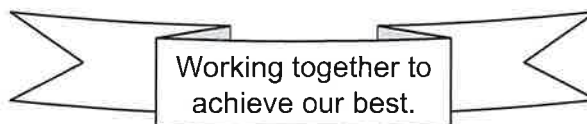




Newsletter

Issue No 4
Date:- 25th October, 2024
www.firslower.co.uk



Chair of Governors: Sarah Walker

Governors: Annette Anderson, Jade Brown, Franco Cameli, Adam Campbell, Suzy McIntosh, Kerry Mercer, Grant Chaney, Amaritpal Uppal and Claudia Wallis

Dear parents/carers,

Harvest Festival

We were very excited to welcome our special guest at this year's Harvest Festival, Andrew Goldsmith, Senior Pastor at Ampthill Baptist Church, who spoke about giving thanks to the communities that help provide food, such as our farmers, shopkeepers and fisherman.



This was followed by our Year 1 and Year 2 children sharing messages of thank you for the harvest, Year 3 children spoke about harvests around the world and Year 4 spoke about the importance of the annual harvest.

The children brought our assembly to a close singing 'Harvest Samba' and 'Thank Your Lucky Stars' to give thanks for harvest time.

Thank you to everyone for your very generous donations to our Harvest display. The Need Project have collected all the produce, helped by our Year 4 School Ambassadors, and were extremely grateful for the generosity and continued support from our Firs community.

Children in Need Day

Friday 15th November will be Children in Need day and we would like everyone, pupils, parents and staff, to wear something spotty. Anything goes from full on Pudsey dress up, spots on t-shirts, face painting to hair decorations, the spottier the better to mark the occasion!

This will be a fundraising day, with donations collected on our Just Giving account, link below. Anyone can use this link, so please share with friends and family. Gift Aid will be an option, adding an extra 25% to your donation.

JG Fundraising Link - [The Firs Lower School, Fundraising for Children In Need 2024](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/firslower)



Pre-Booked School Meals

Just a reminder from our Caterers, Caterlink, all school meals are to be booked and paid for in advance, with lunch accounts on ParentPay kept in credit for our Saplings and KS2 children. Caterlink would ideally like meals to be booked half termly to allow for accurate ordering of ingredients and minimise waste, however booking weekly or even daily is still an option.



Kids' Club and Saplings Pre-school Invoices

Kids' Club invoices for November have now been issued with payment required by 4th November to hold your booking. For Kids' Club, we do have a waiting list on a number of sessions, therefore any bookings that are left unpaid may be at risk of cancellation.



Any adhoc bookings made will be confirmed with a payment request from ParentPay and are subject to payment on receipt of notification.



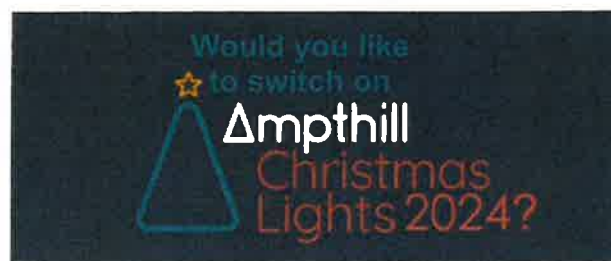
All Wraparound care and Saplings invoice payments can be made through ParentPay, childcare voucher or the [Government Tax Free Childcare Scheme](#). Thank you for your support

Amphill Christmas Lights Switch On

This week, children have brought home a letter from Amphill Town Council, inviting them to enter this year's Amphill Christmas Lights Switch on.

Entries are to be returned to The Firs by Monday 4th November, and posted in the Christmas box in the school's reception area.

A copy of this letter is attached – good luck!



Kids' Club, Safety and Security

For the safety of all our children, we request that all parents accessing the Kids' Club and Saplings Pre-school provision **please ensure that both gates are shut firmly and securely** as you enter and leave the premises. We have had a number of occasions when the gates have been left open.



We also require all parents to 'buzz' in and wait for the gate to be released before you enter. For the safety of our children and staff, and to ensure we always know who is on our premises. **Please do not hold the gates open for other parents.**

Thank you for your support in keeping our school premises safe and secure for our children.

Black History Month

During October, children across the school have been taking part in activities linked with Black History Month.

Year 4



To mark black history month year 4 began the week looking at Mary Seacole. They learned how she was influential during the Crimean war caring for wounded soldiers and how she overcame racism and terrible conditions in her determination to help others.

Year 4 were also inspired by Alma Thomas an African American artist who painted in an abstract style and introduced the style 'Alma Stripes'. The children then used her style to create their own unique abstract art work.



Year 3

In Year 3 we have researched and written about famous black people who have achieved great success in their life. We made posters about those people. We have spent time saying why we are inspired by some of these people.



Year 2

To celebrate Black History Month, Year 2 learned about the lives of Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela, and how they changed the lives of black people across the globe.

We discussed how unfair segregation was in those days, and the children were upset to learn that people weren't allowed to eat, pray or even learn together, due to the rules and regulations made by all-white governments.

We decided to try to show the children what segregation was like, and created an experiment where all children with blonde or red hair were not allowed to play for a short time during break.



