



22nd May 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Shining Brightly:



I have been reflecting on just how many newsletters I have written over my 11 years as Headteacher of this wonderful school and when I write each one, how much pride and love I have for our school and how it is shining so brightly. My newsletters are now termed as we communicate regular news via ParentMails as this is more effective and timelier. At the end of each large term (Christmas, Easter and Summer) each class contributes highlights from their term in class for you to read. I do hope you enjoy hearing about the ways in which we continue to shine ever so brightly. Thank you for being so supportive to help make this school such a wonderful school to lead. Your children are incredible and I have such a fantastic team of staff and Governors to help us to do our best for your children every single day. I will continue to drive the school forward and am planning some exciting school improvement areas for us next year and will be appealing for some parental help with this, which will be super exciting so please read on! There are also some important dates at the end of the newsletter!

Sporting events

Hockey On Wednesday 7th May a group of six Class 6 children took part in a Quicksticks Hockey Festival at The Cotswold School. The event consisted of skills, drills and mini games. The team did brilliantly, represented our school fantastically well and enjoyed themselves. Well done Team AK!

Spirit of Sports event

Class 4 took a group of children to take part in the mini Olympics at Kingshill school where they got a taster of a range of sports including table tennis, boccia, curling, badminton and

handball. They had a fantastic time and represented the school incredibly well, picking up the certificate for showing excellent teamwork for how beautifully they celebrated one another's achievements.

Netball

We took two teams of Year 6 pupils to the local school's netball tournament at Kingshill last week. I was super lucky to be tasked with coaching them. As a netball player myself, I absolutely loved it. They were all tasked with daily shooting practice for the weeks before and then some tactics and training coaching. The children were all exceptional. Every single one of them grew

through the experience. Both teams did really well. We brought home a set of gold medals with one of the teams who won the whole competition without conceding a goal. Super proud of their attitude, resilience, effort, teamwork and growth of both teams. Well done team AK!

Thanks to all the staff and parent helpers who volunteer their time to ensure our children go to these sporting





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events and also a huge thanks to our parents who offer transport to make these events accessible by avoiding coach costs which would prevent us being able to attend.

Maths Quiz Interschool championship

We are delighted to have entered this again. Last time we made it through to the final at Oxford university and finished in the top schools in the country! I am excited to report that our wonderful team of Year 5 and 6 pupils who are representing our school as part of this challenging competition have made it through to the semi finals so a huge well done to them! Having observed the challenge up to the final last time I can tell you this is not for the faint hearted it is rigorous, challenging, fast and tough! We wish them luck in the semi-finals on 10th June. Huge thanks to Miss Redman for driving this initiative for the school and to Max in Year 5's Mum for giving up her time to help.



Year 6 amazingness



We absolutely love them! They are such a brilliant class, excellent role models to all. They completed their Y6 SATS tests this week and we were mega impressed with them and how much they embraced the week. I think the toast, pancakes, biscuits, ice lollies and extra funny moments really did help them (including the pig of positivity and my infamous magic SATs dust) but they have an excellent journey of education in this school which set every single pupil in good stride for the tests. We enjoy ensuring that the

week is a positive first experience of exams for our pupils as they will go on to experience annual exams so their first experience is really important.

They were buzzing to receive their leavers hoodies straight after the final test and are now super excited for London!

Year 6 Leavers We have a plan and dates for Year 6 leavers which we have shared with Year 6 parents including a bespoke church service (where children will be presented with their moving on books from the church and a gift from the school) - children plan and lead this service themselves, Leavers production, shirt signing and Y6 v parent rounders match.



Year R delight as their chicks hatch!

Our wonderful Year R class loved watching closely as 2 of their 6 eggs hatched in school. They delighted in suggesting names for the two new additions to the class and all voted. The winners were Rockstar and ZigZag (brilliant names). The children loved writing





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about the chicks, learning all about them and how to be responsible and care for them. They have both now been happily rehomed locally to a lovely school family where they are thriving. Class R returned from their first trip where they went to Roves farm and I delighted in hearing them tell me ALL about it. They loved it. I also loved hearing how the staff at the farm said they were an incredible class of children! Well done Class R superstars!

Year 5 magical myths

Year 5 wanted to share some of the wonderful writing they have done whilst writing and publishing their own myths as paperback books. Like all good pieces of fantasy writing, of course they started our books with a map! Have a look at some of their beautiful stories.





