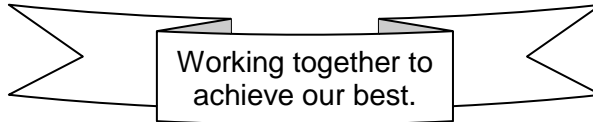




Newsletter

Issue No.5
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www.firslower.co.uk



Chair of Governors: Gareth Jones

Governors: Adam Campbell, Fran Sherry, Jon Wilson, Louise Haigh, Annette Anderson, Jason Manley, John Ashley and Joanna Milne

Dear parents/carers,

Changes to times for Pick up and Drop off from Monday 12th October

We are constantly looking at how to improve our provision during Coronavirus and we listen to your views regarding this. As the weather is changing, we wanted to try and ensure that you were not waiting around for long periods of time if you were collecting another child from a different class at a different time.

We hope that the new times below will help with this but it is very important that you come to school within the time frame given, otherwise children will have to be marked as late in the register and will miss key learning and disturb the class when they are settled.

Previous Drop off	New drop off time	Previous Pick up	New Pick up time
8:45 - 8:55	8:45 - 8:55	3:00 - 3:10	3:10 - 3:20
9:00 - 9:10	8:55 - 9:05	3:15 - 3:25	3:20 - 3:30
9:15 - 9:25	9:05 - 9:15	3:30 - 3:40	3:30 - 3:40

Message from the PTA

PLEASE HELP - FREE MONEY FOR THE PTA

Amazon customers can now support our wonderful PTA in the Amazon shopping app on iPhones and Android phones! AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. This could really add up in the run up to Christmas if all families sign up.



Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations.

1. Open the Amazon Shopping app on your device
2. Go into the main menu of the Amazon Shopping app and tap into 'Settings'
3. Tap 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the process, choosing Firs School Parent Teachers Association as your nominated charity

This doesn't cost you anything but gives money straight to the PTA, which will be much appreciated this term while our hands are tied with running our usual schedule of events!

Thank you 

Value for October

Our value for this month is *Collaboration/Teamwork*

In school, we have explained to the children that collaboration is about working as a team with co-operation and patience to achieve a common goal. They can achieve their best as a team by having good relationships with others (for example, working with any of their peers without complaint) and by making good choices because that will benefit the group as a whole. We have discussed how practising collaboration and teamwork will help them throughout their life.

We are asking parents/carers at home to send in a note if they think their child has demonstrated collaboration/teamwork, describing how they showed this value. We will celebrate some of their achievements in assembly (if they are happy with this). Examples of collaboration might be:



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- Demonstrating a willingness to work/play with everyone – not just their best friends.
- Listening respectfully to both their peers and to adults.
- Supporting the ideas of another person even if they don't agree with them.
- Consistently taking a fair share of something they are offered.

Remote Learning

Like all schools, we have been asked by the Government to produce plans for remote learning.

As a group of FARM schools (Firs, ALameda, Russell, Maulden) we have agreed to use Google Classroom as the means by which we organise any remote learning. We also intend to use it to organise homework for children next term and we will give you details of this nearer the time.



Staff are currently taking part in training (funded by the Government) and the Google Classroom for our school is being set up by our ICT consultants, Partnership Education.

All children Y1 upwards will be issued with a school Google email address. You and your children will be able to access Google Classroom, using that email address and a password, that we will provide. This will be coming to you after half term.

Children will be able to access learning resources such as videos created by their teacher, links to online resources and games, learning resources that can be completed and 'turned in' back to the teacher etc.

We will send out further guidance on how to use Google Classroom after half term. If you want to know a little more however, click the link below (some of the aspects it covers would be used for older children but it is a useful and very quick overview):

[Google Classroom - brief overview](#)



Letter for Y1 Parents

With this newsletter, there is a letter for Y1 parents – 'Reading in Y1 - Explaining our 'Best Fit' RWI Groups'.



The letter explains the way we are organising the teaching of reading, to maximize as much as possible, the benefits of the RWI approach, whilst still allowing us to keep the class bubbles separate. We hope it answers the questions we have received from Y1 parents. If you want any more help or support however, please email your class teacher and either they or our RWI leader Mrs Mercer, will be happy to help.

Bikeability in Year 4

Our Y4 children had a fantastic time this week, improving their cycling skills. We feel it is so important to support the children in developing key life skills such as cycling and we are very grateful to all of our Y4 parents who brought in children's bikes and to from Sustrans for doing such a great job, working with our children.



Mrs Mercer – Deputy Head of The Firs

In recognition of the increased responsibilities Mrs Mercer (who was an Assistant Headteacher) now holds and the enlarged range of work she does across the school, which includes leading RWI and having overall responsibility for our EYFS provision, including Pine and Saplings, her job role has been re-evaluated and from this term, she is our Deputy Headteacher... congratulations to Mrs Mercer and thank you for all the ongoing hard work and dedication she puts into her role at The Firs.



Governor Update

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank Jason Hart who has stepped down after serving as a member of our Governing Body for a number of years. I would like to thank him for his very many positive and valuable contributions over those years, both as a Committee chair and in later years, also as Vice Chair of Governors. He has been succeeded in the role of Vice Chair of Governors by Louise Haigh and I would like to thank her on behalf of all the Governors for agreeing to take on this role.

The Governors, led by our Chair Gareth Jones play a critical role in the leadership of the school, supporting the school, providing very important strategic advice and acting as a critical friend as we continually seek to improve the provision we make for children's learning. It is a good opportunity to thank all of them for their dedicated and conscientious approach.

Welcoming back Pine class

I hope that all our Pine children have been able to access the learning ideas / resources we sent home. I would like to thank all our YR parents for the support you have given children with this. I would also like to thank the staff for preparing the remote learning resources, stories and messages for the YR children. Some parents have asked why some staff had to self isolate and not others. The reason for this is that it is contacts that occur from 2 days before the onset of symptoms that trigger the need for 14 days isolation.

Now the isolation period is nearly over, we look forward to welcoming all our Pine children back to school from next Monday (12th October). The day will be organised as normal and Group A will need to come in PE kit. We can't wait to see all of our Pine children and look forward to welcoming them all after the weekend.

Yours sincerely,

