

Everyone can achieve

Everyone can learn

Everyone belongs

Air Balloon Hill Primary School

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Newsletter 17

20th January 2023

Hello,

You will no doubt be aware that the teaching union, the NEU, recently held a ballot for its members to vote on industrial action in response to the government's underfunding of schools and teacher pay. The result of the ballot is that members voted in favour of taking industrial action on 1st Feb, 2nd March, 15th & 16th March.

What does this mean?

This means that any teacher who is a member of the NEU may take industrial action on these dates. Industrial action means that they will go on strike. If a teacher strikes, they will not be in school to teach their class meaning that the children cannot come to school. If a large enough number of teachers, including senior leaders, go on strike then it may not be safe to open the school for any children not just for those whose teachers are on strike.

What will happen at Air Balloon on these dates?

At the moment, I cannot tell you whether teachers who belong to the NEU are planning on striking or whether some, or all, classes will be closed on 1st Feb, 2nd, 15th & 16th March. I would however advise everyone to explore what childcare options may be available for them on 1st February. I will write to you next week to confirm arrangements with you.

Why might Air Balloon teachers be striking?

The decision to strike is not an easy one to make and no teacher wants to go on strike. However, schools are not being properly funded. As a result, schools are being asked to fund staff pay rises out of their existing budgets. Schools, including Air Balloon, do not have enough funding to cover this expense. Even with the additional funding that has been provided for the next financial year, this does not cover the cost of staffing. The only outcome of this is that resources will have to be cut. This means that teachers and children will not have all the resources they need and we may not be able to put in place the provision, including for children with special educational needs, that we desperately need to support children's learning. Our school budget simply cannot withstand the lack of adequate funding and the detrimental effect it will have on children's achievement.

Will the strikes definitely happen?

We hope not. The unions will be in discussion with the government about funding for schools and teachers' pay. We all hope that these discussions are productive so that industrial action is not needed.

Can we help?

If you don't think it's fair that schools have not been given adequate funding then you can support the campaign to boost education funding. You could also write to your MP or local councillors and tell them that you support better funding for schools.

What happens next?

I will write to you next week – hopefully by Wednesday afternoon – with more information about how the planned industrial action will affect Air Balloon.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. Please understand that nobody at Air Balloon wants to go on strike. We want to come to work every day and teach your children. But we need to be adequately funded in order to do so.

I will be in touch next week to update you.

I hope you all enjoy your weekend.

Tim Browse

Sarah's Top Tips

- Wessex Water Social Tariff - If you are on a low income, have three or more children living with you that are under five, have someone in the house with a condition that means they need to wash more for example eczema, or are on Universal Credits you may be able to be put onto a cheaper tariff for your water bill. For more information please click [here](#)
- The Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) is a statutory consumer body for the water industry in England and Wales. They offer independent advice about your water company. If its service has been poor, they may investigate your complaint. For more information please click [here](#)
- Free School Transport GOV.UK - To see if you may be entitled to free transport to school please click [here](#).
- For support around paying for ever rising energy bills please see the following link. If you would like any further advice or a leaflet on how to reduce energy usage in the home please feel free to make an appointment with me.
Bristol Emergency Winter Fuel Fund - Bristol Energy Network - This is a link for the Emergency Winter fuel fund. It is different to the Cost of Living Payments and if you are given a grant, it wont affect your payments if you are in receipt of benefits. For more information please click [here](#)



Year 4

Year 4 have been incredibly busy dedicating our afternoons and our amazing "Environmental Action" learning to creating beautiful artwork to share with you! You may well know that the art is constructed from a variety of recycled materials and aims to promote all our important Environmental Action messages from "Reducing, Reusing and Recycling" to stopping deforestation and plastic pollution in the oceans and everything in between.

We would love for you to attend our art exhibition on Wednesday (25th January) at 3pm. If you could congregate in the foyer one of our staff will walk you down to your child's classroom to view their amazing creations. We would then appreciate you waiting briefly on the playground while we help the children get ready for home time.

Many thanks,

The Year 4 Team

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION ART!

WEDNESDAY 25TH JANUARY 2023 3PM

ALL YEAR 4 PARENTS ARE INVITED TO OUR ART EXHIBITION. YEAR 4 HAVE BEEN LEARNING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE!

ACT NOW!

PHOTOS!



PE Kit

We have noticed a decline in the number of children wearing the correct PE kit. Your child should be wearing the following uniform for PE:

- Plain white T-Shirt or Green T-Shirt with the school logo
- Black Shorts or jogging bottoms
- Daps or Trainers

On the day that your child has PE, they can arrive in school dressed in the appropriate PE kit. Please speak to your child's teacher to find out your child's PE days.



Lost Property

Annabelle in Discovery Class has lost her knotted pink hat with a yellow bobble on it. If found, please return to the school office to be returned to class.



Attendance

We know that in January, many families start to think about summer holidays & we know that this year, with the costs of living increases, some families may be tempted to make use of cheaper holidays during term-time. We therefore wanted to take this opportunity to remind all of our families of our attendance policy and term dates for the rest of the year.

