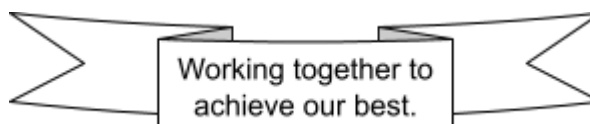




Newsletter

Issue No 14
Date:- 12th February, 2024
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,

2023 Phonics Test Puts Firs in top 2% of Primary Schools!

I am delighted to say that the school has received a letter from Damian Hinds MP, Minister For Schools, to congratulate The Firs on our 2023 Y1 phonics test results.

He said that at 98% meeting the expected standard, it placed us in the top 2% of primary schools in the country.

He went on to say 'Your particular success in teaching phonics and early reading so effectively means your pupils are developing a firm foundation, from which they can become increasingly fluent and develop a lifelong love of reading'.

I want to say a huge well done to all our Y2 children (who took the test last year), a thank you to all our parents for your support for your child's reading and of course, a huge thank you to Mrs Mercer for her passion for reading and all her work, leading the RWI programme and an equal thank you for all the hard work and dedication shown by all our teachers, teaching assistants and Saplings practitioners, who start teaching sounds, beginning our children on their successful reading journey!

A great team effort to be proud of!

(A copy of the letter is available on the [Achievement](#) page of our website.)

Helping with reading...Your School Needs You!

As shown above, we are passionate about helping our children learn to read and we realise that every moment children spend practising their reading skills is precious.

Educational research indicates that children make better progress in reading if they read daily for 30 minutes or more. In school, we provide at least 15 minutes reading time (much more in KS1, where children are developing their reading every day as part of their RWI lesson) and ask parents to encourage their child to read daily at home (and for 15 minutes in KS2).

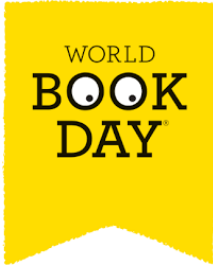


If you could read daily (or at least regularly, a few times each week) it will make all the difference to the progress they make. For help with approaching this, see the help sheet included with this newsletter, also available on our [website](#).

Before Covid, we had a lot of parents and grandparents, who came in to help hear children read during the school day. We would like to seek out your help with our effort to get this going again. If you think you could help please complete the Google Form we are sending out today. [Helping with Reading Link](#)

Mrs Mercer and I will contact all the parents who volunteer to arrange a brief induction session which we hope will help to make the sessions as successful as possible. Thank you in advance for your support!

World Book Day 2024, Thursday 7th 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 7th 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!

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 12th March or Thursday 16th March 2023. This is for all parents who have children in Years 1-4. Parents of Reception children will continue to have their Focus Child meetings, so are not required to attend the parent evenings.

Appointments can be made from Tuesday 13th February, and will close Monday 11th March, 9am.

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

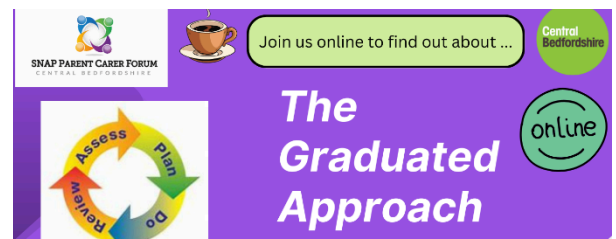
Please visit <https://firslower.schoolcloud.co.uk/> to book your appointment, where you will be asked for your name, email, your child's name and their date of birth.

Individual reminders and a link will be sent out on the 13th February 2024.

SNAP Parent Carer Forum

Central Bedfordshire Council and SNAP PCF have worked together to co-produce new training and a guide for parents/carers to better understand how parents/carers and external agencies should work together, to ensure a programme of early intervention is delivered to support children and young people in Central Bedfordshire.

Join the forum online on 14th February 2024 9:30am-10:30am to find out more. Please email admin@snappcf.org.uk, further details in the attached leaflet.



'Wear What You Love' PTFA Disco

The google booking form has now closed for the PTFA Disco, which will be held on the 14th February. Please email firslowerpta@gmail.com if you would like your child to attend but haven't booked in yet.

Thank you



Amphill Fireworks Committee



Jennie Bredenkamp, our school Business Manager attended the Utilita Amphill Fireworks committee event last Tuesday.

A significant amount was donated to our school, to contribute to support work with our families.

We would like to thank the committee for this very kind donation.

Thank you also to Jennie for going along, on behalf of the school, to collect our cheque!

New Governors wanted!

We are very lucky to have a very conscientious and hard working team of trustees on our Governing Body, who do a fantastic job, helping us to manage and develop the school.

We are looking for people who would be interested in coming forward to join this dedicated team. If you are interested, I know our governing board would love to hear from you!

Please contact the School Office in the 1st instance.

Sickness in School

We have had quite a lot of sickness in school recently and I would like to remind you that your child will be able to come back to school following the last episode of sickness, **48 hours after this occurs**. Some parents have been sending their children back after 24 hours following their child being sick. This is too early and then infections can be passed on to other children in school. Please support us with this.

Head Lice

Head Lice are doing the rounds again. Please check your child's hair and treat it if necessary. It is so important that after the treatment, you continue to check your child's hair, applying conditioner and combing it through with a nit comb. This should be a regular routine if your child has been affected by this. We have seen how uncomfortable children are when they have recurring head lice and so we would ask you to please help us to stop this spreading throughout the school and support us with this - thank you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Alan H. Carpenter". The signature is written in a cursive style and is located on a light blue background.