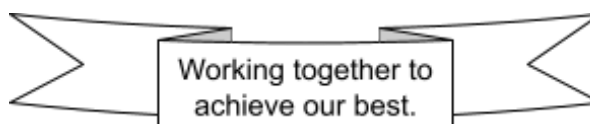




Newsletter

Issue No 3
Date 28th January, 2022
www.firslower.co.uk



Chair of Governors: John Ashley

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

Dear parents/carers,

Y4 St Albans Trip

The children had a great time on their trip to St Alban's Cathedral last week. On the day the children learned about the life of St Alban and participated in some drama activities to tell his story. They met a Roman Legionary in full armour, who told them about life in the Roman Army. They also learned about Roman Mosaics and got to make one of their own. It was, of course, sad that a number of the Y4 children were unwell and couldn't join us and we would like to say a particular thank you, both to all the parents / carers, who joined us for the trip and to all our parents for your support at a challenging time. It was a fantastic day and we would like to say thank you to Mrs Rogers and the Y4 team for organising it.



The Firs' BALL - Reminder

The Firs PTA ball happens every two years but due to COVID-19, we haven't been able to get our dancing shoes on since 2018. So, this year on **April 23**, it's back and there will be a chance to eat, meet friends and dance the night away. Tickets will be on sale at the end of this month but to make this fantastic event raise as much money for our children as possible we need your help.

We have previously raised funds to buy all the Chromebooks that the children use in lessons and this time we are looking to top previous efforts and fundraise for not just one, but three great initiatives to provide even more learning support for our children.

We want our children to make the most of the facilities and unique setting we have here at The Firs. We've set a £15,000 fundraising



The Ball in 2018!

target so they can enjoy more nature, more sport and more reading by doubling our Forest School provision, bringing in new specialist sports coaching and recruiting a brand-new lunchtime librarian. We are aiming to fund each of these for at least two years so that as many children get the benefit.

Through this extra-curricular support, we want to help our children be curious and caring about the world around them and enjoy the amazing setting we are lucky enough to have here at The Firs.

To be able to achieve all of this we are looking for sponsors and auction prizes from local companies. Big or small, it all counts! In previous years, we've had support from many local and national companies, including money can't buy experiences, which have all really helped us – we'd love to know if you or your employer could support us and help us hit our target.

We know that you're all really busy, but your support will make all the difference in helping us achieve our fundraising target – our ask is if you could spare 5 minutes having a think about how you might be able to support this. Please email us on firslowerpta@gmail.com or grab one of us at the gate. We're friendly, we promise!

Let's make The Firs' ball a night to remember for us and give our kids new experience and learning support for many years – thank you!

What Are We Learning Sheets

With this newsletter, you will find the What Are We Learning Sheet for the spring term. This will hopefully give you an overview of the learning going on in school and some ways that you might support learning at home. These are a little delayed in coming out to you due to the focus on steering the school through the Covid challenges recently, for which we apologise.

Interim Reports

The teachers in **Y1-Y4** will be sending out the interim reports in the next few days via email. (YR operate their 'Focus Child' reporting system over the course of the year and so do not complete an interim report).

These reports were written in January, reflecting back on the children's progress over the course of the autumn term.

The reports focus on giving you an update on children's attainment and progress in reading, writing and maths. They also give an indication of whether children are '**on track**' or not to meet the standards set for the end of each year group.

We are aware that absences and disruption to learning due to Covid has occurred since writing these reports and this will have further impacted on children's progress. We will, as ever, all persist in supporting children, whatever the circumstances and challenges and feel that these reports are still very valuable in the information they contain.

Where children are '**not on track**' or are only 'on track' if they receive additional support, there is another box, at the bottom of the sheet, that gives you some ideas of what you could do at home to support your child's learning further. We hope these notes are helpful to you as any help you can give at home can make a huge difference over time to children's progress.

We are hoping that these reports are useful in giving you an update on your child's learning since the last parent teacher consultations in October. There will be another opportunity to discuss your child's learning with their teacher in the week beginning the **14th March** (more details to follow) but if you have any questions regarding these interim reports then please contact your child's class teacher.

Pine Plea

Please see attached letter from the Pine Team, asking for your help with some items they need in Pine - thank you for your support.

Playing on the Pirate Ship at the end of the school day

Please do not let your child play on the pirate ship at the end of the day. When you collect your child, please walk straight out of the gate using the one way system. The gate will only be open long enough for you to collect your child and leave the school premises. Please support us with this, thank you.

Covid Update

We have been experiencing high rates of pupil and staff absence in school again this week.

All schools in Central Bedfordshire have been informed this week, by the Local Public Health Team that 'rates of infection among children and young people are very high and rising in Central Bedfordshire'. This has obviously been demonstrated by our own experience.

Due to the ongoing infection rates in school, we will be continuing with all the additional measures next week, such as children playing in class groups at playtime and lunchtime and we will review the measures we have in place on a weekly basis.

I wanted to take this opportunity to wish all the children who are currently away from school a speedy recovery. We all miss you and hope that you are well and back in school again soon.

I wanted to say thank you to all the staff for their fantastic efforts during the course of the last two weeks. It has been difficult at times, with so many staff away and we have been supported magnificently by members of staff stepping in to do additional work, sometimes in different areas of the school to where they are normally. It has been a great team effort that has kept the school going for our children here at The Firs.

Both Mrs Mercer, the Deputy Head, and I have been self isolating this week and I would like to say a particular thank you to Mrs Brady, Mrs A'Court and Mrs Jukes, the other three members of the Senior Leadership Team, who have done a brilliant job, coordinating everything in our absence. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Adam J G Campbell