



Fir Tree Newsletter



Dear Parents,

We have had a lovely start to Term 2 and it's nice to have all the children back at school after the half term break. Whilst we are happy to be back at work, our thoughts do go out to those in the school community who are struggling during these difficult times.

The academic year continues at pace and we have already achieved so much as we head towards the end of the calendar year. With a number of exciting events and activities planned for the remainder of the term, we will be sending you out our Christmas diary dates letter to help keep you up to speed in due course.

Thank you to all parents who attended parents meetings prior to half term, we hope that you found these informative and we look forward to working with you moving forward to ensure that your child progresses.

Government guidance released last Wednesday allows us to continue as we have been, with the exception of extra-curricular clubs. Breakfast club are able to proceed as normal. I will of course keep you informed of any new developments as they arise.

The guidance on the new national restrictions makes it clear the government is continuing to prioritise the long term future of children and young people therefore early years settings and schools will remain open and I am very pleased that this is the case.

It is very important for children and young people to attend their education setting for their wellbeing and long-term development. School attendance continues to be mandatory.

Please could we remind you that **only one** parent should be dropping off or collecting children; on collection children should be taken straight home with no parents or pupils congregating and talking outside the school site. If we all play our part with the lockdown measures we will continue to all play our part in keeping everyone safe and enabling school to remain open.

Unfortunately there seems to be a nationwide shortage of uniform suppliers who are able to offer us school fleeces. We are still trying to source these for you to be able to buy for the children and we will update you when we have news. In the meantime we welcome the children wearing warm/thermal underclothes, long sleeved t-shirts, etc.

Wishing you all a great weekend. Thanks as always for your continued support.

Regards,
Lindsay Wood
Headteacher

What to do if your child develops symptoms of COVID-19

If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19, they must not come to school and should remain at home for at least 10 days from the date when their symptoms appeared. Anyone with symptoms will be eligible for testing and this can be arranged via <https://www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119.

All other household members who remain well must stay at home and not leave the house for 14 days.

This includes anyone in your 'Support Bubble'. Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill.

Household members should not go to work, school or public areas, and exercise should be taken within the home.

If you require help with buying groceries, other shopping, picking up medication, or walking a dog, you should ask friends or family.

Alternatively, you can order your shopping online and medication by phone or online.

Household members staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community.

Symptoms of COVID-19

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- **new continuous cough and/or**
- **high temperature and/or**
- **a loss of, or change in, normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)**

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild illness. If your child does develop symptoms, you can seek advice from NHS 111 at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/> or by phoning 111.

How to stop COVID-19 spreading There are things you can do to help reduce the risk of you and anyone you live with getting ill with COVID-19 Do

- **wash your hands with soap and water often - do this for at least 20 seconds**
- **use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available**
- **wash your hands as soon as you get home**
- **cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze**
- **put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards**

Further information is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>



Please note that our online calendar on the school website is updated regularly.

W/b 16th November
Road Safety Week

W/b 16th November
Anti-Bullying Week

Monday 16th November
Odd Socks Day

Thursday 10th December
PTA Christmas Movie Night
Lockdown lifted dependent

Monday 14th December
Bags to School Collection

Tuesday 15th – Thursday 17th December
Christmas Dinners

Wednesday 16th December
Panto

Thursday 17th December
End of Term 2 – early afternoon finish

Teacher Training Days

Friday 18th December 2020

Monday 4th January 2021

Friday 25th June 2021

Last newsletter I explained how we are intending to use Teams for any remote learning which may need to be completed after half term and



beyond. In addition to that guidance, I thought it may be useful to remind (below) when we will send work home to children for completion. Current arrangements for sending work to children who are unable to attend school:

- If a child is unwell but not showing symptoms work will not be sent.
- If a child awaiting a test result is unwell work will not be sent home.
- If a child is awaiting a delayed test result and feels fine, work will be sent home as soon as possible but no later than the next day.
- If a child is having to self-isolate after a positive test, then work will be sent home when they are feeling better. Parents are to inform the school, and work will be sent as soon as possible but no later than the next day.
- If a child or a group of children is/are having to isolate (but is/are feeling well themselves) as a family or class member is showing symptoms or has tested positively, then they will be sent work home as soon as possible but no later than the next day.
- If a class of children are having to self-isolate then the children will be taught by the class teacher remotely starting on the first day of isolation if possible.

All children in Years 1 to 6 now have their log ins which are in their reading diaries and homework books, they have had the opportunity to log on in school and have completed some tasks and we will continue to do this throughout the term. Each teacher will set an activity with their class for homework this term for them to complete on TEAMS. In addition to this we have also sent home with the children today an exercise book for them to complete any home learning in, please keep this safe until needed.