Our school attendance policy is clear that the cheaper cost of holidays in term-time is not a reason for absence that can be authorised and as for any absences from school which have not been authorised, penalty notices may be issued.

Attending school every day throughout a term helps children and young people maximise their learning in the classroom and enjoy the benefits of their educational experience. A week out of school may not seem much, but for some areas of the curriculum, that can mean that children miss the key building blocks for their learning – particularly in maths, phonics or when starting a new text in English – leaving children behind their peers or returning to school and not understanding what the class is working on. Attending every day really does make a difference.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely that any leave will be authorised by the Headteacher. However, any request should be put in writing. Term-time Leave Request Forms are available from the foyer, please contact us on 0117 903 0077 or email airballoonhillp@bristol-schools.uk if you have any questions. Every application for a term-time absence is reviewed on an individual basis – taking into account specific reasons for the absence and individual circumstances – we don't have a 'blanket policy' of automatically declining requests for absences and would encourage anyone considering a term-time holiday to give us as much information on their Leave of Absence Request as possible so that an informed decision can be made.

When completing a Leave of Absence Request, please ensure it is handed into the school office at least 4 weeks before the intended absence and remember that we cannot authorise absences retrospectively. All requests will be responded to in writing and you will be informed if the absence has been authorised or not and whether any further action will be taken (i.e if you will receive a Penalty Notice).

Parents/carers are reminded that any unauthorised absences may result in a penalty notice or prosecution. However, every attempt to resolve parent and carers' concerns and improve a child's attendance will be made before any formal action is considered. When an absence is initially reported as an illness but we subsequently discover that the absence was for a term-time holiday, penalty notices will be issued. It is important that if you have concerns regarding your child's attendance you speak to your child's teacher or a member of the school's Attendance Team - Mrs Knight, Mrs Stone or Mrs King.

A copy of the school attendance policy can be found here: www.abhps.com/policies/ and information on Penalty Notices can be found here: [PN-leaflet-2020.pdf \(abhps.com\)](#)

To assist parents/carers to book holidays and arrange other events please find detailed below the term dates and inset days for the remainder of this academic year:

Term 3: Tuesday 3 January 2023 to Friday 10 February 2023

Term 4: Monday 20 February 2023 to Friday 31 March 2023

Term 5: Monday 17 April 2023 to Friday 26 May 2023

Term 6: Monday 5 June 2023 to Friday 21 July 2023

In-Set Dates

Monday 20th March 2023

Bank Holidays (school closed)

Monday 1st May 2023

Monday 8th May 2023

If you would like to be extra-organised, the term dates for 2023-24 are also available on our website - www.abhps.com/term-dates/

Library News

We have had an exciting start to January as we received a delivery of brand-new books to add to our Library catalogue.



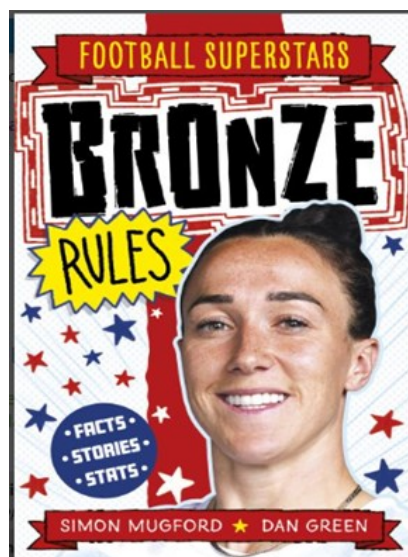
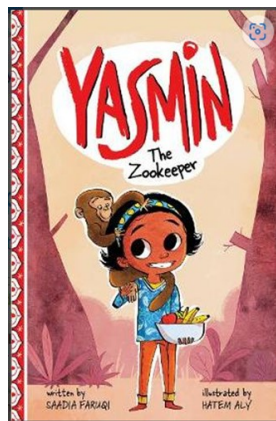
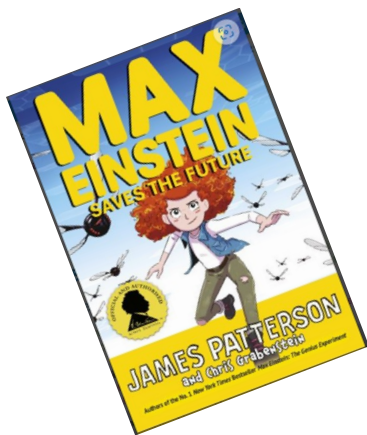
The books range from picture books, short chapter books for KS1 and non-fiction, plus lots of exciting new fiction for KS2.

The children have been really engaged in the new books and it has created a lot of buzz in the Library.

Last year we fund-raised just over £1,000 from our Summer and Christmas Fayres, and holding our Second-hand Bookshop on World Book day. We look forward to another year of fundraising and I would like to thank the children and families that have recently donated a wonderful selection of books that will either be added to our library stock or will be available in our next book shop this coming World Book Day in March 2023.

If you would like to donate some books, you can leave them with the reception team at school.

Thank you, Miss McDonald



FAB News

Non-uniform day on Friday 10th February. No fancy dress. Advised donation £1 per child. Please give all money to the class teacher or the school office.

