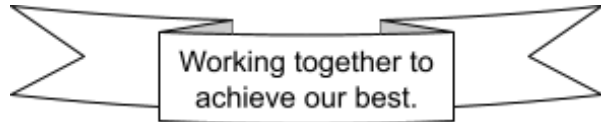




## Newsletter

Issue No 3  
Date:-3rd October, 2022  
[www.firslower.co.uk](http://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,

### **RWI Evening tonight at 7pm**

If you would like to come to our RWI evening, please let the school office know either by phone call or email. This is for our new Pine parents and any new parents who have children in Year 1 or 2. We hope you can make it and look forward to seeing you tonight.

### **MacMillan Coffee Morning**

Just a reminder that we will be joining the world's biggest coffee morning on Friday 7th October in aid of the MacMillan nurses charity who do amazing work to support families through the most difficult times.

The school hall will be open to parents, grandparents and members of our local community from 9:00am until 11:00am - you can pop in briefly or stay for longer.

Come and join us for a chat, a warm drink and a delicious slice of cake and make a donation to a very worthy cause.

Of course, we will need lots of cakes to offer our guests that morning, so we are asking everyone to get baking! If you can and send in any of your wonderful creations on Thursday 6th or Friday 7th please. Could we ask that you don't use any nuts and that you let us know what kind of cake it is and the ingredients to avoid any difficulties with allergies - thanks. If you are not able to bake then a shop bought donation would be just as appreciated!

Bring your family, meet with friends and hopefully, we will see you there!

**WORLD'S BIGGEST  
COFFEE  
MORNING**  
**MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT**



### **Photographer in school - Tuesday 11th October**

The photographer will be in school on Tuesday 11th October to take individual pupil photographs. If your child has a sibling who is in school, they will also be photographed together, unless we hear otherwise. Children who attend our Saplings Pre-school will also have their photograph taken. Any Saplings child who does not normally attend on a Tuesday can come into school via the main entrance at 9.30am to be photographed and if they have siblings attending The Firs, they will also be photographed with them.

### **PTFA AGM - Wednesday 5th October -7 pm**

We would like to remind you that on Wednesday 5th, the PTFA will be holding their AGM. This will be a very informal occasion and the PTFA are hoping that lots of our parents will come along and join them for a glass of wine! It will be a great way to learn more about the PTFA and find out how you can get involved. I know they are hoping that lots of our new parents / carers in Pine and across the school will come along, as getting involved with the PTFA is a great way of meeting other parents and getting to feel part of our friendly community!

### **New Parent Governor needed**

Please remember that nomination papers should be returned to the school in an envelope marked "Nomination Paper - for the attention of the Headteacher" by **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2022.**

All the information relating to this was in Newsletter 2 but if you would prefer to collect nomination forms, please pop into the office.

## School Council Elections Y1-Y4

Teachers have talked to children Y1-Y4 inviting them to put themselves forward to be a school council representative for their class.

There will be a boy and girl representative from each class Y1-Y4.

We want to use the process of selecting representatives for the Council to show children the way a democratic process works, (democracy is one of our 22 values). Children will be given an opportunity to use their completed nomination form or the notes they have made, to talk to the class briefly about why they should vote for them.



On Wednesday 5th it will be **Election Day** at The Firs! We will be setting up the hall as a polling station and we will be asking some children from Y4 to take turns to act as Presiding Officer and Poll Clerk in the hall on the day, as each class comes in to cast their votes!

## PTFA 'Learn to Braid' Evening -Thursday 13th October

There are a few places left for the PTFA 'Learn to Braid' evening on Thursday 13th October starting at 7.45 - 10.00pm. Please find attached information about this evening and if you have questions relating to this please let us know.

## FFF

Football for Fathers is a community based club for football-loving dads (and mums) across Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. Set up by seven friends in Hitchin in 2017, it now has over 500 players enjoying regular weekly sessions of fun, competitive "no fuss" football. It is starting a new session in Ampthill on Wednesday evenings, 9-10pm, at Redbourne School.

Games are competitive and of a decent standard - but inclusivity, wellbeing and enjoyment are key. Members regularly report feeling fitter, less stressed, sleeping better, losing weight, making new groups of friends, settling into a new area quicker, and improving their social lives.

