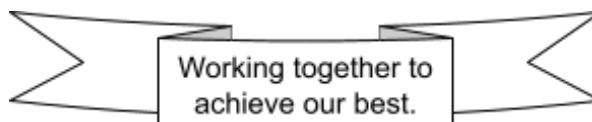




Newsletter

Issue No.4
Date 1st October, 2021
www.firslower.co.uk



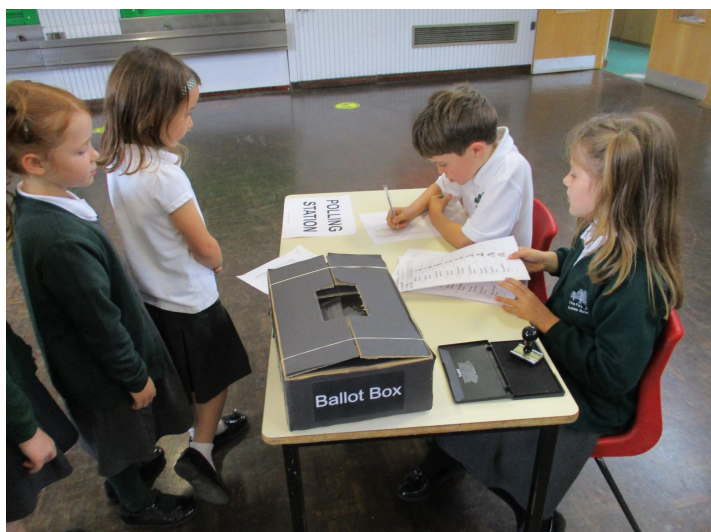
Chair of Governors: John Ashley

Governors: Annette Anderson, Franco Cameli, Adam Campbell, Louise Haigh, Kerry Mercer, Fran Sherry and Tom Stean

Dear parents/carers,

School Council Elections

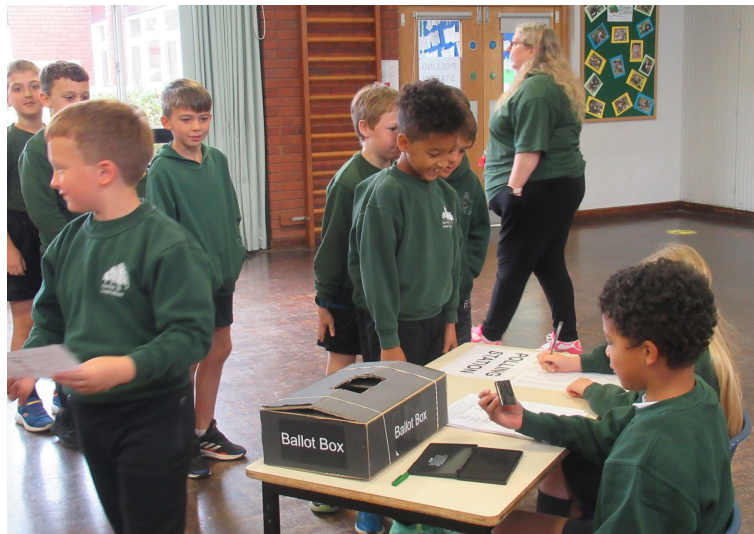
The children were very excited on Thursday when we held our School Council elections. We turned the hall into a polling station and our talented Premises Manager made two voting booths for us so the children would get an authentic experience... and they loved it!



Staff were very impressed by the efforts children went to in talking to their class about why they should get their vote and one candidate in Oak class even produced very professional leaflets as part of her campaign!



Our Y4 children did a brilliant job on the day, taking it in turns to be the Poll Clerk and Presiding Officer in the polling station and the children took the whole process very seriously. It was a great way to experience our value of democracy in action and we were very proud of all our children and how they participated so positively and confidently.



The children will find out which children have been elected to the council on Monday in our merits assembly... so it is not too long to wait!

Plee from Y4

Year 4 need some shoe boxes for an experiment they are doing in science next week. If you have a shoe box at home and you could bring it in for us, we would be very grateful. Could you send them in by Thursday next week please, thanks!

Our new pirate ship

The children in Y3, Y4 and Kids' Club have been very excited to see the work progressing on the new KS2 pirate ship and the work is now complete. We are organising the grand opening, when the winner of the naming competition will be revealed and we will be writing to you early next week with details.

Parent Forum - Thursday 7th October at 2:30pm

We would like to hold our 1st parent forum meeting for this year on **Thursday 7th October at 2:30pm**. We will be contacting the members who attended regularly last year but we would very much welcome new members. So if you can spare us an hour before pick up on Thursday, we would be very grateful!

