



Ashill VC Primary School

Newsletter



Tel: 01760 440403

Friday 24th October 2025

www.ashillschool.co.uk

From the Desk of Mr Pickard...

Fresh Eyes



As we reach the end of this first half term, I find myself reflecting on those words I shared at the very start of term — about *new beginnings*, *curiosity*, and *fresh eyes*. When I wrote that, I promised to spend my first weeks at Ashill getting to know the school, the people, and the community that make it so special.

School Family



The *strong sense of family* that drew me to the school is noticeable every day. The kindness, teamwork, and commitment shown by staff, parents, and pupils helps make our vision a lived reality.

Those smiley faces and cheery hellos that helped to calm my first-day nerves have continued throughout the term, and I feel very much at home at Ashill.

Forest School



It has been a joy to see our children learning beyond the classroom through our **Forest School sessions**. The woodland has been alive with laughter and curiosity as children have explored, created, and challenged themselves in the great outdoors. From mixing and toasting dough over an open fire to concocting imaginative “autumn stews” in the mud kitchen, these experiences have built confidence, resilience, and a love of learning that we can all be proud of.

Trips & visits



We’ve also been fortunate to enrich our curriculum through a **range of trips and visitors**, helping to bring learning to life in so many exciting ways. These opportunities are invaluable in sparking curiosity, deepening understanding, and reminding us that education stretches far beyond the classroom walls.

Curiosity



I’ve tried hard to be curious. I’ve filled many pages in my notebook with observations, questions, and reflections about our school — and I can clearly see why Ashill holds such a special place in the hearts of so many. Over the coming months, I’ll be using what I’ve learned to help shape our next steps together, always with the children at the heart of every decision.

Thank you



To the friends of Ashill who make these curriculum enrichment opportunities possible.

To all our parents and carers for your ongoing support and engagement — whether it’s attending events, volunteering, helping with homework, or simply offering words of encouragement at the school gate. Your involvement makes such a difference and helps our school community to thrive.

Refresh



Wishing you all a wonderful and restful **half term break** — full of fresh air, laughter, and time together. Please take some time to ‘refresh’.

I look forward to the next chapter of our journey as we continue to grow and learn together here at Ashill.

Dates for the Diary

(please note that events marked in **blue** are new events and those in **bold** are where parent/carers are invited)

2025 Autumn Term

Wed 5 th Nov	Tempest Photography – Individual & Sibling Photos
Thurs 6 th Nov	Squirrel Class – Gressenhall Homes Long Ago Trip – To be confirmed
Tues 11th Nov	New Reception Open Day AM
Thurs 13th Nov	New Reception Open Day PM
Fri 14 th Nov	Children In Need – Wear something spotty (donation via School Money)
Thurs 20th to Tues 25th Nov	Scholastic Book Fayre 3.15pm to 4.00pm
Tues 25 th Nov	Tag Rugby Tournament – Details to be confirmed
Fri 28th Nov	Bumblebees Coffee Morning
Sat 29th Nov	PTA Christmas Fair 11.30am to 14.30pm
W/C 1st Dec	Parents' Evening Week
Thurs 4 th Dec	Buy a Gift
Wed 10th Dec	Bumblebee Nativity to Parents
Thurs 11th Dec	Badger Class – Curriculum Café 1.45pm to 3pm
Thurs 11 th Dec	Christmas Disco KS1 5.30pm to 6.30pm KS2 6.45pm to 8.15pm
Tues 16 th Dec	Whole School Panto – Rapunzel – Children Only
Wed 17th Dec	Bumblebee Class Curriculum Café 2pm to 3pm
Fri 19th Dec	Christmas Service at St Nicholas Church 9.30am
Fri 19th Dec	Carols in the Playground – 2-3pm

2026 Spring Term

Tues 27 th Jan	Hockey Tournament
Mon 9th Feb	Whole School Drop In
Fri 27th Feb	Hedgehog Class Coffee Morning
Thurs 5 th Mar	World Book Day – Details to be confirmed
W/C 16th Mar	Parents' Evening Week
Wed 25 th Mar	Football Tournament
Fri 27 Mar	Easter Service at St Nicholas Church 9.30am

2026 Summer Term

Wed 22 nd Apr	Ashill's Got Talent
Fri 24th April	Squirrel Class Coffee Morning
Tues 28 th April	Netball Tournament
W/C 11 th May	SATs Week
Wed 20th May	Sports Day
Thurs 9th July	Summer/Leavers Disco KS1 5.30pm to 6.30pm KS2 6.45pm to 8.15pm
Fri 17th July	Leavers Service at St Nicholas Church 9.30am

