers and we ensure that this vision is firmly embedded through all aspects of our school life.

Each class started the school year by considering what this meant for them. See each class page on our website for examples of what they children experienced. Here is Class 5's example:

<http://www.akps.org.uk/classes/class-5/>

Your children may have mentioned to you the 'Wows', 'Ows' and 'Nows', which is the language of spirituality in our school.

- This language of spirituality begins from a Christian understanding that everyone is a valued creation, individually and uniquely made by God, like pots made by a potter (Isaiah 64:8). Yet, in life things happen that impact on the physical 'pot' of life and create cracks that provide a glimpse of something 'beyond' the tangible.
- Cracks may be caused when something so good and breath-taking happens that the pot expands and cracks – the wows of life.
- Cracks may happen when something challenging happens and threatens the comfort of everyday – the 'ows' of life.

Cracks can also happen in the stillness and ordinariness of everyday – the 'nows' of life, when a moment of stillness, a pause or prayer creates a crack in the normal, physical every day. In these special moments there is a spiritual opportunity. Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken ceramics with golden joinery or glue, creates something that has been broken into something even more beautiful. Using this metaphor, the 'wows', 'ows' and 'nows' of life offer the possibility of cracks that are filled with gold and make the pot even more beautiful. The gold in the cracks reflect a little of the wonder of spirituality. More can be read on our website <http://www.akps.org.uk/curriculum/spirituality/>

Wows

The Wows

These are the awe and wonder moments. The times when you want to breathe in and capture the feeling, holding onto it as long as you can.

Ows

The Ows

These are the things that can go wrong. They can knock the breath out of you.

Nows

The Nows

These are the every day ordinary times being able to be present in the moment, thinking of what we have now and how lucky we are to be here, now.
(Being thankful - God is not just for emergencies.)



We have been so impressed with how the children have been living out our value in focus, 'Thankfulness' this term. Learning from stories in the bible and considering how they can make wise choices in their lives and show their gratitude. We were so thankful to have ex-parent Lizzie Glover visit us to deliver a fantastic and energetic worship in thankfulness and gratitude to help in moments of 'ow' or when resilience is required. She suggested a lovely activity you might like to try at home- make a paper chain and write on each loop of the train something you/ your child is thankful for and display it somewhere to remind you, especially when you feel the 'ows' of life. I love this and have done it myself!

Through our Global advocacy curriculum, we help our children learn how they can be advocates of change and shone a light on others locally and globally to help them to have a full life. We are proud of the work our children do as courageous advocates and how they use what they learn to make a difference.

<http://www.akps.org.uk/curriculum/global-advocacy/>

Welcome Service for Class R and Y6 Buddies

We had our wonderful welcome service for our new Class R children and their families in Holy Cross church this week. The children were accompanied by their brilliant Year 6 buddies who had each made them a star with a beautiful and kind message on the back for their Class R buddy. Class R, blew our socks off when they bravely stood at the front of the church and sang and danced for us which is such an achievement for their 4th week in school! They were so brave. Thank you to Holy Cross church for having us, it is always so special to visit the church. The children and church team worked in partnership to write and deliver a very special service for Year R and their families. Mrs. Crowley will send a video of the children performing the song along with the prayers and poem from Year 6 on seesaw in case any families missed it. All stars were sent home. What a wonderful experience for our children, they were brilliant! We are very thankful to and proud of our Year 6 buddies who guide our youngest children with such kindness and care.



Ashton Keynes village wins best kept large Wiltshire village- Congratulations!

You may already know but Ashton Keynes won the best kept large village award and one of our pupils, who lives in the village, Evie in Year 5 collected the award on the village's behalf. We were very proud of her and how well she embraced the opportunity which she was really looking forward to even though she hadn't been well beforehand. We received this lovely feedback from the Parish council. Thank you and

well-done Evie for representing the school and village so well.

Evie was brilliant yesterday. She had been poorly, and it was touch and go as to whether she could make the CPRE Presentation. However, she made it, along with her parents and sister, and duly received, on behalf of the village, a plaque to commemorate the village's win of the competition. The plaque was presented to her by Cllr Bridget Wayman, Chair of Wiltshire Council.