A huge thank you to everyone who purchased Pudsey Toast and Hot Chocolate today for Children in Need, popular as always! We raised a fabulous **£190** thank you everyone!



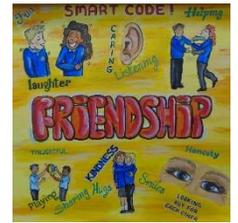
Miss Burton is a member of West Berks Food Bank. As we did not celebrate Harvest this term we would like to collect for the Food Bank up to **27th November**.



Any donations of tins or dried food that could go to others in need would be gratefully received. Teachers will be working with children in class to discuss why we are collecting and to develop our "it's ok to talk about it" culture at Fir Tree. Thanks in advance for your donations and help! See the attached leaflet for ideas on what to donate.

Value of the Month for November is...

FRIENDSHIP



Friendship is an act of giving to others.

Ideas for the theme of Friendship are:

- Discuss 'What is a Friend?'
- Talk about how we can care for our friends.
- Get your child to draw a picture of a special friend and write why they like them.
- Discuss, 'The only way to find a friend is to be one'.
- Talk about being a good friend and get your child to think about what kind of friend they are. How does being a friend influence their behaviour?
- Get your child to make two lists- What have you done this week that was friendly to others
- What have you done this week that was unfriendly to others?
- Discuss what they write and give positive praise and encouragement for friendly behaviour.
- Talk about what makes a good friend – this can be to brothers and sisters too!



Anti-Bullying Week 2020 is here next week – (Monday 16th – Friday 20th November) with the theme 'United Against Bullying'. As parents and carers, we all want our children to be happy and safe and it is natural to worry about bullying - particularly if we have experienced bullying ourselves, or we think our child may be more vulnerable to bullying. The good news is you are not alone! Every November schools throughout the United Kingdom take part in Anti-Bullying Week. This is an opportunity to shine a spotlight on bullying and consider the steps we can take together to stop it.

We will be raising awareness of Anti-bullying Week through assemblies, lessons and activities using resources provided by the Anti-Bullying Alliance next week, the aims of the week are to support and help children to understand:

- **The definition of respect**
- **That bullying is a behaviour choice**
- **That we can respectfully disagree with each other i.e. we don't have to be best friends or always agree with each other but we do have to respect each other**
- **That we all need to choose to respect each other both face to face and online.**



To kick off the week we would like all children to come to school wearing odd socks on Monday 16th November to raise awareness.

A huge thank you to everyone who donated towards the Poppy Appeal this year. It was wonderful to see so many pupils keen to donate and purchase a commemorative item. We held our 2 minute silence on Wednesday and remembered those who have put their lives on the line for us all, as always thank you for your support.





Over recent weeks, Fir Tree's PTA has been working hard to transform your children's portraits into fabulous keepsake tea towels! These will include portraits of all of the children and staff at Fir Tree and would make a great Christmas presents for family and friends.

These will cost £4 each or there will be an offer of 3 towels for £10. The tea towels will need to be preordered so the PTA can ensure that there will be enough for everyone who would like one - or even three!

A letter will be sent out in the coming weeks with details of how to order and pay for the tea towels.

Money raised from the purchase of these tea towels will be going towards the outdoor improvements that will benefit all of Fir Tree's children.

Notes from the School Office

Visitor Restrictions

Whilst we are under national restrictions we must keep visitors to the school to a minimum. Please do not visit the school office unless you have an appointment. Before coming to the office please telephone us on **01635 42129** or email office@firtree.newburyacademytrust.org. This visiting restriction includes those times before and after school, with the exception of those that are dropping off or collecting a child outside of their usual times or arrangements.

School Lunch

Please keep ordering your school lunches **before 8:00am** on the day that they are required – you can also order further in advance if you wish to. If you do not have a login or are having problems ordering then please speak to Mrs Rummins in the office.



If your circumstances have changed and you think that you may now be eligible for Free School Meals, you can apply at: www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals

Forgotten Items

It is difficult for office staff to run things round to classrooms at the moment because of maintaining the current 'bubble' system. It is therefore really helpful to check that your child has everything they need **before** they come to school i.e. lunch boxes, PE Kits, glasses, etc. If these items arrive late then, because of the restrictions, it may be some time before we are able to deliver them to classes.

Attendance

LITTLE MISS LATE

By Roger Hargreaves



Children will be marked in the register as 'Late' if they are not in school by the Start Time for their class, as per the current timetable. Please see the timetable below as a reminder of the times for your child's class. We are really appreciative of those parents who are following the drop off and collection guidelines, thank you. Please can we remind you that we ask that **only one parent/adult** attends the school at the start and end of the day for drop off and collection so that we can maintain social distancing.