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Year 1 trip success On Wednesday Class 1 went to Westonbirt Arboretum. The sun was shining and the children had a lovely time looking at the variety of plants and trees. They worked out approximately how old one of the trees was by measuring with their hands! We managed to get the whole class plus a couple of grownups around this tree! They had a great time hunting for minibeasts and collecting lots of leaves, sticks, seeds and petals which we will use in class to create some art work. They also had to be blue tits and race one another to collect caterpillars, not real ones! It was a super day out, the children were brilliant, as always.

Plea from Year 1

Year 1 are collecting clean, empty jam jars with lids for their jar tombola that they will be running at the fete on the 19th July. Please rescue them from your recycling and hand them to any of the Year 1 team or the office.

Thank you in advance.

Thank you from children for the new play equipment

We LOVE the new play equipment- thank you! Now every single year group and child has access to new play equipment!



Mrs. Saville on DBE (diocese Board of Education for Bristol)

I am ever so excited and proud to say that I have been selected to be on the board of education for Bristol Diocese. My post will start from September and will be mostly after school hours across the year. This is important for me as an experienced Headteacher I can give my experience and input into the Diocese vision and strategy for education in the Diocese of Bristol and the children they serve. I will relish the opportunity to continue to develop and learn from this role which is exciting for me.



This year I have successfully carried out a new role as lead facilitator within Challenge partners. I have worked with heads from across the country working with them in school improvement. This has meant a few days in London and other areas of the country but each time I have returned renewed invigorated and full of wonderful things for AKPS. I have been asked to continue in this role next academic year. It is important that I continue to grow professionally and that this positively impacts this wonderful school as a role model for the pupils and staff and to enable us to keep getting better. I have been Head here for a long time and we need to keep reaching in order to continue to develop and shine and my professional



development invigorates me and benefits the school. My little moment to shine beyond and for the school!

Message from School Council

Dear Parents and Carers,



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On Friday 13th June we will be taking part in Cystic Fibrosis awareness day. To raise awareness, the Cystic Fibrosis Trust encourage people to wear yellow. Rather than a full dress down day, we will be accessorizing with something yellow. Each child will be given a length of yellow ribbon and we will be asking "How will you wear yours?". Bracelet, anklet, hair accessory? The choice is yours! Pupils can also wear something yellow as an accessory to mark the day. This could be: yellow socks, hair bands/clips, badge (can be homemade) or any small yellow accessory. We will be thinking as a school about CF and raising awareness to support members of our school family who have CF and to also ensure our whole school is aware and supportive of this condition. If you would like to find out more or donate any money to support the work the CF Trust do, you can use the following link: <https://www.cysticfibrosis.org.uk/>

Thank you

Imogen (Y6), Evie (Y3), Edie (Y3) School Council

Key upcoming dates for your Diaries:

Sports week - We are working hard behind the scenes for another exciting annual sports week. This will end with a brilliant sports morning organised by Mr. Tanner which we love parents and carers to join with us for. Reception have their session first at 9am until 9.30am for their parents to watch then all other classes start at 9.30am. More details to follow but save the date Friday 4th July.

Y3 camp - On Friday 11th July Year 3 will be having their camp at AKPS. A night together doing outdoor activities and camping under the stars of our school grounds. Super exciting for them!

Y5 residential - Wednesday 18th - Friday 20th June Year 5 will be returning to Viney Hill in the Forest of Dean for their annual residential. They are super excited to be doing lots of exhilarating activities (including high ropes, abseiling, gladiator challenge, leap of faith, tunneling, bush craft in the forest and canoeing) to help them reach for the stars! Please remember I will be on residential with them so I will not be available during this time including not able to monitor my emails. **If you require senior leadership conversation/support during this time please speak directed to my Deputy Head, Mr. Hockaday.**

Y6 residential - Tuesday 24th - Friday 27th June Year 6 are going to London! Oh my, how exciting we are to take them and they cannot wait! Lion King, Olympic whitewater rafting, Shrek adventures, London eye, top of St Paul's cathedral, Science museum special workshop- the list goes on! For this time, myself and Mr. Hockaday will be on the residential so both unavailable and not able to monitor emails. **If you require senior leadership conversation/support during this time, please contact my EYFS Lead Mrs. Crowley, KS1 lead Miss Igoe or KS2 Lead Miss Thomas.**

Y3/4 production - The two classes are working hard together to prepare an exciting production for their families and they will also perform it for all children in school as a dress rehearsal. Dates and information about tickets have been set out to the two classes.