For further information and to reserve your space at the new Ampthill session starting on 2nd November, visit the Football for Fathers website: [www.footballforfathers.co.uk](http://www.footballforfathers.co.uk)

## Fantastic FREE opportunity available to our pupils!

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October, Inspiring Music (CBC) will be holding an Open Morning at Redborne Upper School where pupils can come along and try out our sessions at no cost.

The following sessions would probably be of particular interest to pupils at The Firs school, but adults and older siblings are also welcome to register and there are other groups available:

- Musical Starters - for reception age children
- Musical Explorers - for year 1 upwards (beginners)
- Recorder Stars (beginners)
- Ukulele Magic (beginners)
- Musical Theatre (open to all)
- Inspiring Singers (open to all)

More information about all the sessions on offer and the opportunity to register can be found here or by going to the Event Brite website and searching for Ampthill Music Centre:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/music-centre-open-morning-ampthill-music-centre-registration-421210751697>

### **Guitar, Viola and Violin Lessons in School**

We have a few spaces left if you are interested in your child learning any of the above instruments. Please let the school office know where we will be happy to help you with this.

### **1:1 Teaching Assistant Vacancy at The Firs**

We currently have a vacancy for a 1:1 teaching assistant to support a child in our Reception class who has special needs. The hours would be Monday 12.00 - 3.30pm and Tuesday - Friday 1.30pm - 3.30pm. All the information relating to this post can be found on our website - [www.firslower.co.uk](http://www.firslower.co.uk) under 'school information' then 'vacancies'.

### **Autumn Clean Up in Ampthill Great Park**

Please find attached a flyer regarding a Community Litter Pick on 8th October 2022 in Ampthill Great Park. Equipment is available from outside Ampthill Town Council offices if you would like to participate.

### **Harvest Assembly**

We are delighted that Dominic Holroyd-Thomas, the Reverend from St Andrews Church will be leading our Harvest assembly on Wednesday 12th October. The Harvest assembly is for pupils only as our hall is not big enough to extend this to our parents.

We are asking for Harvest produce such as dried foods and tinned products to be brought into school on the morning of the 12<sup>th</sup>. These will then be displayed before assembly begins at 10.05am.

All produce brought into school will be collected by the Bedford Food Bank who run the largest network of foodbanks in the UK, giving emergency food and support to people in crisis.



Many thanks for your support.

### **Parent Forum**

We held our first meeting of the Parent Forum on Wednesday 28th September. It was lovely to see so many of our parents at the event we focussed on the questions from the recent parent questionnaire that we held last term and invited the parents to give their views on these important aspects of our provision.

We have summarised below some of the comments made and feedback we have received:-

- **The school makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year**

Parents indicated that they found the 'what are we learning sheets' very valuable. One parent added that it's great that they get them from such a young age as young children don't tend to want to talk about what they have done during the day! One parent asked whether they could be available on Google Classroom.

- **When I have raised concerns they were dealt with properly**

Parents commented that when they had raised any questions or concerns they had been dealt with promptly and the matter attended to well. Many parents also commented that it was very useful to have the teacher's email address and some new parents commented that this was not the case in their previous school. One parent said that it was very useful to have email addresses for the teachers especially if children attend Kids' Club.

- **The school makes sure its pupils are well behaved**

Praise cards and merits were discussed and there was a general feeling that these 2 systems were very useful in encouraging children to develop positive attitudes to both their behaviour and their learning. Parents also valued the use of class dojos and whether a more standardised approach the school would be worth considering. We had a very useful and positive discussion about the increased challenges the school was facing since Covid in terms of pupil behaviour and the way that the school is responding.

- **The School has high expectations for my child**

One new parent said that they felt that the balance between the expectation to strive for success against the need to ensure that children were happy was struck very well at this school. We talked about the fact that our approach here at The Firs was to strive to ensure that every child achieved their best but that we approached this by encouraging and inspiring children by offering them interesting and stimulating teaching.

- **My child does well at this school**

It was felt that children were happy coming into school. We commented on the fact that we have had several new children this year who we have incorporated very well. Our new parents said that their children have been so happy since starting at The Firs and any issues they have had have been dealt with promptly.

#### **Can you Help?**

If you have a van and would be willing to help us with the collection of some furniture from outside the area, please contact Katherine Jukes by email - [katherine.jukes@firslower.org](mailto:katherine.jukes@firslower.org) or telephone the school office on 01525 402735. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Adam J G Campbell