

Dear parents and carers,

I am delighted to be writing to you in the first newsletter of 2024 as the new Headteacher at AJS. I have been made to feel so welcome by staff, children and parents in my first few weeks and I am thoroughly enjoying getting to know the school and the community. The school has a number of priorities to ensure we continue to build on the many strengths at AJS. Please see the Key Priorities 2023/24 poster emailed with this newsletter which summarises the main things we will be working on over the next 2 terms.

Our School Pride Chant

Who are we?

We are Team AJS!

We have energy for learning

We have energy for life

We have energy for the environment

I have enjoyed meeting all the children every Wednesday in our whole school assembly. The theme for this half term is about taking pride in ourselves, our school work, our behaviour, our friends and family and our school. We have learnt a new school pride chant (above) using British Sign Language - ask your child to say it for you! I am very keen for all children to take pride in wearing the AJS uniform and sports uniform. I will be reviewing the uniform code this term and will give parents plenty of notice if any changes are required ahead of the next academic year in September. In the meantime, here are a couple of uniform reminders:

- *No nail varnish, make up or jewellery (apart from stud earrings which must be removed for PE).*
- *A watch may be worn. Smart watches are fine UNLESS they have a built in camera which is NOT allowed. Any such watch will be confiscated and parents contacted to collect.*
- *Long hair must be tied up. Plain red, black or white head bands/ elastic bands only please. Novelty hair accessories e.g. unicorns/ cat ears etc. should only be worn on non-uniform days/ special occasions.*
- *Plain white t-shirt for PE - no football/ other sports kit featuring sponsors or t-shirts with large logos such as Nike. If children attending an after school football club would like to wear a football kit, they can bring it to school in a separate bag and get changed at the end of the school day.*

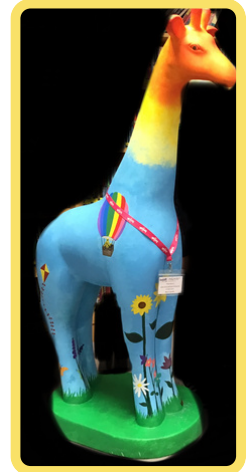
Thank you for your support with uniform. If you have any questions or concerns about purchasing or finding the correct uniform, please don't hesitate to speak to a member of staff. My aim is to make AJS the smartest school in Whittlesey!

Please do say hello if you see me on the playground in the mornings!

Best wishes, Mr Fry

Giraffe Competition

Last half term, Miss Clarke ran a 'design the giraffe' competition in order to raise awareness for the charity Break. The lucky winner of this competition was Rose V in Kenya class, as her design encapsulated the schools love for the environment. Rose, along with some other helpers, then helped to decorate the giraffe. For now the giraffe has been sent off to Cambridge and will be out for everyone to visit in the Grafton Centre in the spring time! Well done Rose!



Mental Health Week

Children's Mental Health Week will take place from 5-11 February 2024. The theme this year is 'My Voice Matters'. My Voice Matters is about empowering children and young people by providing them with the tools they need to express themselves. When we feel empowered, there's a positive impact on our wellbeing. Children who feel that their voices are heard and can make a difference have a greater sense of community and self-esteem. This year, we want children of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to be empowered to work together to create a positive change for their mental health and wellbeing. During Children's Mental Health Week, we want all children and young people to be able to say – and believe – "My Voice Matters." We will be completing some activities in school around this but if you would like to take part at home there are some lovely activities on the Place2Be website [here](#). Please feel free to speak to your class teacher if you would like more information or support around children's mental health.



Year 2 Christmas Unwrapped

Year 2 were invited to the Whittlesey Baptist Church before Christmas to take part in some fun Christmas activities. We learnt more about the story of Christmas and took part in our very own Nativity show. We also made Christmas cards to bring home and created our own small world Nativity scenes. A big thank you to Caroline, Matt and all at the Whittlesey Baptist church for inviting us!

Tuck Shop Update

Tuck shop is now open. Items are 65p each. Please send your child in with the correct change as notes will not be accepted. There is a maximum of 1 drink and 1 snack per child. Thank you.



FOAJS Secret Santa

Thank you to all children and parents for your support with this year's Secret Santa event. We hope everyone enjoyed their gifts! We raised a brilliant £1058.15 which will all go towards supporting the school and funding new resources and experiences. Thank you!

Year 2 Zoo Lab Visit

On Monday 11th December, Year 2 had some very exciting visitors come to school; Zoo Lab. They brought in a tarantula, snake, cockroach, land snail and a frog. The learning was linked to our Science topic Animals: offspring, needs and exercise. The children were taught some facts about the different animals and what they need to survive as well as being able to hold and stroke some of the animals which saw many of the children being very brave and overcoming their fears. Year 2 would like to thank the Friends of AJS for funding this visit into school. We had a fantastic time!



Straw Bear Festival 2024

What a wonderful Straw Bear Day we had! Our fantastic dancers Mila, Amelia, Laylah, Katie, Alisha, Mia and Paige had been practising their dances since October and finally got the chance to perform to everyone. Together with Mr Fry, Mr Pattison, Mrs Cradock and Mrs White, the children paraded with the other performers and then had the opportunity to dance three times for the crowds. We all had a great time.

