


Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that 2025 has started well for all our families. It's hard to believe that we are now half way through the school year! Our staff have been working very hard on the four major priorities we set out in September:

- 1 Improve reading outcomes from Early Years to Year 6 and embed new strategies in the teaching of phonics and other reading skills.
- 2 Promote and improve attendance strategies so that our overall school attendance reaches 95% over the year.
- 3 To further develop teaching and behaviour management strategies which promote inclusion for all
- 4 Improve the lunchtime experience for our children (dining and playtime).

Please look out for the  symbol in this newsletter for updates about these priorities.

On Friday, we have our first Trust Training Day which provides an opportunity for all staff to join together, to be trained and reflect upon these priorities as we move into the second half of the academic year. I'd like to wish everyone a restful, enjoyable half term break next week.

Best wishes, Mr Fry

Building Update

We are nearly there! The project should be complete by 14th March, but we are hopeful that we will be able to open up the Key Stage 2 playground entrance before then once the scaffolding has been removed. The exterior cladding will be installed this week and the staff toilets and visitor toilet will be installed over the half term break. This photo of Mr Baldwin and Ms Bradshaw taken a few weeks ago shows the new visitor hatch and lobby area. We are all looking forward to having a welcoming entrance area that will also improve the security of our school site. Thank you for your continued patience with the building disruption.



CELEBRATING



ATTENDANCE AT AJS SPRING TERM 1 2025

Classes with highest attendance this half term:



97.9% - USA



97% - Egypt



96.7% - Canada



Whole school target
for 2024/25 **95%**
Currently **94%**

This week, Mr Fry will be meeting with a group of children who have made big improvements with their attendance this term - hot chocolate and marshmallows all round!



Each friday in assembly, classes with 95% attendance or above are entered into the 'Attendance Wheel'. This term the lucky class have had 5 mins extra playtime the following week!



Message from

Mr Isley

Attendance
Officer



If there are issues that are affecting your ability to get your child into school, please don't suffer in silence: I'm here to help. I am available for a chat every morning near the main entrance or I can arrange a meeting/ chat on the phone at a time that is convenient to you. I am also happy for you to email me with any questions or worries:

risley@ajs.education

Wishing you a lovely half term break.

Belonging & Diversity Working Group



On 6th February, we held our second Working Group meeting at AJS and were joined by parents, community members, AJS staff and also Headteachers and staff from Sir Harry Smith College and Coates Primary. AJS staff shared the training and work that have taken place around protected characteristics and this led to a wider discussion about how we can engage the Whittlesey community to celebrate belonging and diversity. The next meeting will be on 27th March. Please let the office know if you would like to join the working group.

3

AJS Litter Power Pickers

Introducing our new team of Year 3 and 4 litter pickers! This voluntary group spend lunch and break picking up litter on our playgrounds. Thanks to the Friends of AJS, we also have some more bins on order to help keep our school litter-free.



4

AJS Local Governing Body

We currently have a vacancy for a new parent governor to join the team.

Parent governors are elected by and from the parents of children currently attending our school. They serve a four-year term of office and bring a very important and valued perspective to the work of the Local Governing Body.

Working in partnership with SOKE Education Trust, the Local Governing Body has a vital role to play in making sure every child receives the best possible education. This is achieved by ensuring that governors have the necessary skills and commitment to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school. The particular skills that governing boards need will vary and will include personal qualities and capabilities, such as the capacity and willingness to learn and work as part of a team. It is expected that governors will make use of the various training opportunities available to them and play a full part in the work of the Local Governing Body both at and between meetings.

If you are interested in becoming a governor, please contact the school office with your nomination (self-nomination is acceptable), which will need to be with the school by **3pm on Friday 28th February**. Applicants will be invited to school to meet the Chair of the Governors, Mrs Hemmaway and Mr Fry over a cup of tea to learn more about the role.

If there are more nominations than vacancies, a ballot will be held and you will be sent a voting paper. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

We will also be recruiting a Trust Governor following the resignation of Tom Claxton, who volunteered his time for a number of years as a Governor at AJS. We would like to thank Tom for all his support and dedication to the role at our school and wish him well for the future.

