



Ashby Hastings Primary School

Headteacher – Mrs Rachel Mckeown

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“Inspiring minds to foster confidence”

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Newsletter

2025/2026 Autumn Term 2



Dear Parents,

What another jam-packed term we have had! As we you will see in this Newsletter, school has been very busy and it has been great to see the children embracing their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

The lead up to Christmas has truly been a magical time at Ashby Hastings with fabulous Christmas performances, spectacular dancing at our Christmas discos, glitter-filled crafting at our Decorations Morning and super running in our annual Santa Fun Run!

Our children impressed with their confidence in their class Christmas performances, shone with their singing and entertained with their acting skills – I am sure you will agree we have some very talented children! Thank you for joining us for these events and for your generous donations. Money raised will go towards the enhancement of future performances.

In the new year, we will be launching Ashby Hastings' Job Centre. Keep an eye out for information about the new roles on offer!

In the meantime, I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

We look forward to welcoming the children back into school on Monday 5th January.

Best wishes,
Mrs Rachel Mckeown

Scooters and bikes – A reminder

It is fantastic to see so many children coming to school on bikes and scooters. **Please can we remind everyone that bikes and scooters are to be pushed, not ridden, in the school grounds.** This includes pre-school children and is to make sure everyone is safe.

EYFS

Foundation Stage have enjoyed finding out about people in our community. The children have used their excellent questioning skills to find out how police officers, fire fighters and dental nurses can help us to keep safe and stay healthy. It was lovely to see the excitement on the children's faces as they were able to use the firefighter's water hoses and take a look into a police van!

The children have been taking part in lots of festive activities and particularly enjoyed our Christmas party! They have dressed up and used their imagination to role-play their own Christmas experiences. We are so proud of how well the children performed in our nativity, 'Christmas Counts' - they all worked so hard to learn their lines and they sang beautifully! Well Done Foundation Stage!



Class 1

Class 1 have been very busy and have enjoyed our topic "Where will my wellies take me?", learning about where we live and the local landmarks in Ashby. In science, we have been looking at how the weather has been changing as we transition from Autumn to Winter. As we have had a lot of rain, we will continue our weather observations after Christmas and discuss what we have noticed.

The children have been doing a fantastic job recognising the new sounds we are learning both in our phonics sessions and in their reading books. We are pleased to see how much everyone is reading at home - just 5 minutes each day is helpful, and we can see that it is paying off with how confident the children are becoming from week to week. Lots of children are now confident enough to read words on sight.

In English, we have written some interesting character descriptions, using a range of adjectives to describe different elements of the characters from our focus stories.

A highlight this term has been designing and making windmills for a mouse! The children spent time researching different windmills, then added their own designs before connecting the elements together. It was great to see the children showing teamwork and resilience when getting their windmills fixed together.

The children have been looking at using their voices in music and have learnt some simple call and response songs as well as clapping out the rhythm with a partner.

The children did a super job in their Nativity this year and it has been a pleasure to practice the songs in preparation for their final performance. It can be quite scary performing for an audience, but we were so proud of everyone!

Overall, another super half term with some fantastic pieces of work being completed. Well Done Class 1 - I hope you all have a lovely Christmas.



Class 2

What a busy half term it has been in Class 2! In English, Class 2 enjoyed writing instructions on how to make a monster pizza. The children came up with lots of revoltingly brilliant ideas and did a great job at describing these using adjectives in their writing.

In Maths, we have been learning about money. We have been counting in pence and pounds, working out the total value of different amounts of money. We visited the Christmas Shop, acting as elves to work out how much items cost and give change to each other.

We have also loved learning about the Great Fire of London in History this half-term. We looked at different historical sources to learn about how the fire spread and became architects to help rebuild London - just like Sir Christopher Wren!



In Science, we have been looking at the use of everyday materials. We have investigated lots of materials, observing their properties and experimenting with how they can change shape. In D&T we have been practicing our sewing, making a stocking shaped Christmas tree decoration which are perfect to hold a sweet treat.

Our favourite lesson this half term has been PE. We have loved playing dodgeball and improving our aim, throwing and dodging skills.

Class 2 gave an amazing performance in our Christmas Nativity, I was so proud watching them all shine! Well done Class 2, have a lovely Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Class 3

This term, Class 3 have been extremely busy! We kicked off the term with a lovely Forest Day full of collaboration, perseverance, and a lot of mud! In Maths, we have begun to master our 3,4- and 8-times tables with plenty of problem solving and proving 'Always, Sometimes, Never' statements. We've also been beating our own personal score in our times tables challenge each week due to our excellent determination and motivation.

In English and Geography, we have been learning about the UK's physical and human features. We have been reading Floella Benjamin's autobiography, 'Coming to England' and exploring how immigration has made the UK the vibrant, multicultural society that it is today.

In Science we have studied vertebrates and invertebrates, investigated how the length of our femur correlates to athletic performance and built our own moving hands. Lastly, we showed off our singing and Makaton talents at Holy Trinity Church for our Christmas performance, which was an excellent start to December. Well done Class 3 - it is definitely time for a rest!



Class 4

Class 4 have had a wonderfully busy and memorable Autumn term in the run up to Christmas, packed full of exciting learning experiences. One of the highlights was our Ancient Egypt topic, where the children had great fun dressing up as Egyptians and holding their very own Egyptian gallery. The classroom was transformed as pupils proudly shared their work, enjoyed mummifying each other (with plenty of giggles!) and created a range of impressive artefacts inspired by their historical learning.

