

New Classroom Build

Work to construct our new classroom is due to start next week and some of the school site will be inaccessible throughout the building period. The builder's compound will be fenced off from near the entrance to the school hall, across the playground towards the orchard and half of the turning circle. Limited vehicle access to the turning circle will be maintained for use by Pre-School. Please note that the pedestrian gate from the turning circle into school will not be available during the building works. Therefore the only access to the school site will be the main entrance at the village hall end of the school. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

We have been in touch with the village hall committee and they have very kindly agreed to allow parents to use the car park at the rear of the village hall as a drop off and pick up point. There is a gate leading from their car park onto the footpath adjacent to the school with quick access to the main school entrance. Please park carefully at the village hall using only the rear car park. The village hall have asked that parents do not park at the front of the village hall and we hope that parents will respect these wishes. Many thanks to the village hall for being so accommodating to us during our building project.



Class 5 visit to Bletchley Park

As part of their topic on World War II, Class 5 visited Bletchley Park to learn about the codebreakers and their vital contribution during the war years.



PTA News – Celebrating Success

A message from Jo Brown, retiring Chair of the PTA

The annual AGM was held on November 14th and from this meeting the following headline outputs and decisions have been taken:

Changes to Committee Personnel:

New Chair: Lizzie Kewell, vacating Jo Brown

New Treasurer: Tina Keech, vacating Bharathi Brown

New Secretary: Kristen Fisher, vacating Lizzie Kewell

Ordinary Committee members:

Vicky Gentle

Lindsey Goldsmith

Jo Brown

A massive 'Thank You' to the incoming and remaining committee members which will enable the committee to continue functioning. Most importantly it will ensure all children continue to receive the benefits of additional spending in order to advance the education of the pupils at Pirton School.

PTA Fundraising Ambitions 2017/18

We have discussed and agreed with the school that the allocation of the fundraising efforts will be directed on 3 important elements over the next coming year:

1. Replacing the schools 16 outdated pieces of laptop hardware with an ambition of acquiring 30 new laptops and other IT equipment to enhance the IT curriculum. This will ensure each and every pupil gets the use and benefit of a laptop during their IT sessions.
2. Improving the outdoor equipment and environment for Class 1.
3. Continuing to support the school and pupils benefit from outings such as a Pantomime trip, Christmas card project and Christmas Disco, the year 6 leaver books & clothing.

Remaining Funds from 2016/17 budget

The remaining funds from the 16/17 budget, £4,500 will be allocated in full to securing additional IT equipment. Communication of this will be made via the regular newsletter bulletins.

Change to Committee Name: Pirton Parent Teacher Association.

The committee will adopt the nationally recognised brand name Parent Teacher Association (PTA) with immediate effect. There will be no change in how the committee operates, raises funds or its core purpose. We will continue to hold our charitable status.

As the outgoing Chair, I would like to personally thank all those parents, members of teaching staff and pupils who have supported the committee over the last 2 years by either getting involved, through to organising, attending events or generally lending a hand. The money raised really does make a difference to the children's enjoyment of school life.

Jo Brown

Pirton Parent Teacher Association

Recent Fundraising

A big thank you to parents and pupils for some fantastic results during recent charity events.

Money raised for Children In Need has been passed to LV Insurance in Hitchin who will match fund the amount collected. They will let us know in due course the total amount raised.

The Royal British Legion representative for Pirton was really impressed with the amount of £257 which was collected for the Poppy Appeal and asked us to pass on heartfelt thanks to parents and pupils.



E-Safety Evening

A reminder that our E-Safety information evening for parents takes place in the school hall on Monday evening at 7pm. We look forward to seeing you there.

Primary Admissions 2018

The application process for Primary admissions for children born between 1st September 2013 and 31st August 2014 opened on Monday 6th November 2017 with the closing date deadline of 15th January 2018. Online applications can be made on www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions.

Outdoor PE Kit and Uniform

As the colder winter weather commences, a reminder that pupils should have jogging bottoms in their PE kits. PE takes place outside whenever possible over the winter months.

A reminder too that although pupils should wear school shoes in the classroom.

Panto Lunch

We will be having a late lunch when we return from the panto in January. We have asked Hilary, our Cook, to provide packed lunches for pupils who normally have a school lunch on Fridays. The choices are a ham, cheese or tuna sandwich and either a banana, apple or orange. The packed lunch will also include a drink, packet of crisps and a cookie.

Parents also have the option to provide a packed lunch of their own. A credit will then be added to your child's dinner account for that day.

Please indicate your choice on the slip attached and return to the school office by Friday 8th December so that we can order supplies prior to the Christmas break.



Christmas Card Project – Information from the PTA re Ordering

“Christmas Cards Made With Love by Your Children”

The PTA are working in partnership again this year with Art Projects for Schools (APFS). Inside your child's book bag you will find the artwork your child has lovingly created. The picture will be accurately reproduced into full colour onto Christmas cards that are available to order. Additional items are also available such as wrapping paper and gift tags.

The more orders raised the greater the amount of funds Pirton Parent Teacher Association receive, from which your child will benefit.

To order simply visit www.apfsorders.co.uk and input the unique code found on the back of the artwork.