READING NEWS

1

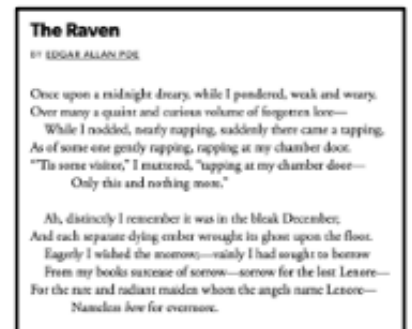
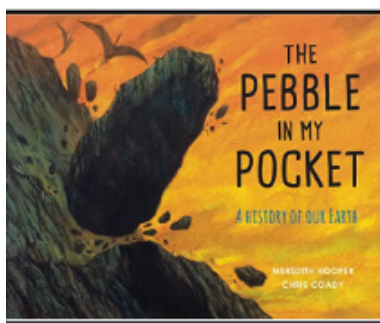


This year, we are working closely with Read Write Inc to further improve the teaching of phonics in our younger year groups. Last month, we were visited by a Read Write Inc consultant for a 'development day' to further strengthen the teaching of phonics and early reading. Every day, our reading leader, Mrs Smith-York checks in with the different phonics groups and provides support and coaching to all the staff who are teaching essential early reading skills and knowledge. As part of this work, we now also have access to 'Oxford Owl' (www.oxfordowl.co.uk) which has a huge online library of age appropriate books and a series of quizzes that children can complete after reading a book. If your child's teacher has issued log in details, please check out the website over half term.

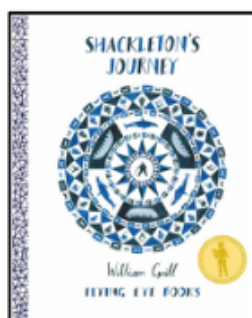


After a successful trial in Year 6 in the Autumn Term, teachers in Years 3 to 6 have started to use a new reading curriculum called CUSP Reading. It involves a whole class reading lesson every day based upon a range of engaging and exciting books. Each class has 15 copies of each book so that children can read along in pairs and become immersed in the text. Below are the texts that the children have been reading so far this term. Once the building work is complete, we will be relaunching our school library with new furniture, books and even a trial of a different uniform for Year 6 librarians! Please encourage your child to read as much as possible at home as this really helps build vocabulary and confidence.

Year 3



Year 5



Year 6

Thank you



Here are some photos of children in Ukraine receiving the gift boxes we created at AJS last term. Thank you Miss Neacy for organising this and to everyone for your help/ donations.



MATHS NEWS

On 7th February, our children took part in the NSPCC Number Day. During this day, they enjoyed a range of exciting maths activities. This year at AJS, our vision is to develop our 'noticing' in maths and enjoyment in this exciting subject. Across the day, they used their 'noticing' and estimating skills then identified a mystery number. They also took part in a number of different, brain busting investigations! Thanks to Mrs Taylor, our Maths Leader, for organising the day.

PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO LOG ONTO TT ROCKSTARS DURING HALF TERM TO PRACTISE THEIR TIMES TABLES.



PUPIL ACHIEVEMENTS

George R - Achieved level 8 in his swimming lesson and has begun swimming for City of Peterborough Swim Club.



STRAW BEAR FESTIVAL

The AJS Plough Gang dance group performed at the annual Straw Bear Festival in Whittlesey on 11th January 2025.

The group were very proud to dance in the market square in front of hundreds of festival goers, accompanied by a small band of AJS staff musicians.

This year, the dancers wore specially made 'rag coats' in school colours. The coats were made by a group of dedicated Teaching Assistants who spent hours making them over the Christmas holidays.

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the children at this event.

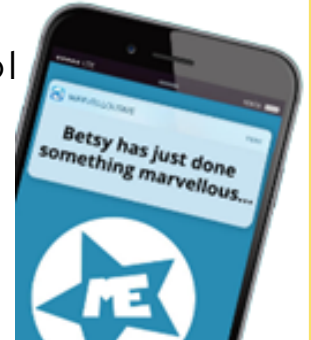


MARVELLOUS ME

We have been using Marvellous Me to share your child's achievements throughout the school week. We hope you are enjoying the opportunity to celebrate their successes with them.

We will also use Marvellous Me to send reminders of any home learning tasks such as reading and using Times Table Rockstars or Numbots. These reminders will appear via notifications, much like how badges are already shared.

