



Newsletter

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www.firslower.co.uk

Working together to
achieve our best.

Chair of Governors: Gareth Jones

Governors: Sue A'Court, Celia Bennett, Adam Campbell, Paul McKinney, Fran Sherry, Phillip Clarke, Jeremy Ramsden, Laura Gilson, Jon Wilson and Jason Hart

Dear parents/carers,

Remembrance Sunday

Last Sunday, some of the Year 4 Rotakids children took part in laying a wreath on behalf of the school for Ampthill Armistice 100. The children did a fantastic job and they should feel very proud of themselves in the way they represented the school. A few extra photos can be viewed in our Ampthill Armistice 100 Gallery on our website www.firslower.co.uk. We would like to thank Mrs Brady and Mrs Bennett for being present with the children during this time.

Year 4 Visit to Kings Arms Garden

On Monday 12th November the children in Year 4 took part in an event to commemorate Remembrance Day at Kings Arms Garden in Ampthill. Following the theme of peace and forgiveness, the children made their way around the garden, learning about how we can show these values today. The children also got the opportunity to try on a WW1 soldier's helmet and look in a first aid box carried by one of the voluntary nurses. The most thought provoking story of the day for most children was that of Arthur Ingram, who was shot in the chest but survived to tell the tale. His military issued Bible, which he had kept in his top pocket, prevented his death. We would like to thank Ampthill Baptist Church for inviting us to such a memorable and thought provoking activity. Further photos can be viewed in our Kings Arms Garden Photo Album. Thank you to all the parents and staff who helped accompany the children on the day.

Teaching Talons and their Animal Ambassadors Visit The Firs

To support our Y1 topic on Animals this half term, we invited the company 'Teaching Talons' to bring a variety of species for the children in Year 1 to experience. This supported their work on classification between mammals, birds, fish and amphibians. Further photos from this event can be viewed in our Photo Gallery. Thank you to the animal ambassadors who brought in such a large variety of animals for the children to experience.

School Photographs

Today, the school photograph orders were sent home with your child. If you have a late order, this will come directly to you.

Christmas Tree Festival, St Andrews Church – Saturday 1st – Sunday 2nd December

This year, The Firs will, once again, be taking part in the Christmas Tree Festival at St Andrews Church. The choir will also be singing on Saturday 1st December, arriving at the church at 1pm and performing at 1.15pm. A letter detailing arrangements will be sent out soon but we thought you'd like to make a note of this, if your child attends choir.

Book Fair

We want to thank all the many parents who supported our book fair, which finished on Monday this week. It is always a fantastic success and it is lovely to see all our children so excited about books and reading, which is so important to us at The Firs. We are also delighted to say that we have so far raised a total of £1500 which is fantastic news for us, as we benefit by receiving 60% commission in the form of new books for our children. A big thank you to Mrs Brady and Mrs Bennett for their work in organising it and to all the staff who helped to run sessions.

Santa Scooter Challenge

Advance warning that we will be working with Alistair Barclay from Sustrans by taking part in their Santa Challenge. This will be about encouraging children to walk, cycle or scoot to school in the week beginning Monday 26th November. More information will follow next week.

Children In Need

The children have had a fantastic time taking part in our dress down day, many choosing to dress up as a superhero or their favourite character. We are very grateful for the kind generosity of all our parents, their contributions allowing us to raise £230 which will be donated to Children In Need – thank you.

Anti-Bullying Week

We began our work on Anti Bullying Week by thinking about what bullying is. We agreed that it wasn't when one thing happens like falling out with someone, even though that can upset us. We agreed it can be a whole range of unkind things that happen again and again over a period of time and make someone feel really unhappy.

We also remembered the anti-bullying pledge we all signed up to in Anti Bullying Week last year:

The Firs anti-bullying Pledge:

**We believe bullying is nasty, mean and unkind.
At The Firs we believe in living together in peace and we will not bully or upset people.
We will stand up to bullying!
If we feel someone is bullying us or anyone else, we will say 'stop!' and ask for help.**

Year R have been using our superhero theme to talk with the children about looking after each other, helping others when they need help and being kind and caring to others.

Year 1 have been thinking about the qualities that make a good friend and writing the key things they are looking for in a friend on a hand print.

Year 2 are thinking about how bullying makes people feel and the need to stop it happening at The Firs. They are making anti bullying posters that they will be finishing off next week.

Year 3 have followed up on a Pixar video, used in assembly, which explores how bullying springs from people being different to one another. They are thinking about how we should celebrate differences between us.

Year 4 have been looking at BBC Bite Size videos on bullying and discussing the behaviours that are linked with bullying and the consequences of bullying. They have been learning about Martin Luther King and his 'I have a dream speech' thinking about equality and the rights we all have to be happy and have the same opportunities. They have looked at some data on bullying and the impact it has on people.

They have also begun to take groups of pupils to sign up to our anti bullying pledge (see above). It will be displayed in the school hall, once everyone has signed up.

This afternoon, Darren Coleman, father of a child at our school, came to talk to the children in Years 2, 3 and 4 about bullying, the different kinds of bullying and what to do if the children or someone they know are being bullied. He was a victim of bullying himself and his presentation was a very thought provoking, fact finding eye opener to bullying. For more details about this please visit www.kickoutbullying.com. We would like to thank Darren for coming into school and for giving such an informative and interesting presentation to some of our children.

Staffing News

We are very sad that Heather Edwards, our Kids' Club Leader will be retiring from her post at the end of this term. Heather has been working at our school since 2005 and in 2007, she took on the role of Kids' Club Leader. Our Kid's Club is a very popular club and the children are very happy and well cared for by our kind and caring staff. We are very aware that this nurturing culture has been a happy result of Heather's very

successful leadership of this provision since she took over in 2007. We would like to say a very heartfelt thank you to her, not only for all her hard work and commitment to Kids' Club but also for all those times when she lived the values of our school, taking care of children and making sure they felt looked after and had a happy time in Kids' Club. We will all miss her and wish her well in her retirement.

Staff Vacancy for Kids' Club Leader – January 2019

**23hrs per week Monday – Friday 7.30am – 9.00am and 3.15pm – 6.00pm + bookwork/shopping time
Level 4 points 21-24 - (estimated pro-rata salary £11,069.00)**

We are looking for an enthusiastic and committed Kids' Club Leader to join our hard working and caring Kids' Club team in January 2019. Applicants who have an NVQ level 3 in Playwork or equivalent are invited to apply. We are forward thinking, offer a structured induction programme and are committed to further professional development for all staff. Details can be downloaded from our website on www.firslower.co.uk. Please email applications to sue.acourt@firslower.org or for more information telephone 01525 402735.

We look forward to receiving an application from you. The closing date is 23rd November, 2018 and the interview date is 30th November, 2018.

Visits to the school are warmly welcomed and we are looking forward to meeting you!

Read Write Inc Videos for Parents

There is now a link on our website which takes you to a whole host of RWI videos which are specifically aimed at parents. These videos will help you to understand how RWI is taught in our school and will give you ideas as to how to help your child at home. To get to this link go to our website www.firslower.co.uk and click on the 'our learning' then 'curriculum' then Read Write Inc. we are sure you will find these useful.

Yours sincerely,



Adam J G Campbell
headteacher