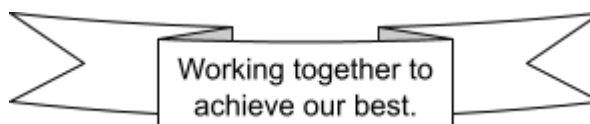




## Newsletter

Issue No 13  
Date:- 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2024  
[www.firslower.co.uk](http://www.firslower.co.uk)

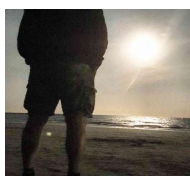


**Chair of Governors:** John Ashley

**Governors:** Annette Anderson, Franco Cameli, Adam Campbell, Kerry Mercer, Stuart Hobbs, Grant Chaney, Amaritpal Uppal and Sarah Walker.

Dear parents/carers,

### Mr Lees' Marathon Hike



Well done Mr Lees, for completing your Marathon Hike, Ampthill to St Albans in 8 hours and raising an impressive £4000 for Prostate Cancer UK.

<https://runthemothme.prostatecanceruk.org/fundraising/martins-going-the-extra-mile-challenge>

### CHILDCARE SUPPORT IS EXPANDING - APPLY NOW FOR APRIL

Government help with childcare costs for parents. Whether you have toddlers or teens, you could get support!

Sign up for more details about the upcoming expansion from April 2024, as well as how and when to register for support with childcare costs.

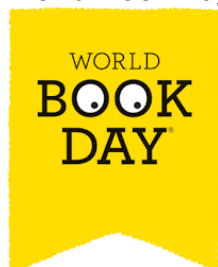
With significant changes coming to 15 and 30 hours childcare support in England, please follow the link below to check your eligibility, for pre-school and Wraparound care. [Childcare Choices Link](#)



**HELP PAYING FOR  
YOUR CHILDCARE**



### World Book Day 2024, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March



We thought parents would welcome some advanced warning that we will be inviting children to dress up as their favourite book character on World Book Day, which is on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March, after half term.

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. We will let you know more about the event nearer the time but we thought we would mention it now, so that you can start thinking about your costume choices!

### Can you help The Firs Lower PTFA?

The Firs Family plays a huge part in making our PTFA successful; once more we are looking for volunteers to help with the biggest fundraiser of the school year!

Whether it's your time, business contacts or expertise that you can offer, we would love to hear from you.

Just drop us a line at [firslowerpta@gmail.com](mailto:firslowerpta@gmail.com) and let us know how you can help.



## KS2 Sportshall Athletics Competition

Mr Rushby had the pleasure of taking 24 children across years 3 and 4 to a Sports Hall Athletics event at Alameda Middle School on Thursday.

The children were enthusiastic, competitive, and focused on all the activities. They all demonstrated excellent team working skills, supporting and motivating each other throughout. Mr Rushby and Mrs Casey were also impressed by how the children represented the school and showed The Firs values, especially sportsmanship towards the other schools.

A huge well done to the children who competed in the event and also a big thank you to Mrs Casey for coming along and cheering us on.



## Children's Mental Health Week. 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024

We're proud to be taking part in @Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week (5-11 February 2024).

*'This year's theme is My Voice Matters.'*



Throughout the week we will be raising awareness of the importance of children and young people's mental health. We have planned different activities that will empower children and young people, and provide them with time, space, and opportunities to express themselves.

Each class will be taking part in a check-in challenge where they will be sharing their ideas and thoughts within the themes of 'Proud to be me', 'Being thankful', 'Being a listener', 'Celebrating me' and 'Working together to make things better'.

Learn more about supporting children's mental health at

[www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk](http://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk)

(Please note we will not be taking part in the fundraising elements of this children's mental health week event)

As part of the week we will be gathering the voice of all members of the school community through a school questionnaire on wellbeing and mental health.

We are interested in your perspective of mental health and wellbeing in school. Please follow the link below to share your views with us.

Parents/Caregivers questionnaire

<https://app.myedupod.com/survey/d5f4da55-f920-414b-a2a0-51350d7bc9bf/care-givers>



Central Bedfordshire also have developed resources to support children's mental health as part of their Local SEND offer.

[Central Beds Local Offer Resources link](#)

## Central Bedfordshire - Wraparound Childcare Programme Have your say and find out more!

As you may be aware, Central Government announced in the Spring budget last year that they were investing £289m in a National



Wraparound Childcare Programme to achieve their ambition of supporting all families who need it to access wraparound childcare. The programme will focus on supporting primary school-aged children, from reception to year 6, Monday to Friday during term time.

Central Bedfordshire Council are part of a co-design group, consisting of 17 local authorities and are working with the Department for Education to support them with the roll out of the programme.

They would be extremely grateful if you could spare a few minutes and take the time to complete the school survey below. It should only take 5 minutes and will help the development of wraparound childcare for the children and families in our area.