We have an amazing 86% of parents signed up which is wonderful! However, if you are having any trouble logging into Marvellous Me, please contact Mr Brown via the school office and he is happy to help you resolve any issues.



3

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



WE MARKED CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK WITH A SEED PLANTING ACTIVITY

To celebrate Children's Mental Health Week, we invited pupils to join in a fun seed planting activity on the school field to represent personal growth and well being.

This year's theme, 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself' encouraged students to reflect on the importance of looking after their mental health. The aim was to inspire self-care, resilience and mindfulness, creating a positive and supportive atmosphere for everyone. Throughout the week, there were various activities to help start important conversations about emotional well-being.

As parents, if you would like more information on how to support your child please visit <https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>



STAFF NEWS

At the end of January, we said goodbye to Kathy Lister and Chris Redhead who both retired from their cleaning roles at AJS. Collectively, they worked at our school for nearly 80 years - an incredible achievement! We wish them both every happiness in their retirement.



At the end of February, we say goodbye to our family support and safeguarding officer, Mrs Clarke. Mrs Clarke has worked at AJS for nearly 5 years and has worked tirelessly to help children and families overcome different barriers. She has also been our Senior Mental Health lead and founder of the the staff wellbeing group. Mrs Clarke will be sorely missed by us all at AJS and we wish her every success in her new role as Safeguarding Lead at Nenegate School in Peterborough.

banner^{eco}

TOTAL
CLOTHING

This is to proudly certify that
Alderman Jacobs Primary School
has saved upto...
315
Plastic bottles
from landfill!
In 2024!
Issued in January 2025

NEW WAYS TO REPORT YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

Should your child be too ill to be present at school, please call the school before 08:30am and select option 2 from the menu. We will also have a new absence email after February half term. The email address is **pupilabsence@ajs.education**. Please note, these are the only two ways that pupil absence should be notified.

EVENTS

JOIN THE FOAJS FOR OUR

Valentine's DISCO

Thursday Feb 13th

DISCO 1: PRE-SCHOOL & EARLY YEARS
4.30PM - 5.15PM
(One parent per pre-school child to stay)

DISCO 2: Y1, Y2 & Y3
5.30PM - 6.45PM

DISCO 3: Y4, Y5 & Y6
7.00PM - 8.15PM

**£3 TO INCLUDE A DRINK & CRISPS
PAY ON THE DOOR WITH PRE-FILLED SLIP**

WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU!

WORLD
BOOK DAY
6 MARCH 2025

Children are invited to dress up as a book character for the day. There will be a special assembly and lots of reading activities to enjoy across the school.

Thank you!

From FCAJS

£1149.99 made from
Secret Santa

£259.54 made from
Christmas hamper raffle



SAVE THE DATE! FOAJS AGM

Friday 28th February
Alderman Jacobs School
5.00pm

New/ perspective members welcome!

Please register your attendance by
emailing foajs@gmail.com

Diary Dates

February 2025

Thursday 13th - Year 3 Maths Cafe 2-3pm

Thursday 13th - Friends of AJS Disco

Friday 14th - Trust Training Day - school closed to children

March 2025

Monday 3rd March - EY's/Year 6 Height and Weight Check

Thursday 6th - World Book Day

Friday 7th - AJS Careers Day

Monday 10th - Pre School Reading Cafe 2-2.45pm

Thursday 13th - Pre School Reading Cafe 2-2.45pm

Tuesday 18th - EY's Vision Screening Check

Wednesday 19th - Year 2 Woburn Safari Trip

Monday 24th - Year 4 Maths Cafe 2-3pm

Thursday 27th - Year 1 Sacrewell Farm Trip

Monday 31st - Wednesday 2nd April - Year 5 Grafham Water

April 2025

Friday 4th - Last day of Spring Term

Tuesday 22nd - Start of Summer Term

School Term Dates 2024/5

Autumn Term Closes: Fri 20th Dec

Spring Term Opens: Mon 6th January

Half term: Mon 17th-Friday 21st February

Spring Term close: Fri 4th April

Summer Term open: Tuesday 22nd April

Half term: Mon 26th- Fri 30th May

Last day of school year: Tuesday 22nd July

Professional Days

The school will be closed to pupils
on the following day:

**14th February 2025 Trust
Training Day**