2025-2026 Term dates

Autumn term:	Wed 3 rd Sept	to	Fri 24 th Oct
	Mon 3 rd Nov	to	Fri 19 th Dec
Spring term:	Tues 6 th Jan	to	Fri 13 th Feb
	Mon 23 rd Feb	to	Fri 27 th Mar
Summer term:	Tues 14 th Apr	to	Fri 22 nd May
	Mon 1 st Jun	to	Fri 17 th July



Friends of Ashill School



Easy Fundraising

We are using a great website called easyfundraising to help raise money for Ashill School PTA - Thetford - simply by shopping online. Easyfundraising turns your everyday online shopping into FREE donations when you use them to shop with over 7,000 brands such as eBay, John Lewis & Partners, Argos, ASOS and Booking.com. Brands then make a small donation to say 'thank you' and easyfundraising gives those free funds to the cause.



Please register using this link – just click sign up - <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause/step-1/?char=27981&invite=wt04dy&referral-campaign=s2s>

Plus, once you've raised your first £5, easyfundraising will double it! There's no catch or hidden charges and Ashill School PTA - Thetford will be really grateful for your donations.



DISCO'S



Please read as there are a couple of changes.....

Christmas Disco - Thursday 11th December

Summer/leavers disco – Date to be confirmed

KS1 (Reception Year 1 and Year 2) £2.50 entry per child. Disco times will be 5:30-6:30. Drop off at the Office door and collect from the hall door please, all children receive a drink and a biscuit while at the disco with a goody bag to bring home.

Ks2 (Years 3-6) £2.50 entry per child, Disco times are 6.45-8.15. Drop off at the office and collect at the hall door. Children will receive a drink during the disco and can bring up to £3 for tuck.

Thank you for supporting us and the children as they love a disco!



CHRISTMAS FAIR

GAMES, CRAFTS,
FOOD, &
SANTA'S GROTTO!!

11.30-14.30

SATURDAY

29TH
NOVEMBER

ASHILL VC PRIMARY
SCHOOL

Join Us for Drop-In Sessions

We will be here to answer any questions you may have, advice and signposting to further support.

All sessions are subject to change, and any changes will be advertised on our Facebook page. Please be aware these sessions do not offer a private room to talk, we will be based in main areas of the library. As we are not taking bookings, we will do our best to speak to you on a first come, first served basis.

Find out more



Dereham Library 1st Oct
10:00-12:00



Caister Library 7th Oct
14:00-16:00



Kings Lynn Library 9th Oct
11:00-13:30



Mile Cross Library 15th Oct
10:00-13:00



Wroxham Library 17th Oct
13:00-15:00



Great Yarmouth Library 22nd Oct
10:30-12:30



Cromer Library 27th Oct
11:00-13:00



Mile Cross Library 31st Oct
10:30-12:00



Earlham Library 4th Nov
13:00-16:00



Gorleston Library 11th Nov
13:00-15:00



Wymondham Library 14th Nov
13:00-15:00



Downham Market Library 27th Nov
11:30-13:30



Thetford Library 10th Dec
10:00-12:00

We can give you advice, information and support about special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in relation to education.

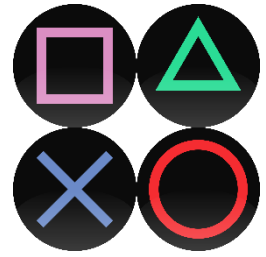
We work with children, young people (0-25 years) and their parent/carers. We can give you information about SEN Support, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP's), mediation, appeals, exclusions and suspensions, and other SEND processes.



Supporting young children online

With the half term holiday coming up, children are likely to be online that little bit more than usual.

Use these top 10 practical tips to help young children have safer online experiences and develop their digital resilience.



1) Talking to siblings

It's a good idea to talk to any older children about what they do online and what they show to younger children. Encourage them to be responsible and help keep their younger siblings safe.

2) Stay involved

Encourage them to use their tech devices in a communal area like the lounge or kitchen so you can keep an eye on how they're using the internet and also share in their enjoyment.

3) Put yourself in control

Install parental controls on your home broadband and any internet-enabled devices to manage internet safety. Set up a user account for your child on the main device they use and make sure other accounts in the household are password-protected so that younger children can't access them by accident.

4) Explore together

The best way to find out what your child is doing online is to talk with them about what they do and what sites they like to visit. Ask them to show you or play online games together to learn about the platforms and teach them good e-safety habits.

5) Agree boundaries

Be clear what your child can and can't do online – where they can use the internet, how much time they can spend online, the sites they can visit and the type of information they can share. Agree with your child when they can have a mobile phone or tablet.

