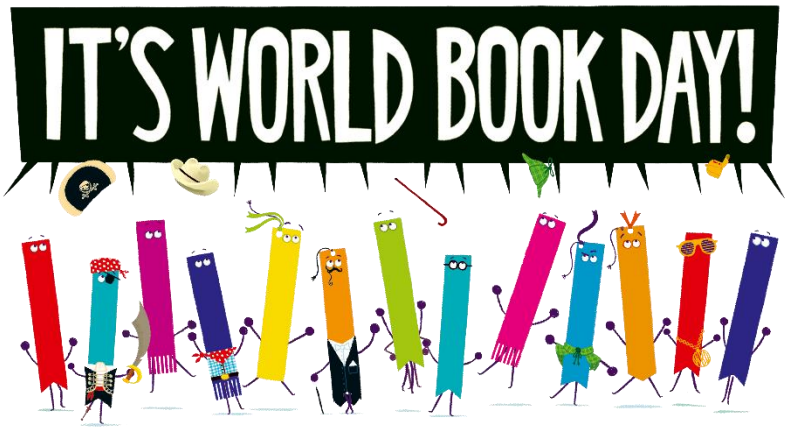
Newsletter

Belong Thrive Succeed

Wednesday 25th February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you all had a great half term- it's only 5 more weeks until Easter so Spring is just around the corner- hopefully bringing with it some warmer weather! It's been great to see the children back at school after half term this week, they have been focused on their learning and playing happily outside with their friends and our new equipment!



Thursday 5th March is World Book Day!
Our Reading Ambassadors have been busy planning an exciting day for all of our children! It's going to be a fun and exciting day in school bringing the focus of World Book Day back to sharing and celebrating books and promoting a love of reading, as well as having time to mix with peers across the school.

Every year we are overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of our school community, but we don't want our World Book Day celebrations to be an additional burden for parents/carers.
This year, children are invited to come to school dressed as a book character or wearing pyjamas, ready to read. Please be aware that children will need to wear a suitable coat and appropriate shoes for playtime.

Mrs Shorthouse
After many years at Hill Top, both in the office and the classroom, Mrs Shorthouse is leaving us for pastures new. We are all sad that she is leaving us but wish her all the best in her new job. I am sure that you will join me in thanking her for all that she has done for our families, children and staff at Hill Top. She will be greatly missed.

Food Allergies in school

Did you know that around 7% of children in the UK have some form of food allergy? Food allergies are currently on the increase; research shows that 1 in 10 children younger than 5 years old have food allergies.

As a school, we have a wide range of allergies within our community and they range in severity.

A food allergy occurs when the body's immune system sees a certain food as harmful and reacts by causing symptoms. This is an allergic reaction. Allergic reactions can involve the skin, mouth, eyes, lungs, heart, gut and brain.

An allergic reaction triggered by a small amount of food eaten or touched can be rapid in onset and progress quickly into a life-threatening emergency.

We have the following systems in place to help keep everyone in the school community safe:

- Food may not be shared between children, washing hands before and after eating is encouraged.
- We are a nut free school
- We discourage food with high risk of allergic reactions or known allergic reactions to individual students, being brought to school.
- Teachers plan for children with food allergies when planning any fundraisers, cultural days or community events by sending notices to parents requesting food allergy information for each event and discouraging specific food products.
- Food rewards are discouraged and non-food rewards encouraged.
- Children at risk of food anaphylaxis should eat food that is supplied by their parents or food that is agreed to by parents prior to a given event.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation in keeping everyone safe.

School Attendance

Attendance has been very good so far this academic year at **95.8%** to date- the figure for schools nationally is currently 93.4% so we are above national. However, we would really like each child's attendance to be above 96%. The table below demonstrates how much school children miss if they are absent and it is surprising how this adds up.

Attendance Matters!		
If your child misses…	**That equals…**	**Which is…**
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year of missed learning
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year of missed learning
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year of missed learning
5 days holiday + 5 days illness = attendance below 96%		
10 days holiday + 5 days illness = attendance below 93%		

Any absence (including lateness) affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence can seriously affect their learning. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law.

Good attendance is important because statistics show that children with good attendance have higher attainment in school and studies show that children with attendance above 96% make better progress socially and academically. With the focus and development on the curriculum that has taken place at school, children who are absent will find gaps in their sequential knowledge. Please think carefully before you book a holiday or keep your child at home!

Drinking Water in School

We are trying to encourage children to drink more water during the day! Water is available at lunchtimes and we encourage children to bring in water bottles to class

Why drink water?

It boosts learning. *When we are thirsty, mental performance including memory, attention and concentration can decrease by around 10%. Pupils concentrate better because they are not distracted by the effects of dehydration such as thirst, tiredness and irritability.*

It's healthy! Drinking enough water regularly throughout the day can protect health and contribute to well-being. It can help prevent a range of health problems that stem from dehydration such as lethargy; dizziness; constipation; headaches and bladder, kidney and bowel problems. In addition, water has none of the health problems associated with drinks containing sugar, additives, sweeteners or caffeine.
Remember a hydrated child is a much happier child!

If you have any questions, please phone school or email office@ashbyhilltop.leics.sch.uk

Regards,

Sylvie Newman
Headteacher

2025-2026 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please find below dates for this academic year- we have tried to include as much information as possible here! This information will be added to the bi-weekly newsletter and will also be available on the school website. New dates will be added in green!

3 March	**Phonics check meeting for Year 1 parents**	**3.30pm**
5 March	World Book Day	All day
5 March	FOHT World Book Day Wonka Bars	

9 March	British Science Week	
9 March	**Year 5 Bikeability - letters have gone out to parents**	**During the school day.**
24 March	EYFS Classroom showcase	3.00pm
27 March	School closes for Easter	3.25pm
Easter Break		
13 April	School reopens for children	8.45am
13 April	Y5/6 Greek workshop in hall	
15 April	World Art Day	
24 April	FOHT Rainbow Run	
29– 1 May	Y4 Beaumanor Residential	
4 May	School closed for Bank Holiday	All day
7 May	EYFS Classroom showcase	8.30am
11 May	Year 6 SATS week	
15 May	Y6 Camp Day	
21 May	EYFS Art Gallery for parents	pm
22 May	School closes for half term	3.25pm
May Half term		
1 June	School reopens for children	8.45am
1 June	Year 4 Multiplication check window	
3 June	Sports Day	am
8 June	Year 1 phonics check week begins	
9 June	FOHT School Summer Disco	pm
10 June	Musical Evening	pm
TBC	Saffron Lane- NWLSSP sporting event, selected KS2 children TBC	
12 June	Y6 Warning Zone trip	
22 June	Whole School Picnic	
24 June	Reserve Date for Sports Day- in case of wet weather	
25 June	End of Year Reports out to parents	
29 June	KS1-KS2 transition meeting	3.40pm
29 June	EYFS Classroom showcase	8.45am
30 June	EYFS-KS1 transition meeting	3.40pm
2 July	Move up day for whole school (Y6 to high school)	All day

2 July	Meet the Teacher evening	4-5pm
3 July	EYFS celebration	
6 July	Y6 Leavers Assembly	am
7 July	School closes for Summer	
Summer Break- have a wonderful Summer!		
24 August	School reopens for children	8.45am