

Aldryngton Primary School

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Headteacher: Mark Wieder

24th September

Dear Parent/ Carer,

Last week was rather busy. We had our first trips of the year when Upper School visited Rushall Farm as part of their geography learning this term. On Wednesday, we had National Fitness Day and our PTA AGM. On Friday, it was great to see many of you enjoying your picnics on the field at the end of the school day. Finally, on Saturday, a huge thank you to all of the volunteers for helping to further improve the school grounds.

October Census Day: Thursday 3rd October

Please could all families in Foundation and Lower School support the school by choosing a school dinner on this day. This day is used to generate the funding levels provided by the government to fund the school for Universal Infant Free School Meals. Therefore, the higher the take up on this particular day, then the more funding the school will receive. Thank you in advance for your support with this.

There has been a menu change this week on Thursday and Friday so please make sure you check your selection if you have already pre-ordered your dinner.

Parent Survey 2024 Analysis

In July 2024, we completed our annual parent survey. This year, we received 48 responses.

The leadership team has reviewed the responses and can present the following headlines:

- Percentages in most areas have either increased or stayed broadly in line with 2023 outcomes of the survey.
- The highest percentages agreeing or strongly agreeing were in the following categories: my child feels safe; Aldryngton makes sure its pupils are well-behaved; there is a good range of subjects at the school.
- Biggest increases have been in the school makes me aware of what my child will learn; my child has SEND and they have been given the support that they need; the school supports the wider personal development of my child.

Like any survey, there was a varied range of comments regarding what families thought was working well and what they felt required improving. However, the following areas were shared as strengths of the school by the largest number of responses:

- Academic excellence and strong teaching
- Staff are approachable, caring and kind.
- The sports days and swimming galas.
- The approaches used to teach reading and phonics.



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Please find a summary table of the areas most identified by families of requiring further improvement and the associated response:

Improvement Area	Response
<p>School lunches in particular better-quality meat options and meat offered on all days.</p>	<p>We had a changeover in our kitchen team from June 2024 and since this time, we have noticed that there has been less waste.</p> <p>I have continued to sample the menu on a daily basis and provide feedback to the caterers every week. For its price, the meals are high quality. There are of course some menu items that are more popular than others. There are also some very good vegetarian options, the cheese whirl is a particular favourite. I appreciate that not all meals will be to everybody's tastes though.</p> <p>Caterlink have been operating a meat-free Monday for a while now as one of their sustainability objectives. We have also embraced this objective ourselves and support this decision.</p> <p>The menu has to be approved in line with nutritional guidelines and is the same as in other Caterlink schools. We do feedback what is popular and what is not. Caterlink are then known to make changes in response to this.</p> <p>Caterlink are open to parents feeding back specific issues/ requests relating to school dinners and there is an option do so via surveys that they run throughout the year.</p>
<p>Grounds requiring more maintenance</p>	<p>We had a successful working party last Saturday and it was amazing what was achieved in such a short time frame. We are looking at developing an asset management plan for the outdoor area to place a more strategic overview into managing our grounds.</p>
<p>Pool club not open at weekends</p>	<p>This particular area had the most responses in the survey wanting an improvement by far. As a result, we are currently working with the PTA in order to find a solution to increase the number of weekends that the pool is open next season.</p>
<p>More sports clubs for Lower School and Foundation Stage children</p>	<p>We will investigate to see if further options are available. Some of the external clubs that the school uses have had to either merge with more year groups and in some instances have not been cost-effective to run due to fewer children attending.</p>
<p>More feedback on homework tasks completed.</p>	<p>It is recognised at a national level that teacher workload is an issue and research in recent years has questioned the impact of written comments. Therefore, we adjusted our approach to marking and feedback several years ago. There is now a greater emphasis on verbal feedback and</p>



	<p>future plans being adjusted in response to the findings of the teacher as they mark the work.</p> <p>It is also understood the challenges sometimes faced by families in ensuring that their child completes the homework and therefore it can be understood why families may want more feedback. However, teachers can often have up to 90 books to mark per day in addition to the teaching commitments, planning the lessons, attending training and staff meetings as well as running clubs. We have made the strategic decision to focus the teacher efforts on areas that are known by research to have a greater impact on pupil progress.</p> <p>We did review our Homework Policy in July 2024 and have now made it clear that written feedback will not be provided. We are also completing trials of MyMaths in Y1-4 at the moment, which provides immediate feedback to both the child and the teacher.</p>
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Thank you once again for all of you that completed this survey. As the survey was anonymous, it was not possible to provide individual feedback. However, if there is anything that you wish to raise specifically, then please contact the school office and we can triage your email to the most appropriate person to respond to you.