: <https://centralbedfordshire.welcomesyourfeedback.net/wraparound-parents>

### PTFA 'Wear What You Love' Disco, Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February

Our PTFA have been busy organising their next event for the children, and are now ready to take bookings for their 'Wear What You Love' Disco on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February.

KS1 3:30-4:15pm    KS2 4:30-5:15pm

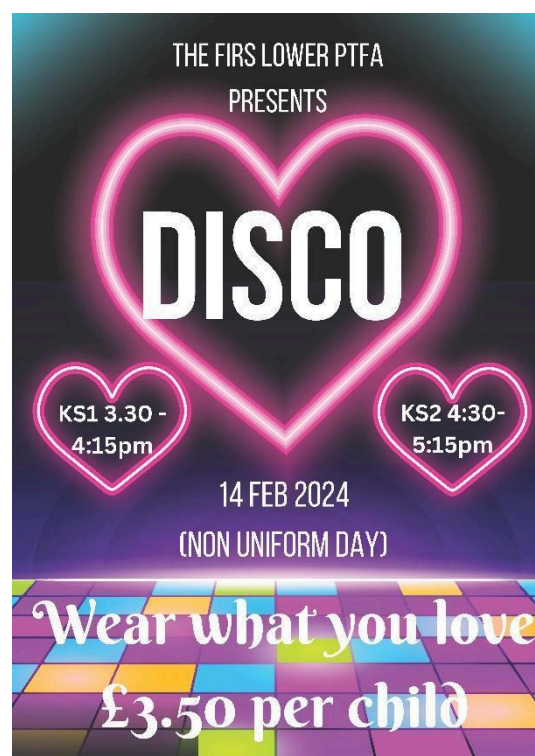
This will be a non-uniform day, with children wearing a favourite outfit, accessory or pair of shoes! Please bear in mind the practical element for a day at school :)

They will have a raffle and disco, as well as fun activities and a little something to take home. Tickets are £3.50 per child, and all bookings **MUST** be through the link below, by the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

<https://forms.gle/TGaTnK8dT1gfRg4q7>

*Polite note from the PTFA:*

*"We take safeguarding and allergy requirements very seriously, so please ensure your child is booked on and form filled out in plenty of time **\*before 7th Feb 2024\*** Thanks for your understanding!"*



### Lunchtime Clubs, Final Call



If you haven't already done so, please make your selection for lunchtime clubs, using the google form link -

<https://forms.gle/1k24dPWCDMXNMs499>

Requests to be made by Monday morning, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

We will start looking at all the applications over the next few weeks and let you know if your child has got a place or is on the waiting list for a club.

### Parking on the Double Yellow Lines outside School

It has been highlighted to us by a parent that there are a number of parents who park on the double yellow lines outside the school.

The parent, with her children, was crossing station road outside school (in what should have been a safe place this morning) when a car started reversing. The parent who reported this said that the driver of the vehicle had complete disregard for other children trying to safely cross at this time. Please support us in helping to keep our children safe.



We have sent out a letter today regarding improving safety on our service road. Please read this letter carefully and help us in ensuring that everyone stays safe at the beginning and end of the day. Thank you.

### NSPCC Maths Number Day 2024

The children all looked fantastic in their number related clothing and accessories; they were definitely 'Dressed Up For Digits' so thank you for your help with that. After a super singing assembly including songs containing numbers (thank you Mrs Wadsworth), they all embarked on their exciting activities across the school.

Activities included:

In Saplings - a number caterpillar, finding numbers in jelly, practising writing numbers and hook-a duck.

In Pine - hopscotch, shopping with a till, darts, counting with giant Numicon, and playing Build a Beetle and Snakes and Ladders.

Year 1 - making amazing number hats showing how to make a number in lots of different ways, playing Snakes and Ladders and having a number bonds to 10 Numicon treasure hunt.

Year 2 - making an array city using equal groups, playing Top Trumps, making maths watches and making dominoes to play with.

Year 3 - 'Buddy's Key Challenge', maths puzzle sheets, code breakers and Sudokus, decorating biscuits with numbers and Supermovers PE based maths.

Year 4 - 'Buddy's Key Challenge', navigating a digital mathematical maze with puzzles to solve, making maths wristbands, dice games and a fun maths quiz.

The Key Stage 2 children also entered the TTRockstars NSPCC challenge, open for 12 hours, that collects all their correct answers to the multiplication tables and allows them to compete against other schools.

It was definitely a day of: 'It's maths, but not as we know it!'

A fun day was had by all - a big thank you to all the staff for organising all the special activities.

Equally importantly, thank you to all of you for your donations for such a good cause - we have now exceeded £250 and there is still time to donate if you have not had the chance already.



Yours sincerely,

*Alan 14 Caplan*