Thank you for your hard work and effort in learning the dances and to the other children who learnt the dances with us. Thanks to Mrs Cradock for your support in teaching the children with me. Look out for information on how to be a dancer next year in October 2024 where we hope to make new costumes for our performers.

Mrs White



Keeping children safe on the roads and paths around school

One of the things that many parents have spoken to me about since I started at AJS concerns the traffic and road congestion at drop off and pick up time. I understand that this is an ongoing issue and construction work locally has added to the volume of traffic in the area. We want all children to be safe when walking or riding a bike/ scooter to school and we are very lucky to have an excellent Lollipop Lady who supports this aim. However, every parent who drives their child to school also has their part to play in keeping children safe and being considerate to others by:

- **not** double parking
- **not** parking in the lay by (drop off only) / across resident driveways;
- **not** driving up on pavements
- sticking to the speed limit.

We will be investing in some more signage and working with the Council and Police to help tackle some of the current issues.



Attendance at school

What YOU must do:

- Try to telephone the school before 8.30am each day of your child's absence.
- Tell the school in advance, of any medical appointments and bring in appointment cards/letters.
- If you are not sure whether your child is well enough to attend school, consider sending them in anyway as they often perk up on arrival.
- Have a backup plan for if your child misses transport, call on a family member, neighbour or friend.
- If you and your child are experiencing difficulties with school attendance then talk to us as a first step so we can help!

What WE will do:

- Check your child's attendance every day.
- Phone home to discuss your child's attendance with you.
- Invite you into school for attendance meetings if we are concerned.
- If we cannot establish a reason for absence, then we may make a welfare home visit.



**MOMENTS
MATTER,
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**

Cultural Day

Last half-term saw the first Cultural Day of the year. The children spent the day learning about the culture, geography, language, history and other interesting facts of the country class that they are in. This was achieved through a variety of different craft activities, looking at maps as geographers as well as trying some of the food that is linked to that culture. All the children had a really fantastic day learning about diverse cultures from around the world.



Year 6 SATs information evening

On Wednesday 7th February, we will be holding a SATs information evening for Year 6 parents between 5.30pm and 6.15pm. Children are welcome to attend. More information will be sent out to Year 6 parents over the next few days.

Year 1 Competition Winner!

A huge congratulations to George in Spain class who won a National book review competition for KS1 over the summer holidays. As his prize, George won an amazing 200 books for our school library and a virtual author visit for his year group. Year 1 got to meet and chat to author Alan and hear some extracts from some of his stories. Well done George!



Poppy Appeal

Thank you to everyone who bought items from the Poppy Appeal merchandise and donated to our Remembrance Day collection. The school have raised £102.59!



NSPCC National Number Day

Alderman Jacobs School will once again be participating in the NSPCC National Number Day on Friday 2nd February 2024. Number Day is a great way to make maths fun and bring about a positive, 'can do' attitude towards the subject. Across the day, your child will take part in a range of maths activities designed to develop their fluency, reasoning and problem solving skills. We will be raising money to support the NSPCC. By raising money, we can help to fund their vital services such as Childline. Should you wish to give a voluntary donation, you can use the Just Giving page - <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/numberday2024>
This is not a dress up day so children should wear their usual uniform/ PE kit as relevant.

Attendance

So far this term, our school attendance is at 93.5%. The government expectation is that all children's attendance remains above 96.5%

Diary Dates



February

Friday 2nd - NSPCC Number Day

Monday 5th - Y2 Reading Cafe

Wednesday 7th - Y6 SATs Information Evening

Thursday 8th - Y1 Reading Cafe

Tuesday 13th - Y3 Maths Cafe

March

Friday 1st - Dental Checks (invited children only)

Thursday 7th - World Book Day

Friday 8th - Careers Day

Monday 11th - Pre-School Reading Cafe

Tuesday 12th - Y2 Woburn Trip

Wednesday 13th - Y6 Maths Cafe

Wednesday 13th - Wicked Trip (invited children only)

Thursday 14th - Pre-School Reading Cafe

Friday 15th March - Comic Relief

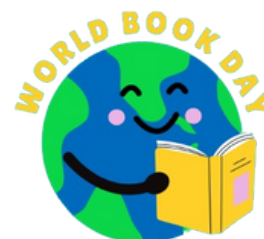
Wednesday 20th - Y6 Maths Cafe

Thursday 21st - Y1 Maths Cafe

Friday 22nd - Y4 Maths Cafe

Monday 25th March - Cultural Day

Tuesday 26th - Thursday 28th - Grafham Residential

The Comic Relief logo consists of the words 'COMIC RELIEF' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a red rectangular background.

**COMIC
RELIEF**

School Term Dates 2024

Half Term: Mon 19th - Fri 23rd Feb

Spring Term Closes: Thu 28th Mar

Easter Holidays: Fri 29th Mar - Fri 12th Apr

Summer Term Opens: Mon 15th Apr

Half Term: Mon 27th - Fri 31st May

Summer Term Closes: Fri 19th July

Autumn Term Opens: Thu 5th Sept

Half Term: Mon 28th Oct - Fri 1st Nov

Autumn Term Closes: Fri 20th Dec

Professional Days

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

Monday 22nd July 2024

Tuesday 3rd September 2024

Wednesday 4th September 2024

Friday 25th October 2024

Monday 4th November 2024