Falling Pupil Numbers in Earley Area

Accompanying the weekly update this week is a letter from Ming Zhang detailing the fact that in parts of the Wokingham Borough, pupil numbers are falling and there will be a need to look at reducing the planned admission number for certain schools. I am able to confirm that Earley is one of the areas identified where there is and will continue be a surplus of places. However, Aldryngton continues to be full and currently we have no plans to reduce our planned admission number. We have seen this year that families that live over a mile away from the school offered places, when traditionally only those in catchment areas would have been able to secure a place. If you are aware of any families looking at schools for next academic year, please direct them to one of our prospective parent open mornings. Due to falling numbers in the area, there is now a realistic probability of securing a place at Aldryngton living out of catchment.

OFSTED Update

The OFSTED inspection window has now opened again after this was paused due to the announcement that single word gradings for overall effectiveness would be removed. Instead the school will receive gradings in the following categories: Quality of Education; Personal Development; Behaviour and Attitudes; Leadership and Management; Early Years. As previously communicated, I am expecting that we will be inspected this term. After the inspection, grades and the report need to be finalised before the outcome is shared with families. This usually takes between 4-6 weeks after the initial inspection.

World Homeless Day: 10th October

We will once again be running a non-uniform day to raise funds for local homeless charities on Thursday 10th October. A donation of a minimum of £1 can be made directly to one of the two charities below:



New Beginnings

<https://www.newbeginningsreading.org/donate>

CIRDIC

<https://www.cirdic.org.uk/donation.html>

Harvest Festival

This is taking place on Friday 11th October and food is to be left in the hall. We will once again be donating the food to CIRDIC. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Events List

Please find a couple of updates highlighted in yellow below. This week the updates are mainly PTA based after our meeting last week. We have also brought the Upper School production in the Summer a week forward.

Date (Time)	Event
Thursday 26 th September 1pm	Cross country at Redham House KS2
Monday 7 th October (assembly) and Thursday 10 th (non-uniform)	World Homeless Day (assembly to raise awareness and non- uniform day to raise funds for local charities)
Tuesday 8 th to Thursday 10 th October	Middle School trips to Ure Museum
Tuesday 8 th October	PTA Bags 4 Schools
Friday 11 th October	Harvest Festival Collection (please bring in cans and dry food for re-distribution)
Friday 11 th October	Harvest Assembly
Monday 14 th October	Individual Photographs
Tuesday 15 th October (3:30pm)	Accelerated Reader Parent Presentation
Friday 18 th October (9:30am)	Prospective Parent Tour
Friday 18 th October	PTA Diwali Fayre
Monday 21 st October	Lower School Florence Nightingale Workshop
Tuesday 22 nd October (3:30pm)	Read,Write, Inc Parent Presentation
Thursday 24 th October	Middle School RE Inspired
Thursday 24 th October (2:30pm)	Middle School Diwali Assembly
Thursday 24 th October (6-8pm)	PTA Disco
Week beginning 27 th October	Half Term
Monday 4 th November	INSET Day (No pupils in school)
Tuesday 5 th November	US Paleoquest
Thursday 7 th November	R.E. Inspired Lower School



Monday 11 th to Friday 15 th November	Anti-Bullying Week (wear odd socks on the 11 th). Assembly on Tuesday 12 th .
Monday 11 th November	Remembrance Day
Tuesday 12 th November	Evidence Me Parent Workshop
Friday 15 th November	Children in Need
Week beginning 18 th November	Road Safety Week
Week beginning 18th November	PTA Wrap a Present
Monday 18 th November (9:30am)	Prospective Parent Tours
Thursday 21 st November	RE Inspired Upper School
Week beginning 25 th November	Parent Evenings Week
Monday 2 nd December (2pm)	School Council
Tuesday 3 rd December (9:30am)	Prospective Parent Tour
Thursday 5 th December	R.E. Inspired Middle School
Saturday 7 th December	PTA Christmas Fayre
Sunday 8 th December	Loddon Valley Carol Concert (choir only)
Wednesday 11 th December (9:15am and 2:30pm)	Lower School Christmas Assemblies
Thursday 12 th December	R.E. Inspired Foundation Stage
Friday 13 th December (2pm)	Carol Concert
Friday 13th December (evening)	PTA Carol Concert
Monday 16 th December (3:30pm-4pm)	Topic Visits to Classes
Monday 16 th December (2pm)	Foundation Stage Christmas Performance
Tuesday 17 th December	Pantomime
Wednesday 18 th December (2pm)	Foundation Stage Christmas Performance
Friday 20 th December	Last Day of Term Progress reports to parents
Monday 6 th January	INSET Day
Wednesday 8 th January (9:30am)	Prospective Parent Tour
Friday 10 th January	Spelling Bee word lists out



