

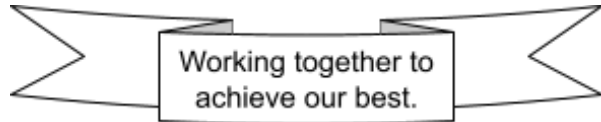


Newsletter

Issue No 1

Date:-12th September, 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,

Welcome back

I would like to welcome everyone back to school and hope you all had a great summer break. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome all the new pupils who started with us this week throughout the school. It was lovely to see you all and look forward to everyone working together as we go into the new academic year. Thank you to all the many children who have helped new children to settle into their new class. It has been lovely to see children on the playground living our 'Care' value by looking after new children and ensuring they are included in their play.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

With this newsletter is a separate attached letter, addressing our response to the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Bank Holiday Closure

As detailed in the attached letter The Firs Lower School and The Saplings Pre-school will be closed for the bank holiday on Monday 19th September.

If your child / children were due to attend a fee paying session at The Saplings your next invoice will be amended with a credit to reflect this missed session.

If your child / children were due to attend Kids' Club before or after school and you have paid in advance you will receive a credit for this session on your Parentpay account.

Open Evening for Starting School in September 2023

We will be holding an open evening on Tuesday 8th November at 7.00pm for parents of children who are due to start school in September 2023. This will be a great opportunity to meet our staff and find out more about what our school has to offer the children who attend The Firs.

An information leaflet about our school is attached which gives you an insight into the fantastic learning opportunities our children have.

If you would like to come along to our open evening, please email sue.acourt@firslower.org or telephone the school office on 01525 492735.

Reading at The Firs

At the Firs we are passionate about ensuring that children rapidly develop the knowledge and skills they need to become successful and confident readers.

RWI

It was this commitment to improving our provision for the teaching of reading that led us to become a Read Write Inc school, as this programme is a tried and tested approach to teaching early literacy skills that is used in schools across the country. ([The History of RWI](#)).



Our RWI consultant visits The Firs each term, to ensure we are maintaining high standards and to help us continue to develop and improve. Our RWI leader Kerry Mercer has been working on some enhancements to the way reading at home will be organised and these are set out in a letter for the parents/carers of

children on RWI that was emailed with this newsletter. It can also be found in the [letters home](#) section of our website.

Accelerated Reader

To build on the solid foundations that RWI delivers for us, we are very excited to be introducing Accelerated Reader in KS2 this term for children who have completed the RWI programme. AR is a computer program that helps teachers manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. With this letter is a Parent Guide which gives an overview of the programme. It can also be found in the [letters home](#) page of our website. ([Click here](#) for general information on AR.)



Starting School September 2023

Parents can now make a Starting School 2023 application online via the Central Bedfordshire website at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions or via a paper application (available on their website). Please note that your application must be made by 15th January 2023.

Leave of Absence

All educational research shows that there is a strong correlation between good attendance and good progress and so the government has made achieving good attendance a high priority for all schools.

If you need leave of absence during term time, please be aware that we are therefore unable to authorise any holidays unless deemed to be in 'exceptional circumstances'. Any holidays which amount to 5 days (10 sessions) or more will trigger a fixed penalty notice, as set out in our attendance policy, which is available to view on our [website](#).

Illness or medical appointments

If your child will not be attending school due to illness, please leave a message on our phone or email the school office - office@firslower.org by 9.05am. This is very important as we have to account for every child and know that they are safe.

If your child has a medical appointment, please email the letter to the school or bring it to the school office where we can photocopy it. For non-urgent doctor or dentist appointments, these should be made after school.

'What are we learning?' sheets and 'Welcome' letters.

The 'what are we learning?' sheets for Years 1 - 4 will be emailed out to you today. We want to make sure that you are aware of what children are learning each term and that you have some ideas about how you can help with learning at home. We hope they are a useful starting point for discussions at home with your child about their learning.

The Year Group 'Welcome' letters we emailed to parents recently and the 'What Are We Learning' sheets are also available on both the [letters home](#) section of our website and on the year group pages, under the ['Our Learning'](#) tab.

School Service Road

In the interests of everyone's safety, only those that have been issued with a permit should use the school service road. Permits can be issued to Saplings and Kids' Club parents/carers upon request.

Please be aware that these permits allow you to park in the marked bays for 10 minutes whilst you pick up / drop off your child at The Saplings / Kids' Club. Please only park in the marked bays to avoid obstruction to school buses and other road users.

To allow a greater availability of parking for users, please do not exceed the 10 minute time limit. If you feel that you have a need to be issued with a permit for another reason, please come and talk to us at the school office.

Relief Midday Supervisors Required

Please contact Sue A'Court on 01525 492735 or email sue.acourt@firslower.org if you have any spare time during lunchtime.

This would be to cover lunchtime staff absences as required in KS1 or KS2. KS1 hours are 12.00-1.20pm and KS2 is 12.15 - 1.20pm.

Babybel Cheese

If your child is bringing a Babybel cheese for their packed lunch or snack, can you please take it out of the red wax and wrap the cheese in cling film or put in a snack pot.

When the red wax falls onto the floor it makes it really difficult to clear up as the wax gets ground in.

Thank you for your support with this.

Yours sincerely,



Adam J G Campbell