Music festival - Please do not forget the AK music festival from Wednesday 25th – Sunday 29th June. School is hosting the event from Friday 27th until Sunday 29th. It is a wonderful village for music and this event is fabulous for the community. I love seeing our pupils, past pupils, staff and parents all engaging with the talent of local musicians and coming together to enjoy music and time together. The music festival team



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have very kindly offered to give some funding to enable our pupils to participate in a specialist music workshop, which we are very thankful for. More details on this workshop will follow once final arrangements are in place. I will be there for the Friday and Saturday and will be singing too!

FOAKS fete - Saturday 19th July is a fete organised by FOAKS. Save the date!

Child enterprise - As part of their AKPS 11 by 11 personal development opportunities, all classes will be involved in an enterprise event to enable them to do a stall at either the music festival on Sat 28th June or FoAKs fete Saturday 19th July to either entertain with activities or sell items. They have to make the cost of the enterprise back and try to make a profit if they can, whilst entertaining people with their stall! I'm excited to see what classes come up with!

Theatre visit - I am super excited to have booked for a brilliant theatre company to return to our school to perform the classic, Oliver for our children. This will take place on the afternoon of Monday 23rd June and school have funded it so no cost to parents to support with our affordability strategy. I know a few pupils in the choir are performing at a special concert at a local retirement village the same afternoon but it was the only date I could secure for the school. I know the choir members will love their afternoon performing and it will be hugely appreciated by the residents.

Attendance Reminder

Please remember we are bound to the new DFE attendance policy and cannot authorise holiday in term time. Sometimes exceptional circumstances can be applied such as bereavement, direct family wedding, health etc. but sadly affordability is not one. I totally understand how hard it is to afford holidays at peak holiday times but I also understand how not attending school affects a child in terms of their academic progress but also we see impact socially and sometimes with school refusals. Time off school means lessons are missed and learning moves on quickly. In addition, regular lateness affects progress. We start learning from 8.45 in all classes with small lessons and targeted group or whole class work before attending worship/assembly at 9am. If your child is regularly late, they miss this important extra support and learning and it will negatively impact on their progress. Mr. Hockaday leads on attendance and works closely with the Education welfare officer who monitors our procedures and policy and will challenge persistent absence including issuing fines for absence as per DFE policy. Please be reminded that a day absence is counted as 2 sessions absence. 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a period triggers a fine. Our attendance policy written on DFE guidelines can be found here <http://www.akps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Attendance-Policy-updated-2.pdf>

Reports and next teacher information

Teachers are currently writing your children's end of year reports. They will be sent out on Friday 18th July. Before moving up morning on Wednesday 16th July, when will get to spend a morning with their new teaching team to get to know one another ahead of the Summer holidays, I will provide the staffing structure to inform you which class teacher and TA's your child/ren will have for next academic year.

SIP (school improvement plan) next year- appeal for parent careers support

We are working on writing our annual school improvement plan for 2025 - 2026. We will be appealing for help from our wonderful parent/carer community around careers. As part of our personal development we want to look at careers with the pupils to inspire them and help them see why subjects at school and work



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ethic are important from primary age so they understand the importance of their journey through school. I'd love to hear from a range of careers and employment our parent community might have to share with the children to inspire and inform them. If you think you would like to be part of this, please email the school office: office@ashtonkeynes.wilts.sch.uk and let us know. We will make note of responses and contact you next academic year once we have the plan underway. We might ask you to do a short talk/workshop. We will confirm once we have interest and know how many we have. I am keen to ensure a range and diversity in careers and employment experiences we share with the children if we can.

Heroes and Heroines. I love seeing so many of you join us to celebrate all of our children in this special termly assembly which enables families to join us. We celebrate them every Thursday in *Time to Shine* but at the end of each of the 6 terms we open the invitation to families to join us. The final Heroes and Heroines of this school year will be 9am on Wednesday 23rd July, School will finish at 3.15pm on this day for the Summer holidays.

May I take this opportunity, on behalf of the school, to wish you all a restful half term break and thank you for your continued support. We look forward to welcoming you all back to school on Monday 2nd June 2025 at 8.45am for the final term of this academic year.

Best wishes,

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