Importantly your order must be placed online by midnight on 29th November. The artwork will then be dispatched back to school by 7th December and arrive home in your child's book bag ready for you to send and share with family and friends in time for Christmas.

Any queries relating to the project can be addressed to APFS by calling 08000271939 quoting the Pirton school identity code 2301 or simply email on info@apfs.org.uk



Door Entry System

As you may be aware, we have a new door entry system to increase our security and safety. The new system has a camera so that we can see who is at the door and also a speaking facility. Can we please ask parents to try to stand in front of the camera and also to state their name if asked for clarification. This will enable us to ensure we only allow authorised personnel on to the school premises.

The system does not have a video recording facility so please be assured that when you stand in front of the camera it is simply for us to establish who is seeking entry to the premises. We would ask for your patience whilst we get used to the new system!

Christmas Concerts

This year's Christmas performances are as follows:

Classes 1 and 2 – Lights, Camel, Action!

Wednesday 6th December at 2:00pm, School Hall
Thursday 7th December at 6:30pm, School Hall

Classes 3, 4 and 5 – Carol Concert

Wednesday 13th December at 2.00pm, St Mary's Church
Thursday 14th December at 6:30pm, St Mary's Church

Please see attached letter for information about ordering tickets for these concerts.



Snow Clearance

In the event of icy or snowy weather we need to spread rock salt on the playground and car park before staff and children arrive at school. This is a major task for our premises staff and we would appreciate any help parents are able to offer. If you would like to help or would like more information, please speak to Mrs Bailey in the school office. Thank you!

Christmas Hamper Appeal

Schools in the Hitchin area have agreed to support the Christmas Hamper Appeal being organised by Hitchin Foodbank.

At Pirton School we have offered to supply packets of stuffing so if you would like to add a box of Paxo or similar to your next shop we would be really pleased to receive a donation to pass on to this Appeal.

School Closure Information – Important Update

A reminder that last year Herts County Council launched a new Schools Closure Notification System which will allow parents to receive a text or email if the school closes. In order to receive a text or email parents will need to register with the new system which is hosted by a company called Everbridge.

To register, please visit <https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736725489> where you will be directed to the 'Sign Up' page. Click on the 'sign up' button located at the top right hand corner of the page on the grey strip and from there follow the instructions. It should take no more than a few minutes to register and you will be able to edit your information at any time, eg change of mobile number or email address. If you have children at more than one Hertfordshire school, you can register for those schools in a single registration process. Once signed up, you will receive messages relating to the status of schools during severe winter weather. This new system allows you to receive this information automatically and so saving parents the need to listen to radio stations or wait for a telephone call.



We will also continue to use the Cascade system and up to date cascade lists have recently been distributed. A reminder of how the cascade system works is attached to this newsletter. There is a date at the bottom of the cascade list – please destroy any old cascades as phone numbers may have changed and keep this information to hand over the winter months.

Information about school closures across Hertfordshire will continue to be broadcast on BBC Three Counties Radio and announcements made on 106.7 and 106.9 BOBfm, Heart 96.9 Home Counties and Heart 97.6 Home Counties. If you don't have access to a radio, links to school closure information can be found on the following website: www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties

A decision to close the school is never taken lightly. Once a decision has been made, the school answer phone will announce if school is closed and a Parentmail message will also be sent out.

School Admissions Arrangements 2019/20 - Consultation

Hertfordshire County Council is running a consultation on the proposed admissions arrangements for the school year 2019/20 and is seeking responses from parent/carers, schools and community groups.

The proposed changes are:

1. To amend the wording and definition of 'Rule 5 - Nearest School' to include all schools and academies (regardless of status) unless that school or academy prioritises applications and allocates places on the basis of faith.
2. To include reference to the Shared Anti-Fraud Service in the definitions section in cases of fraudulent address verification.

The consultation period runs until 5 January 2018. Please visit

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions2019 for more information and to respond online.

Old Batteries

There is a collection bucket inside the main entrance door for any old batteries you need to dispose of. Please use this facility rather than placing used batteries in your waste bin.



Allergies

We would remind parents that we have children in school with severe (life threatening) allergies to nuts, sesame seeds and tahini which is contained in hummus. Please refrain from including these ingredients in snacks and lunch boxes.

Thank you for your support in keeping our pupils safe.

Seasonal Illnesses

During the winter months, pupil absences resulting from illness understandably increase. A reminder that advice from the Health Protection Agency advises parents to keep children away from school for 48 hours after the last episode of sickness or diarrhoea to help prevent these illnesses spreading quickly. We would ask for your support in adhering to this guidance.

As you are aware, we operate a First Day Response system which means that if we have not been informed of a pupil being absent from school, we will endeavour to make contact with parents to establish the reason why your child is not in school.

Our phone system makes it very easy for parents to record any absences – phone the main number 01462 712370 and select Option 1 to leave a message. Please note that you do not have to wait to hear all the options before selecting the option you require. This facility to record an absence on the answer phone is available at all times during the day and night so parents do not have to wait until office hours to pass on this information.

