

# Ashcombe Primary School

Headteacher: Chris Penny

Deputy Headteacher: Kerry Evans

Assistant Headteacher: Steve Burditt

Know yourself and your world. Be part of the world. Change the world.

We Are Ashcombe



Friday January 24<sup>th</sup> 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We've had a really positive start back to the Spring Term and it's been lovely to see the children back in school after the Christmas break. During our INSET days, we have hosted the other Trust schools for KMAT Learning Festival where staff were able to access training from a range of speakers. Our staff have had further neurodiversity training as part of the PINs project we have been taking part in and we've also had training from Sirona on speech and language. The Spring term is a shorter one than the Autumn – we've got two six week terms ahead with lots of hard work and things to look forward to!



## Curry Day to celebrate Ramadan

I'm delighted and taken aback to announce that Ashcombe will once again be the very lucky recipients of the generosity of Sayd at Poppadoms on Milton Rd. Last year, children and staff were provided with a delicious free offering and we are getting the same kind offer on Tuesday February 11<sup>th</sup> this year. Aspens meals have been cancelled and refunded for this day. If your child does not wish to eat curry on this day, please send your child into school with a packed lunch.

## Mid-year reports

This year we are trialling a new approach to our reports in line with our partner MAT schools. Rather than an end of year report, we will be sending out Reports at the end of February. The intention is for the reports to give you an accurate idea of how your child is performing at school along with some targets for supporting your child for this stage of the year. We have changed the format to be more in line with the schools in our Trust. We will then hold parents and carer's meetings in Term 6 to review how your child has got on over the course of the year. We hope you like the new format of reports and I invite any feedback from parents and carers about how we can improve on this in the future.



## Redeveloping our outside space – can you help?

We're very lucky to have benefitted from DfE funds to extend our school and staff and children are now reaping the benefits of the new spaces we have. Unfortunately, that money did not stretch to redeveloping the outside space but this is a definite priority I am working towards.

We are planning in the long term to install:

- Sand pits
- Climbing frames & adventure playground (ideally composite based as we have a high water table)
- Gazebos/Canopies
- Additional play benches/picnic benches



We are currently in the processing of gathering quotes for the work we want to do with one company visiting in the last week. However, if you are able to offer any services for providing, installing or raising funds for any of these things, or you know someone who can support us, can you please let us know at [office@ashcombeprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@ashcombeprimary.co.uk)

## Dog poo on the way to school



I have been approached by several parents who have complained that their route to school beyond the school grounds has got increasingly bad in recent weeks. I'm sorry to hear this and I have contacted our local Councillor to see what support she may be able to offer. Can I ask families who are concerned to get in touch with the council directly to see if more can be done. If enough residents get in touch then it may prompt further action. <https://n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/parking-travel-roads/street-cleaning/litter-dog-bins>

## Ashcombe's Got Talent 2025

In this week's assembly I've launched the preparation process for this year's edition of an old Ashcombe favourite: Ashcombe's Got Talent. I've seen many fantastic entries over the years. Some of them have been traditional options like dance, gymnastics, music playing or comedy. Some have been rather less traditional but equally amazing to see – I won't ever forget last year's animal impressions entry! The finals for AGT will be taking place on April 2<sup>nd</sup> in the last week of term 4. I share this news now because children will need to get preparing and practising if they wish to enter. Entries are open to children in Key Stage 2 (in years 3-6) and can either be individual or group entries. Auditions will take place towards the end of term and then finalists will be selected. I'm going to be scouring Vinted for a snazzy outfit as host and I'll be selecting the judging panel shortly. Good luck to all the entrants!





## Smartphones – Somerset Pact



Smartphone use and has been in the media a great deal of late and as my own children are approaching secondary age I am having discussions with my wife about the approach we'll be taking with our own children. When and if you do decide to give your children a smartphone is a personal choice for every parent or carer. I don't seek to shame or judge anybody – families need to make their own choices. My own experience of seeing the potential implications of giving young children access to a smartphone has taught me that it needs very careful monitoring.