We would like to discuss the following at the meeting:

- Feedback on the new One way system
- Changes to our school uniform,
- The transition experience for all our children as they started in their new classes this term.
- Possibilities for the involvement of parents in our Open evening on the 18th October

PTFA AGM - 11th October at 7pm

Our Parent Teacher and Friends Association will be holding their AGM at 7pm on Monday 11th October at 7pm. The meeting is for all parents and it would be wonderful to see as many parents / carers there as possible.

Parent volunteers always make a great difference to children's experience of school in many different ways. Some may be able to visit school and provide help and support in the classroom, whilst others may accompany the class on a school trip.

However, behind the scenes the group of dedicated parent volunteers who run the school's Parent Teacher Friend Association (PTFA) also make a very valuable contribution. We have rebranded the PTA as a PTFA to recognise the contribution made by grandparents and other members of our school community, who support the work the PTFA do.

The PTFA enhances your child's experience of their time at the Firs, not only through providing essential funds to improve the resources available (such as new playground equipment, Chromebooks, the library computer system, new gardens etc), but also by creating a positive, inclusive school community, offering the children extra opportunities, such as school discos, dress down days, film nights, fun activities throughout the year and even subsidising transport for swimming lessons.

However, fundraising success is only made possible by the involvement of parents, and with our current PTA committee stepping down this year, we are looking for new volunteers to take their place. The level of involvement you wish to offer is entirely up to you; whether you're looking for a committee role, or just want to contribute new ideas and /or help out at events, everyone is welcome!

All parents have skills that can help the PTFA (you'll be amazed what you can do!) and we're grateful for any time you can contribute – even if it's only 20 minutes a year!

Please join us on Monday 11th October, 7pm in the school hall, to learn more. Refreshments will be available.

Committee roles:

- **Chair** - The Chair provides leadership for the committee, is the main liaison with the Headteacher and the final decision maker.
- **Secretary** - Responsible for ensuring effective communication links between the PTA and the school and project management around all meetings.
- **Treasurer** - Management and control of PTA funds, including banking, bills, receipts and maintaining up-to-date financial records.
- **Events Secretary** - Administration of PTA events. Includes preparation of communications and general event admin such as collecting monies and collating attendance lists.
- **Events Officers** - Project management of PTA events. Includes general event planning, supplier liaison and coordination of volunteers both pre-event and onsite.

Non-committee roles:

- **PTFA Member** – Contributing ideas and/or time as you have available. May also include attending events and/or helping behind the scenes with general admin / tasks.
- **Volunteers** – Ad hoc assistance at events.

RWI Evening for YR parents (and any parents in Y1 new to the school) - 11th October at 7:30pm

After the AGM we will be holding our annual Read Write Inc. evening to explain how the RWI scheme supports children in learning to read, write and spell and how parents and carers can help their child at home.

We have had very positive feedback in the past about how useful this evening is in supporting parents / carers. We will write to you again next week to give more details but please reserve the date in your diary now!

Attendance

It is so important that we maintain high attendance rates for our children. All educational research indicates that there is a strong correlation between high attendance rates and high achievement. We have been concerned in the last few weeks by children arriving late to school which gives the children a very unsettled start to the day which does have a negative impact on their learning. We have also been concerned by a rising number of absences with children being taken out for short absence day trips. Whereas we understand the reason why parents would want to do this, given the recent experience of living through Covid, we are concerned however because children have lost a lot of time in school and so the loss of further learning time now is even more of a concern. Please support us by maximising your child's attendance in school - thank you.

Governor vacancy

With the newsletter last week we sent out a nomination form as we are seeking a new parent governor. This is a great opportunity to make a contribution to the school and we are very much looking forward to welcoming new member to our board of trustees.

Nomination forms should be returned to us by **Friday 8th October, 2021**. Thank you.

A chance for Staff to say goodbye to Mrs Sherry

Today, the staff gave Fran Sherry - our Saplings Leader a great send off as she begins her retirement. As we have said before, Mrs Sherry has worked so hard for the school in her 28 years working at The Firs and recently, she has done a fantastic job helping to shape and develop our pre school provision in the Saplings.



A big thank you to Angie Dvorkin (Saplings Deputy Leader) for making all the arrangements and ensuring that Mrs Sherry had a lovely parting event.

We are very pleased that Mrs Sherry will be coming back to join an assembly soon, so that the children can say goodbye to her as well.

And Finally...

I hope everyone has a good weekend and we look forward to seeing all our children next week.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Adam J G Campbell", on a light blue background.

Adam J G Campbell
Headteacher