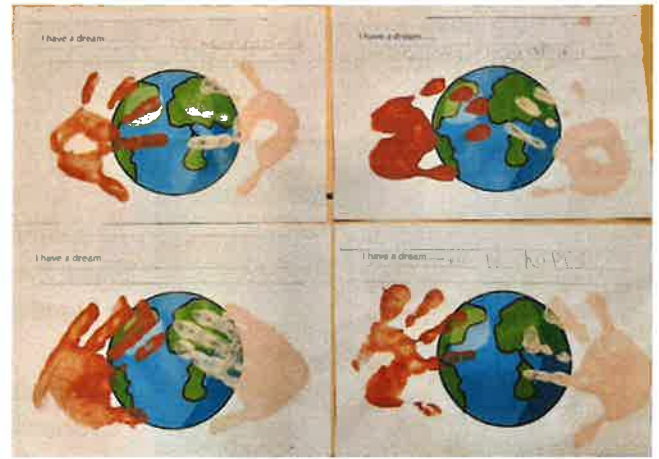
The children were understandably upset by these unfairly imposed rules, and even the children with brown or black hair were upset at not being able to be with their friends. It was a small insight into how inequality has affected many people from black and mixed-race heritages for far too long.

Year 1

During history, Y1 watched a clip from cbeebies about Martin Luther King and then discussed their dreams for the future. Then they wrote down their dreams and added their handprints.

As part of our PSHRE learning the children watched another clip from cbeebies which was called Princess K's Black History Heroes. Then as part of a circle time the children spoke about who their heroes were and why, then drew a picture of their hero.

We have also been reading a variety of books in class which celebrate diversity.



Year R

In Pine we shared the book 'My First Heroes Black History'. The book teaches the children about various heroes from a black heritage such as Rosa Parks, Stormzy and Nelson Mandela. Also the children really enjoyed watching 'Princess K's Black History Heroes' on CBeebies.



Latest SEND Update

Please use this link to browse the latest SEND update - [Issue 109, 23rd October 2024](#)

Year 3 Ancient Egyptian WOW Day

On Wednesday 23rd October Y3 were visited by 'History off The Page' who led a fantastic Egyptian Day in the school hall.



Through role-play, children experienced life as it would have been in 1330 B.C. The children used authentic tools and materials whenever possible to learn skills as apprentices in a wide variety of workshops eg. lamp workers, embalmers, stone carvers, scribes, bread makers, tomb painters, amulet makers and potters.

As the day progressed, the children got involved in the issues of the time, with the chance to participate in a range of cross-curricular





activities, including preparing entertainment for the Royal Banquet celebrations. There was also a story-telling session. By the end of the day, the children had a really good idea of how it felt to be an Egyptian at this time.

Poppies



We will be selling Poppies from the school office over the next two weeks, please pop in or send a donation in with your child.

Professional Insight Online Safety sessions running in November.

These informative sessions will offer attendees the opportunity to find out the up-to-date issues children and young people face in our world today – including grooming, cyber bullying, criminal exploitation and the sending of indecent images.

The Online Safety session will be led by Richard Denton who leads the Bedfordshire Police Education and Diversion Team. Richard has been involved working alongside children and young people for over twenty years with the last fifteen focusing on policing in schools and other educational settings. He has a wealth of knowledge around vulnerability and exploitation with a particular specialism in digital safeguarding

Keeping Children Safe in a Digital World - Wednesday 20th November 4 – 5pm [Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams](#)

Criminal Exploitation – Keeping Children Safe - Monday 25th November 4 - 5pm [Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams](#)

PTFA Christmas Craft Fair - An update from the PTFA...

It's official! The PTFA Christmas Activity Craft Fair will take place on Sat 16th November 2024 from 3-5pm in the school hall.

We have managed to put together some brilliant craft activities, as well as a cafe, grotto, raffle and some exciting surprises for the children.

BOOKING

Please use the link below to book your space by the end of 11th November, and **if you'd like a grotto slot, just email firslowerpta@gmail.com.**

Grotto spaces are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment! Due to demand, unfortunately you will not be able to book the grotto on the day.

Here's the link to book your tickets for the Christmas Craft Fair:

<https://forms.gle/FKdomrdTh1p3p4zD6>

CHRISTMAS CRACKER COMPETITION AND CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR RAFFLE

Emailed to you this week and on our website you will find a sheet of raffle tickets and a poster about the Christmas Cracker Competition!

Everyone is welcome to enter both the raffle and the Christmas Cracker Competition.

- The deadline for completed **Christmas Crackers is Monday 4th November 2024** (please give crackers to teachers). The crackers will be sold at the Christmas Activity Craft Fair and winners (one per class) will be announced in assembly after 16th November 2024.
- The raffle deadline is **Thursday 14th November** (please see attached poster for purchasing options).

Thank you for your support and happy crafting!

The Firs Lower PTFA
AKA Santa's (not so) Little Helpers

Half Term Thoughts

Well done to all our children for a very successful and hard working 1st half term. I hope you all have a great half term break and we look forward to welcoming all the children back on Monday 4th November.

Yours sincerely,

Adam J G Campbell

Headteacher