	Nursery	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Start	8:45 am or 12:30 pm Nursery Gate	8:40 am Main Gate	8:50 am Main Gate	8:30 am Main Gate	8:50 am Car Park	9:00 am Main Gate	8:40 am Car Park	8:30 am Car Park
Collection	11:45 am or 3:30 pm Nursery Gate	3:10 pm / 1:10 pm Main Gate	3:20 pm / 1:20 pm Main Gate	3:00 pm / 1:00 pm Main Gate	3:20 pm / 1:20 pm Car Park	3:30 pm / 1:30 pm Main Gate	3:10 pm / 1:10 pm Car Park	3:00 pm / 1:00 pm Main Gate



What parents & carers need to know about ...

AMONG US

PEGI
7

Among Us is one of the most popular games of 2020. A space-themed 'social deduction game' where 4-10 players take on the guise of Crewmates, who must complete various tasks around their spaceship, while randomly selected Imposters must try their hardest to sabotage the others' efforts. The Imposters have to remain undetected through rounds of voting to win. While Among Us is a largely safe game, it's still prudent to be aware of any potential risks young ones might encounter when playing.

Inappropriate chat



While Among Us can be enjoyed locally via wi-fi, it is commonly played online. Between rounds, players come together to discuss who they think the Imposter is with a text chat, and it's here where children will come into contact with others. There is a profanity filter on the game as standard, but it can very easily be disabled and (like any unmoderated chat groups) children can be exposed to inappropriate, sexual or explicit language.

In-game purchases



Among Us is currently available on both PC (via the gaming service Steam) and mobile devices. On the PC, the game costs a flat amount of £3.99 and has some in-game purchases, whereas the mobile version is free to play but contains adverts and in-game purchases. You can pay to remove the ads or purchase in-game cosmetic items. While these amounts are relatively low, there's still the possibility that young ones could accidentally spend lots of money on the game without realising it, as the process is complete in a couple of taps if a card is connected to your store account.

Risk of hacking



Among Us has been the target of hacking activity. Indeed, only recently the game's developer, Innerloth, tweeted advice that users play private games or with people they trust, in response to hacking issues. As yet, there has been no breach in player accounts. However, if a big enough hack were to take place and player details were accessed, it could lead criminals to having access to credit card data and other personal credentials.

Use of external apps



Many players use external apps like Discord to voice chat with each other while they're playing. The problem with this is that it is unregulated by the game. Usually on Discord, players will only talk to other people they know in private chats, but a stranger could add a child on an external app: pretending to be interested in playing Among Us with them, when in reality they could be attempting to bully, groom or extort.

Mild violence

The art style of Among Us is cartoony but does contain some very mild violence. Imposters must kill off Crewmates one by one and can do this in a number of different ways. Some younger children might find this uncomfortable and could get scared or become upset when an Imposter is chasing them, or if they are the Imposter and are forced to kill. An age rating of PEGI 7 should help guide you in deciding if the game is appropriate or not.



Safety tips

Play with your children

Playing with your kids is one of the best ways to understand the game, and what makes it so popular. Among Us is free on mobile and is incredibly easy to pick up and play. It's also a great way to bond with your young ones - unless of course you're the Imposter or vote them out of the spaceship! You can do this by picking 'Local' on the main menu then 'Create Game'.

Use private lobbies

ENTER LOBBY



Among Us uses private lobbies to let players keep track of who they're gaming with. Using a uniquely generated code that can be given to friends prior to a game starting, it gives parents peace of mind knowing who their kids are playing with. To get a game code, simply select 'Host', choose the game settings, press 'Confirm', then send the six-digit code at the bottom of the screen to friends to invite them.

Deactivate credit cards



Having your credit card automatically paired with any online accounts that can be accessed by children is asking for trouble. A solution could be settling them up with their own account with no credit card attached. They can still ask you when they want to make a purchase, but it's totally up to you as and when that transaction happens.

Use an alias

By default, your name on Among Us will be set to whatever name your device recognises you as. If this is your child's real name, you'll want to ensure they change it before hopping into a game. This is really easily done by clicking 'Online' on the main menu, then simply typing in a new name at the top of the screen.



Talk about the risks



It's a good idea to talk to your child about the risks associated with online gaming, especially when there are chat options and an ability to communicate with others. Try to maintain an open dialogue with your child: talk about their experiences of the game and who they're playing with. This will help you to stay on top of how they're feeling and ensure they know they can come to you if ever they feel upset or uncomfortable about anything they've experienced.

Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for five years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work - but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.



Sources: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.innersloth.spacemafia>