Even if your child would not deliberately search for something, things get shared through messaging service or social media. Children can and do end up seeing things which can cause long lasting trauma. A third (32%) of 8-17s say they have seen something worrying or nasty online in the last 12 months, but only 20% of parents of this age group report their child telling them they had seen something online that scared or upset them in the same time frame. Having access to messaging apps or social media can also mean that the social side (both positive and negative) of school never switches off. We aim to tackle any cases of bullying brought to our attention but some of this goes on without our knowledge online. It is extremely hard to deal with as a young person.

Many parents want the reassurance of knowing that their child can contact them if they get into trouble – this is completely understandable. Some parents are managing this by buying brick/dumb phones (phones with no internet capacity) <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/uk/product-reviews/tech/g33440915/best-dumb-phones/> Another challenge can be managing your child's feelings of being left out if their friends have smartphones – this is probably the hardest pressure to resist because it is so hard to make your child feel isolated in this way.



With this pressure in mind, some parents have approached me asking to share the Somerset Pact website – this is a pledge around resisting smartphone use until your child is at least in year 9. You can find that the website [here](#). The theory being, the more it is normalised with more parents and carers, the easier it is to change a culture. In the end, it is up you as parents and carers to decide what is best for you your children – never an easy job.

## Key dates for the year ahead

I've tried to look ahead so that you can get as many dates in the diary as possible. If we do need to change anything, I'll aim to get that information to you as soon as possible

### **Term 3:**

Term 3 begins 6th January  
INSET Monday 6th January  
INSET Tuesday 7th January  
Curry Day – Tuesday February 11<sup>th</sup>  
AFA Disco – Tuesday February 11<sup>th</sup>  
Year 3 Presentation Wednesday 12th February pm  
Year 3 Presentation Thursday 13th February am  
End of Term 3: Friday 14th February

### **Term 4:**

Term 4 Begins: Monday 24th February  
Mid-year School Reports sent out – Friday 28th February  
World Book Day – Thursday 6th March – (More details to follow)  
Year 5 – Parent Presentation Wednesday 12th March pm  
Year 5 – Parent presentation Thursday 13th March am  
Red Nose Day Friday 21st March – Children to bring in a suggested £1 donation – Children wear a red item of clothing.  
AFA Non-uniform day – Friday March 28<sup>th</sup> – Bring in a donation for the Easter Fayre  
Ashcombe's Got Talent Finals – Wednesday 2nd April  
AFA Easter Fayre - Friday 4th April  
End of Term 4 – 4th April

### **Term 5:**

Term 5 Begins 22nd April  
Class Photos – YR and Y6 24th April  
Y5 Morfa Bay residential Monday 28th April to Friday 2nd May  
KS2 Test week – 12th May – 15th May  
Year 1 Parent Event/Performance – Wednesday 21st May pm  
Year 1 Parent Event/Performance – Wednesday 22nd May am  
Day of Sport and Kindness for Liam Shepherd Foundation - Friday 23rd May (Children wear sport clothes to school)  
End of Term 6 Tuesday 22nd July  
End of Term 5 – 23rd May

### **Term 6:**

Term Begins: Monday 2nd June  
INSET Monday 2nd June  
Y4 Multiplication Check Window Opens - Monday 2nd June to Friday 13th June  
Y1 Phonics Screening Check week – Monday 9th June to Friday 13th June  
Reception and Year 1 sports day - Wednesday 18th June (reserve day Friday 20th)  
AFA Summer Fayre – Saturday 5th July.  
Year 4, 5 & 6 sports day Wednesday 9th July (reserve day Friday 11th)  
Year 2 & Year 3– Wednesday 16th July (reserve day Friday 18th)  
Parents' Evening 1 – Tuesday 8th July 4:00-7pm  
Parents' Evening 2 – Thursday 10th July September 3:30-6:00pm  
Y6 Leavers Show, Parents Lunch and Leavers' Service Thursday 17th July am and pm  
Wrong Trousers Day for Grand Appeal – Monday 21st July – (Children can come into school wearing unusual trousers, shorts or skirts)

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Forever proud to serve you.

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Yours sincerely,

Chris Penny  
Headteacher