01462 712370



British Values

Our November value is
CONSIDERATION

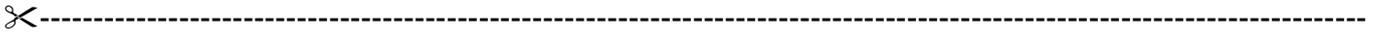


Our December value is
TOLERANCE



Occasional Day

A reminder that Friday 1st December is an Occasional Day and school will be closed.



E-Safety Information Evening – Monday 27th November

Name (s).....

I / We will / will not be able to attend the E-Safety Information Evening.

Signed



Pantomime Lunch – Friday 5th January

Please complete if your child normally has a school lunch on a Friday.

Name:

I will provide a packed lunch for my child			
I would like to order the following packed lunch for my child:			
Sandwich	Please tick one box	Fruit	Please tick one box
Cheese		Apple	
Ham		Banana	
Tuna		Orange	

Signed

Autumn Term Dates 2017

Saturday 25 th November	PSA Christmas Fair 12.30pm Village Hall
Monday 27 th November	E-Safety Parent Information Evening 7pm (new date)
Tuesday 28 th November	Football Rally
Wednesday 29 th November	Christmas Card ordering deadline
Friday 1 st December	Occasional Day – school closed News Classroom building project commences
Tuesday 5 th December	PSA Bags2School Clothes Collection
Wednesday 6 th December	Key Stage 1 Christmas Performance – 2pm in the School Hall
Thursday 7 th December	Key Stage 1 Christmas Performance – 6.30pm in the School Hall
Friday 8 th December	Christmas Crafts Afternoon
Tuesday 12 th December	Christmas Lunch (change of date)
Wednesday 13 th December	Key Stage 2 Lessons & Carols – 2pm at St Mary's
Thursday 14 th December	Key Stage 2 Lessons & Carols – 6.30pm at St Mary's
Monday 18 th December	PSA Children's Christmas discos 4pm to 7.30pm
Tuesday 19 th December	End of term

Spring Term Dates 2018

Wednesday 3 rd January	INSET Day – school closed for pupils
Thursday 4 th January	Spring Term begins
Friday 5 th January	Whole school panto trip to Stevenage
Wednesday 10 th January	Class 3 swimming starts
Friday 12 th January	Class 5 Assembly – 9am School Hall
Friday 19 th January	Class 4 Assembly
Wednesday 26 th January	Class 3 Assembly
Friday 2 nd February	Class 2 Assembly
Monday 5 th February	Young Voices Concert (Years 4, 5 & 6), O2 Arena
Friday 9 th February	Class 1 Assembly
Monday 12 th to Friday 16 th February	Half Term holiday – school closed
Tuesday 20 th February	Parent Consultation Meetings – 3.30pm – 6.00pm
Wednesday 21 st February	Class 2 swimming starts Parent Consultation Meetings – 5pm – 8pm
Thursday 1 st March	World Book Day
Monday 12 th – Friday 16 th March	Cycle Training – Level 1 and Level 2
Friday 23 rd March	PSA Bags2School Clothes Collection Sport Relief
Thursday 29 th March	End of term

Summer Term Dates 2018

Monday 16 th April	First day of Summer Term
Wednesday 18 th April	Class 1 swimming starts
Monday 7 th May	Bank Holiday – school closed
Monday 14 th to Friday 18 th May	Year 6 SATS Week
Friday 25 th May	Inset Day – school closed
Monday 28 th May to Friday 1 st June	Half Term holiday – school closed
Monday 4 th June	Inset Day – school closed
Monday 11 th to Friday 15 th June	Year 1 Phonics Testing
Tuesday 12 th June	Athletics Rally
Friday 15 th June	Class photographs
Wednesday 4 th July	Key Stage 2 Performance 2pm and 6.30 pm
Thursday 5 th July	Key Stage 2 Performance 6.30pm
Friday 6 th July	Reports to Parents
Wednesday 11 th July	Sports Afternoon
Thursday 12 th July	Secondary Transfer Day (to be confirmed)
Monday 16 th July	Open Session for Parents re Reports – 3.30 – 5pm
Wednesday 18 th July	Reserve Sports Afternoon
Tuesday 24 th July	Leavers' Assembly – 9am End of term

Term Dates 2017-2018

Autumn Term 2017

Wednesday 30th August – Tuesday 19th December 2017

Half Term: Monday 23rd October – Friday 27th October 2017

Occasional Days: Wednesday 30th August, Thursday 31st August, Friday 1st September 2017

INSET Day: Monday 4th September 2017

Occasional Day: Friday 1st December 2017

Spring Term 2018

Wednesday 3rd January – Thursday 29th March 2018

Half Term: Monday 12th February – Friday 16th February 2018

INSET Day: Wednesday 3rd January 2018

Summer Term 2018

Monday 16th April – Friday 27th July 2018

Half Term: Monday 28th May – Friday 1st June 2018

Bank Holiday: Monday 7th May 2018

INSET days: Friday 25th May, Monday 4th June, Wednesday 25th July 2018

Occasional Days: Thursday 26th July, Friday 27th July 2018

School Term Dates for 2018-19 can also be found on the following link:

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/schlfe/termdates/>