6) Search safely

Use safe search engines such as Swiggle or Kids-search. You can save time by adding these to your 'Favourites'. Safe search settings can also be activated on Google and other search engines, as well as YouTube.

7) Check if it's suitable

The age ratings that come with games, apps, films and social networks are a good guide to whether they're suitable for your child. For example, the minimum age limit is 13 for several social media sites, including TikTok and Instagram. However, there are some social media platforms made for children which they can use safely.

8) Stay safe on the move

Be aware that if your child is accessing the internet using public WiFi they may not have safety features active. Some providers are part of family friendly WiFi schemes with filters to block inappropriate content. Look out for friendly WiFi symbols like RDI Friendly WiFi symbols when you're out and about.

9) Play and browse together

Learn about your pre-teen's favourite video games, platforms and online interests by joining them. Remember, their online life is their real life — so take an interest. Give them the opportunity to show you some of their favourite things.

10) Visit this website for more info

<http://www.internetmatters.org/>



Healthy Snacks

As you know Bumblebee and Squirrel Class are provided with a piece of fruit or vegetable to eat at snack time. However all children are welcome to bring in a healthy snack for morning break time, that is separate to their lunch. We would request though that any snack brought from home is low in sugar, salt and fat and considered to be a 'healthy' option, avoiding chocolate. Healthy snacks are as follows;



• Fresh fruit	• Fresh vegetables
• Breadsticks	• Plain Oat cakes
• Dried fruit	• Unsalted rice cakes
• Cereal bars (low sugar)	• Plain Crackers
• Cheese (eg Babybel)	• Yoghurt

Celebration Assembly
10th October 2025

Well done to the following children:

Bumblebees



Squirrels



Hedgehogs



Badgers



Headteacher Award



The attendance winners are:

Badger Class 98.4%

2nd
Bumblebee Class
95.7%

3rd
Squirrel Class
94.5%

4th
Hedgehog Class
92%

Overall Attendance (so far this year):

95.7%

Celebration Assembly
17th October 2025

Well done to the following children:

Bumblebees



Squirrels



Hedgehogs



Badgers



Headteacher Award



The attendance winners are:

Hedgehog Class 97.3%

2nd
Bumblebee Class 97.1%

3rd
Badger Class 93%

4th
Squirrel Class 91.6%

Overall Attendance (so far this year):

95.4%

What's Been Happening?







Gardening Club

At gardening club we have had a good season again this year. In September the children were able to take home potatoes, carrots and tomatoes. We have worked hard to weed and trim back the sensory garden ready for the winter. Our last week until after Easter was this week which saw us planting onion sets, garlic in the veggie beds and spring bulbs in the sensory garden. We look forward to seeing what these produce next year. Well done to all the children who come, you are some of the most enthusiastic gardeners I've had. See you again in the spring. If anyone would like any green tomatoes, please ask as there are still loads on the plants.



DISCOVER YOUR CHILD'S POTENTIAL IN
A CARING CHRISTIAN ENVIRONMENT

Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | 9am - 3pm
Friday | 9am - 12am

Term time only

CONTACT

01760 447444

supervisor@firststepsashill.co.uk

www.firststepsashill.co.uk

FIRST STEPS PRE-SCHOOL

The Well Christian Centre
Swaffham Road, Ashill. IP25 7BT

Fee paying and funded places
available for 2 and 3/4 year olds.





First Steps Pre-school has a clear Christian identity, operating on the principles of love, forgiveness, respect for self and others, acceptance of all cultures, and responsible behaviour.

We provide an inclusive, safe, caring and happy Christian environment where all children can learn, play and develop as individuals through a wide range of planned and free play activities both inside and out. The children are encouraged to learn about the life and work of Jesus Christ through Bible stories, music, craft, drama and prayers.

We recognise that children have individual needs and will develop at different rates, so we will provide resources to encourage all children to reach their potential.

We welcome their parents or carers to become involved in their development at pre-school and enjoy with their children the facilities we provide. We aim to serve the needs of the local community in regard to pre-school provision, whilst reflecting the love of God in our relationships, standards and way of life.

At First Steps we follow the Early Years Foundation (EYFS) Stage framework and National Standards set out by OFSTED.

OFSTED Registration EY544373
Fountain of Life Charity No. 1153552



**ENGLAND
FOOTBALL**

**FIND FOOTBALL
NEAR YOU**



SCAN HERE



Storybags

Playgroup for 0-5 yrs

Mondays 9.30 - 11

Term time only

at

St Mary's Church, Church Rd.

Watton, IP25 6DQ

01953 881252

wattonchurch@gmail.com

Play

Stories

Singing

Friendship

Refreshments

FREE!

(Registered as a charity with HM Charity Commission No. 1203622)