FOAKS Fireworks- Saturday 9th November

You will have seen our wonderful new learning and play areas for KS1 pupils and they are fully utilizing this area to develop core skills. We are now keen to build a second play area for the rest of the school. School council have had an input into the design and the FOAKS team are keen to fund this. The Fireworks Night is



our main fundraiser each year and therefore any help with this event and attendance by the community and beyond will really help. It is a brilliant firework event, fabulous display and entertainment and always so well organised. This year, my band, 'Hard to Handle' are returning to volunteer ourselves as the entertainment to provide some live music for you to enjoy and hopefully dance along to. There will of course be a bar serving drinks and food available to purchase. Please come along and support this really important event for our school, one which benefits all of our children whilst serving the community with a fabulous evening. Tickets available from the village shop and you can volunteer for help in any way that would be very much appreciated as they need help setting up, taking down, marshalling and on the stalls, they are particularly in need of an electrician to support- please help! You can offer help here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0848ABAC28A1F4C52-51949788-akfireworks#/>

Please note that the email, contactfoaks@gmail.com can be used if anyone feels they can help with anything! We need helpers to run this event- thank you so much!

Affordable school Strategy

We are ever so proud to work as an affordable school. We try our hardest to offer the very best value at school to support all of our families and our staff. We regularly review and adapt what we offer in school, including our curriculum to ensure it is affordable. More information and links to support can be found here: <http://www.akps.org.uk/parents/affordable-schools/>

With the cost of living rising, we wanted to try to support by reviewing and adapting our school offer, as you will be aware. This year we sent out a guide for each class of upcoming costs for trips and events across the school year. We provide most activities free to parents but where we have to charge, advanced notice helps families to budget to try to avoid any last-minute financial pressures. A few examples: we have adapted our school uniform requirements to include black trainer style shoes, sustainable uniform reuse and resell events organised by FOAKS and offer supermarket alternatives to logo uniform, we organize residential in house to keep residential costs lower than using agencies, we don't ask parents to buy outfits for dressing up, provide a food and nutrition policy with affordability in mind and provide all learning resources and remind about not sending in expensive items. School also has to work on affordability as a tool for future sustainability to support families but also school itself as budgets are reduced and all schools have less money. We do all of this but endeavour not to cut the opportunities we offer our pupils and carefully use our budget to provide many free events for all pupils. We have just applied for the Affordability Gold award (I'll keep you posted on this) but this would be very exciting and the first Wiltshire school to achieve this status if we are successful. The award has provided us with a framework to work through the strategy. We are proud to be an affordable school. I was so impressed recently to hear our pupils on school council independently considering affordability when planning their annual calendar and thinking about not asking for too many fundraising events as it is too much for our families and suggesting raising awareness days instead- I love this!

Attendance for September- IMPORTANT – sending as another reminder

Please ensure you have read the Wiltshire letter (sent via parent mail) about the new DFE Government guidance on attendance which started on 2nd September. We are bound by these national rules and regulations and therefore it is very important you read this document and ensure you understand the changes and consequences of term time absences as it will be very different. Please continue to ensure that



all holidays continue to be taken in non-term time to avoid fines which will now be out of our control and issued automatically.

I look forward to updating you about our Quidditch day, when we launch Quidditch as a new sport at AKPS and our fireworks event in my next term's newsletter along with a summary of highlights from each class. Parents evenings will be in November with stay and share sessions before hand and the booking system will go live the week before for parent's evening appointments. Heroes and Heroines (celebration assembly for the whole school to which parents and carers are invited) will be towards the end of each of our 6 terms with the next one being at 9am on Tuesday 22nd October and the final full day of term 1 in school is Wednesday 23rd October after which it will be half term holiday from the 24th. Thank you for your ongoing support of our school,

Your very proud Headteacher,

Mrs Saville

Mrs Saville

All dates for the year are on the calendar on the school website on www.akps.org.uk to help you plan ahead. All newsletters and annual overviews have been sent to parents and carers but can also be found on class pages of our website.

ASHTON KEYNES


Church of England VC Primary School

SHINE BRIGHT ★ REACH FOR THE STARS



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE



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