Class 4 also loved taking part in a Forest Day, embracing the outdoors! The mud slide proved especially popular and was enjoyed by everyone, making for lots of laughter and muddy clothes by the end of the day!

In English, the children have really enjoyed learning about poetry through the work of A.F. Harrod. They explored a range of poems, discussed language and meaning, and had fun performing and creating their own poetry with confidence and enthusiasm.

In Science, we have been learning about animals and their habitats, thinking carefully about how different species depend on one another. The children explored food chains and considered the relationships between living things, showing great curiosity and thoughtful discussion.

As Christmas approached, Class 4 also worked incredibly hard practising and performing for our Christmas performance at the church. The children showed commitment, teamwork and confidence. It has been a fantastic term full of creativity, curiosity and festive spirit – well done everyone!



A big thank you to everyone that supported our visiting book fair at the start of November. Thanks to all of your purchases we have been able to buy almost £800 worth of books for our school library.

A message from the Chair of Governors

Hello everyone,

My name is Charlotte Owen and I'd like to introduce myself as the school continues to grow and we welcome more families who may not yet know me. I am a parent here, and when my child joined the very first year group in 2021, I also began my role as Chair of Governors. It has been a real privilege to be part of the school's journey from the very beginning.



You may be wondering what a governing board actually does. Governors work as a team to provide strategic oversight – we look at the school's vision, priorities, performance and offer support and constructive challenge to the leadership team. We help ensure that every decision made keeps children's education, wellbeing, and future opportunities at the heart of it.

Although you won't see us in classrooms every day, governors are very much a part of school life. We meet regularly, visit school to see learning in action, and listen to feedback. We are committed to maintaining high standards, celebrating successes, and helping the school grow from strength to strength.

I'm looking forward to attending the school events planned for the rest of the year, and if you have any questions or would like to know more about the work of the governing board, please do feel free to come and have a chat.

On behalf of the governing board, we would like to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

A message from Your PTA:

What a fabulously festive term we have had!

Firstly, thank you for all of your delicious treats and for supporting our bake sale, we made £193.87 - a great start to our fundraising year.

Then the children all had an amazing time at their Christmas parties, raising a further £216.70. We would like to take this opportunity once again to thank our fantastic DJs, Ian and Dave, and Leanne from Ashby Castles and Soft Play for their generous support.

We have supplied the school with some Christmas crackers for the children's Christmas lunch, and have a shopping list of soil and liners for the school gardening club for the Spring Term.

We look forward to seeing you grown-ups at our next Pub Quiz – keep an eye out for details in the new year.

If anyone would like any more information about the PTA, or have any fundraising ideas, please do get in contact with us: ashbyhastingspta@gmail.com

Thank you for your support and Merry Christmas to you all!

Attendance and Absences

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of our families who consistently ensure that their child's attendance and punctuality is good. Establishing these important habits early in your child's life is paramount; for pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly and punctually.

Punctual attendance creates an orderly start to the school day. Classroom doors open at 8:40am and the register is taken at 8:45am. Pupils arriving after 8.55am will receive a late mark (L) and pupils arriving after 9.15am will receive a late mark (U). A 'U' mark means that the whole morning session equates to an unauthorised absence.

We believe that absence from school disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress and should be avoided; therefore, holidays in term time will not be authorised, unless deemed by the Headteacher to be exceptional.

If a pupil meets the national threshold to issue a penalty notice, a referral will be made to the Local Authority, and a penalty notice fine may be issued. The national threshold is 10 sessions of absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, for example:

- 5 or more consecutive days of term time leave (holiday), and for fewer days, if this has happened before; or
- 10 sessions of unauthorised non-consecutive absence in a 10-week rolling period (including holidays and late registration marks).

We encourage all pupils to have excellent levels of attendance of above 97%:

Outstanding	Attendance is 97% or higher.
Good	Attendance is 95% or higher.
Requires Improvement	Attendance is below 95%.
Cause for Concern	Attendance is below 90%.

Please see our [Attendance Policy on our website](#) for more information.

Thank you to everyone who sponsored our children to take part in our annual Santa Fun Run today. It was great fun, and we're delighted to say that we raised more than £550 for school.



Upcoming Diary Dates

5th January – School re-opens

30th January – **Class 3** Assembly – **9.10am start**

February – **Class 3** School Trip (**Date TBC**)

6th February – **Class 4** Assembly – **9.10am start**

5th March – World Book Day

6th March – **Class 1** Assembly – **9.10am start**

13th March - 'Mums' to School – (**Whole School**) - **9am – 10.15am**

16th March – Parents' Evening – appointments between 3.30pm and 7.30pm

17th March – Parents' Evening – appointments between 3.30pm and 6.00pm

26th March – **Class 2** Assembly – **9.10am start**

6th – 8th May – **Class 4** Residential

15th May – **EYFS** Class Assembly – **9.10am start**

22nd May – Red Nose Day (Wear red/non-uniform day) (**Whole School**)

June – **EYFS** School Trip (**Date TBC**)

June – **Class 1 and Class 2** School Trip (**Date TBC**)

19th June – 'Dads' to school – (**Whole School**) - **9am – 10.15am**

25th June – Sports Day – **EYFS, Class 1 and Class 2** – **10.30am start**

25th June – Sports Day – **Class 3 and Class 4** – **1.45pm start**

7th July – End of Term

Please note that all dates may be subject to change.

More information regarding each event will be sent to you closer to the date.

Wishing all of our school community a very Happy Christmas, and best wishes for the New Year! See you in January!

