



Dear Families,

Welcome back, and happy New Year! We hope you and your family had a really enjoyable festive season, and that 2022 will be a safe, happy, healthy and prosperous one for you and your family. The teachers and school staff have asked me to pass on their thanks for all the Christmas gifts they received. These were very much appreciated - thank you.

It has been great to welcome the children back to school this week. We are now all 'ready for learning' and there is a huge amount to look forward to this year! On our two INSET days the staff had a full day of professional development around our early reading phonics programme, Read Write Inc, as well as planning exciting learning in all the curriculum areas for the spring term. I know they are looking forward to starting some new lessons with the children in these areas. Ten staff members also attended de-escalation and positive handling training led by Team Teach so that we can ensure we provide the best care possible for when a child is in crisis and needs support.

Thank you for all you have done to support the safety of our school community and help keep the school open. We had a particularly difficult December, and were very close to placing some classes into remote learning because of absences caused by Covid for both pupils and staff. Fortunately, this was avoided through the resilience of our fantastic King Athelstan staff team and everyone's determination and collective efforts - members of staff stepped up again to cover colleagues, amend hours, work longer hours, work at weekends, undertake duties at the last minute on days they were not supposed to be working and, above all, protect the continuity in health, learning and experiences for the children at King Athelstan. I am very proud of how the staff team has responded to the challenge once again, always putting your children first.

As we know, infection rates in our community remain high and so we may at times experience staff shortages. Please be patient with us if things take longer than usual. Also, please bear in mind that, at times, your child may be taught or supported by different people to usual. We will do all we can to think creatively to ensure that we remain 'open', however, in doing this there may be times where it is not possible to run our full offering of subjects, activities and interventions in order to maintain safe ratios elsewhere in the school. By wearing masks on the school site, undertaking twice weekly LFTs and not sending children to school if they are unwell, you will help keep our school community well. We will continue to provide LFT packs to families when we can.

Social distancing at pick up and drop off will also help in stopping the spread. Our 'soft start' trickle in system starts at 8.40am and closes just before 8.55am, which helps with this. Please also remember the School Council request for families to line up on the Children's Centre side of the pavement as families queuing on the other side of the main gate in the morning are blocking the zebra crossing.

Do also look out for our spring curriculum overviews and Thinker's Project grids. These will be issued over the next week and outline the curriculum that your child will cover this term and how you can support. These can also be accessed on our school website here: <https://www.kingathelstan.kingston.sch.uk/curriculum/>

Kind regards

Lucy Mastrocola

Acting Headteacher

Attendance & Punctuality

As you are aware, our electronic registration system closes at 8.55am for children in Year 1-6. If your child arrives to class after 8.55am they will have already been marked absent. This can of course be avoided by arriving on time! Children in Reception must arrive at 8.35am. If your child is late, they miss out on the start of the day and interrupt the learning of others. Please call or email in for **every day** of absence if your child is unwell. **Be on time for school, every day!**

Reading Volunteers

To promote the love of books and provide additional opportunities for children to share books and read with an adult, we would like to invite back our team of volunteers. Would you like to join our team of reading volunteers? Mrs Ahearn would love to hear from you, so please email the school office if you are interested. All volunteers will need to complete a DBS form and be willing to take regular lateral flow tests.



Wilson Jones Lunch Orders



The new menu for next term is available on the school website here: <https://www.kingathelstan.kingston.sch.uk/about-the-school/school-meals/> Please remember to book your child's lunches - you can book now for the whole term.

Collecting children from school - a reminder of our policy

We expect that children from Nursery to Year 4 are dropped off and collected from school by an *adult* (i.e., 16 or over) parent or carer. Parents and carers should always let class teachers and school staff know before 1pm if someone different is going to collect their child. In order to begin to develop independence, Year 5 and 6 may walk to and home from school by themselves, *providing* parent/carers have giving permission by filling in the Google Form, found on the website here: <https://www.kingathelstan.kingston.sch.uk/for-parents-and-carers/what-to-do-if/>

Routine Medical Appointments

We understand that on occasions your child may need to attend an emergency appointment at the hospital or dentist. However, most routine appointments could be made during the school holidays or after school. Please endeavour to make non-urgent appointments at these times. Thank you.

Smart at School - School Uniform

It is lovely to see so many children in the correct school uniform. We know from our parent/carers surveys that families really value all children looking smart and taking pride in their uniform. Please help us to keep standards of behaviour and pride in our school high by following these rules:

Shoes - these should be sensible, flat, completely black school shoes, not trainers or any other colour shoes (not canvas shoes, boots or heeles etc.);

PE Uniform - children should wear PE uniform on their PE days which is a **plain white** t-shirt, **black** jogging bottoms or shorts with trainers and the purple school sweatshirt;

Jewellery - Jewellery is not generally permitted, however, stud earrings may be worn if your child is able to remove them or cover them independently for PE. Religious jewellery is permitted;

Watches - may be worn, but must be sensible, and not have any alarm, etc. 'Smart' watches are not allowed;

Nail Polish/Make Up - not to be worn in school. If a child has nail polish or make up on in school, they will be supported to remove it;

Hair -long hair (both girls and boys) should always be tied back with a plain hair band. No large JoJo bows or cats ears hairbands, please;

More information can be found here: <https://www.kingathelstan.kingston.sch.uk/for-parents-and-carers/school-uniform/>

Looking After School Uniform

From Year 1 we expect all pupils to look after and take responsibility for their own uniform. If they take their sweatshirt off, they are expected to return it to their tray, locker or chair bag. Ensuring that all items are clearly labelled greatly assists with this: initials are not enough - please write your child's name in full. Time spent by teachers dealing with lost uniform is time that could be spent teaching your child.

Dogs on site

Please note that there is a policy of no dogs on the school site. Although new puppies are very cute, please leave them at home. The only exception is for trained assistance dogs.

Staffing News

We have a few job vacancies to join our fantastic staff team: a Breakfast Club Assistant, Welfare and Attendance Officer, a Teaching Assistant in the main school, and a Teaching Assistant in our Specialist Resource Provision. Please see eteach here for more information and to apply:

<https://www.eteach.com/jobs/royal-borough-of-kingston-upon-thames-jobs-6238/?oo=ag>. Local primary school Lime Tree has also asked us to mention they are looking for a part-time Clerk to the Governors, and details can be found here: <https://www.limetree.info/about-us/current-vacancies>



Dates for your Diary

JANUARY	
Mon 10	Y5 first swimming lesson - Malden Centre
Mon 17	After school clubs start
Weds 19	Warhol Class Assembly
Thurs 20	Census Day - special menu
Weds 26	Van Gogh Class Assembly
Thurs 27	Governor Visit Day

FEBRUARY	
Tues 1	Chinese New Year - Year of the Tiger
Weds 2	Mehretu Class Assembly
Tues 8	Year 6 trip Junior Citizen
Half Term 14 th February - 18 th February	
Tues 22	Y4 virtual Multiplication Tables Check presentation to Parents 9.30am
Wed 23	Y6 trip to Kew Gardens
Mon 28	SEND Parent/Carer Consultations