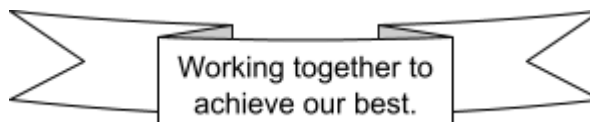




Newsletter

Issue No 16
Date:-27th February, 2023
www.firslower.co.uk



Chair of Governors: John Ashley

Governors: Annette Anderson, Franco Cameli, Adam Campbell, Kerry Mercer, Stuart Hobbs, Grant Chaney and Claudia Wallis.

Dear parents/carers,

Improving Attendance

At The Firs, we believe that good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. A vast amount of educational research proves conclusively that children with low attendance, tend to achieve less throughout their education.

For that reason, we are striving to improve attendance but of course, we need the help of all parents / carers to do this.

With this newsletter is an important letter giving more information about our approach to improving attendance and the launch of our new half termly Class Attendance Trophy Competition.

To see more information and the current standings visit our [Class Attendance Trophy competition page](#) on our website.

Parents Evening, Online Booking: <https://firslower.schoolcloud.co.uk/>

We would like to invite all parents/carers to attend a 10 minute 'Face to Face' Parents' Evening meeting with your child's teacher on Tuesday 14th March or Thursday 16th March 2023.

Appointments can be made from today, 27th February and will close midday on Monday 13th March.

Should you wish to make any changes after this date please contact the school office. office@firslower.org

Please visit <https://firslower.schoolcloud.co.uk/> to book your appointment, where you will be asked for your name, email, your child's name and their date of birth.

Y4 Rugby Festival (Message from Miss Webb)

I had the pleasure of taking 10 of our Year 4's to Wootton Upper School for a tag rugby tournament. All of the children played absolutely brilliantly, showing great sportsmanship, through shaking the hands of their opponents after every match. The children were fantastic at cheering on each other too. Year 4 even won an award for self belief! Thank you to the children who took part- you were amazing!



School Council

The School Council met last week to discuss lunchtimes, including the food on offer and children's playtime experiences.

We were joined by Mrs A'Court, who is the Lunchtime Senior Supervisor and we had a very useful discussion which has given us a lot of information to go on as we work with Caterlink and our Kitchen Manager Hannah Howlett

If you want to know more about what we discussed, the minutes from this and all the previous meetings are available on our [School Council](#) website page.

Parent Forum - 2nd Reminder

We would like to remind you that the next Parent Forum event will take place in The Hollows on Tuesday 28th February.

The meeting will take place just after drop off (from just after 9:00 am) and as usual, there will be a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits as well of course!

The Forum meetings are a really important opportunity to share your views about the school, what is working well and what we could improve. Please make a date in your diary, so you can pop along and make your voice heard!

Book Fair at The Firs

Don't forget the final BF session:

- Tuesday 28th February

As we mentioned in our email to you last week:

We will be 'cashless' for our Book Fairs from now on! (You will need your card details with you)

We hope these notes will be helpful in ensuring book fairs go smoothly:

- Above each book shelf, you will see a 'Travelling Books' QR Code and web address.
www.travellingbooks.co.uk/pay
- You can pay for the books by either scanning the QR code or visiting the web address above.
- You then need to enter the school name or postcode (MK452QR)
- Then click 'I am at the book fair and would like to pay'.
- A short form will then pop up and you will need to fill in the following details:
 - Your email address
 - Your phone number (in case there is a problem with your order)
 - Payment total (£ sign not needed)
 - Your name and address
- Tick to agree to the terms and conditions and click confirm
- It will then display an invoicing screen - **please then show this to one of our staff so we can visually confirm this is related accurately to the books you are taking.**

World Book Day and Book At Bedtime - 2//3/23

As we said in our last newsletter, we are inviting children to dress up as their favourite book character on World Book Day, which is on **Thursday 2nd March**.

As usual we would love it if the children could bring in a copy of the book, their character comes from to support their work in school on the day.

I am sure the children will thoroughly enjoy the day and when they come home they will all be issued with a World Book Day book voucher.

We will also be working with the PTFA to hold our ever popular **Book At Bedtime** event again on the evening of the 2nd March at 5.15pm.



This is always a really popular event with children loving the chance to come back into school for a bedtime story from one of the school staff.

There will be a letter giving more information about 'Book at Bedtime' with this newsletter. Thank you in advance to the PTFA and to all the staff giving up their time to make this possible. We hope to see lots of children come back to school for this event at 5.15pm.

Accelerated Reader Trophy Competitions.

We want to encourage children to read frequently (15 minutes in school and 15 minutes at home a day) and so all the classes participate in one of our two AR Trophy competitions.

The Trophies will be awarded half-termly, to the class with the most number of words read! The first trophy will be awarded at the end of this term.

To make it as fair as possible, we will divide the total word count by the number of children on AR in the class, to find the average number of words read for that class.

For more information on the current standings in KS2, visit the [AR Trophies page](#) on our website. (Y2 information will be available soon!)

Lunchtime Clubs

We have received a lot of feedback from parents and children on the School Council, that the return of the lunchtime clubs run by staff would be very much appreciated.

I am pleased to announce that we will be launching some lunchtime clubs starting at the end of this term and running through the 1st half of next term.

The following clubs will be on offer:

- Chess
- Board / card games
- Sewing
- Science

With this newsletter is a letter / Google Form, giving some more information / to express an interest in joining. Places are limited for each club and will be awarded by random selection following the deadline (see below). Each club will operate a waiting list if oversubscribed. If your child(ren) are interested, please send back the reply slip by **Monday 6th March**.

Children entitled to free school meals will soon be able to book clubs during school holidays

Central Bedfordshire are partnering with e-vouchers (part of Wonde) to provide a holiday activities and food programme (HAF). The HAF programme provides fun, free activities for children and young people aged five and upwards during the Easter, summer and Christmas school holidays.

There's always a range of activities on offer, including sports and games sessions, craft and creative activities and fun days out. Healthy snacks and lunch are also provided to all children and young people attending face-to-face activities.

The sessions are inclusive, so are suitable for all children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND). The process for booking places for the HAF programme for Easter 2023 is now in place. On 6th March 2023 vouchers will be assigned to parents / carers of children eligible for free school meals, these vouchers can be used to book on to activities online.

You will need to look out for an email or text message from HolidayActivities.com. There is more information about how to book in the step by step Holiday Activity Parent Guide available for download on the [Letters Home page](#) on our website. There will be a separate voucher issued for each child with a unique code that

will need to be used to book activities. We already work with e-vouchers to distribute supermarket vouchers to eligible families during the school holidays. If you receive these, you will receive your HAF vouchers to the email address or phone number you normally receive free school meal vouchers to.

You should receive your vouchers for the Easter holidays on 6th March 2023, and you will be able to book onto activities from then onwards. If you don't receive your vouchers, or have any further questions or need further support, you can contact support@evouchers.com

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam J G Campbell", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Adam J G Campbell