Week beginning 13 th January	Team Newsletters out alongside knowledge organisers
Monday 27 th January	Chinese New Year Assembly
Wednesday 29 th January	Lower School Trip to Brooklands Museum
Week beginning 3 rd February	Children's Mental Health Week
Friday 7 th February	NSPCC Number Day (dress as a number in return for £1 donation to NSPCC)
Week beginning 10 th February	Spelling Bee Finals
Tuesday 11 th and Wednesday 12 th February	Upper School trips to Kew Gardens
Tuesday 11 th February	Safer Internet Day
Thursday 13 th February	PTA Disco
Week beginning 17 th February	Half Term
Week beginning 24 th February	Bike-ability week
Thursday 6 th March	World Book Day (Children can come in dressed as a book character)
Week beginning 17 th March	Neuro-Diversity Celebration Week
Week beginning 17 th March	EYFS Parents' Evenings Week
Week beginning 24 th March	Parents' Evening Y1-6 Week
Friday 28 th March	Junior Music Festival
Monday 31 st March	Topic Celebrations
Wednesday 2 nd April	Foundation Stage Easter Performance
Thursday 3 rd April (2:30pm)	Lower School Eid Assembly
Thursday 3rd April	PTA Cake Sale
Friday 4 th April	Last Day of Term Progress reports to parents
Tuesday 22 nd April	Children Return to School
Thursday 24 th April	R.E. Inspired Upper School
Week beginning 28 th April	Team newsletters out alongside knowledge organisers
Monday 5 th May	Bank Holiday
Week beginning 12 th May	Key Stage 2 SATS Week



Thursday 15 th May	R.E. Inspired Lower School
Thursday 15 th May (6-8pm)	PTA Disco
Friday 16 th May	Middle School Maypole Dancing
Weeks beginning 19 th May	Y6 at Little Canada
Week beginning 19 th May	Multiplication Championship
Friday 23 rd May	Cultural Diversity Day
Week beginning 26 th May	Half Term
Monday 2 nd June	INSET Day
Monday 2 nd to Friday 3 rd June	Y4 Times Table Check Window
Monday 9 th to Friday 13 th June	Y1 Phonics and Y2 Phonics Retakes Window
Wednesday 11 th June (4pm)	New EYFS Parent Meeting
Friday 13 th June	KS2 Sports Day
Saturday 14 th June	PTA Try-a-Tri
Thursday 19 th June	Lower School trip to Hawk Conservancy
Thursday 19 th June	R.E. Inspired Upper School
Friday 20 th June (PM)	60 th Anniversary Prom and Picnic
Wednesday 25 th June	EYFS trip to Wooley Firs
Week beginning 30 th June	Sports Week
Monday 30 th June (AM)	Inter-House Cross Country- Middle School
Monday 30 th June (1:30pm)	Upper School Swimming Gala
Tuesday 1 st July	District Sports (To be confirmed)
Wednesday 2 nd July (1:30pm)	Middle School Swimming Gala
Wednesday 2 nd July	Upper School Cross Country
Thursday 3 rd July (2pm)	Foundation Stage and Lower School Sports Day
Friday 4 th July	PTA Non-Uniform Make the Rules Day
Monday 7 th July	Upper School Production to Foundation and Lower - dress rehearsal
Tuesday 8 th July	Transition Morning
Tuesday 8 th July (2pm)	Upper School Production to Middle School - technical performance



Wednesday 9 th July (7pm)	Upper School Production to Families
Thursday 10 th July (7pm)	Upper School Production to Families
Monday 14 th July (2pm)	Upper School Production to Foundation and Lower - dress rehearsal
Monday 14 th July (3:30pm)	Topic Celebrations
Wednesday 23 rd July (AM)	Y6 Leavers Assembly to Children
Wednesday 23 rd July (PM)	Y6 Leavers Assembly to Parents
Wednesday 23 rd July	Last Day of Term

Yours Sincerely,



Mark Wieder
Headteacher

