Newsletter

23rd October 2026

Have a lovely half term!
School reopens on TUESDAY 3rd NOVEMBER.
Thank you for all your donations to our annual Food Bank appeal. our Ambassador have been to visit the Food Bank with Mr Perkes to see how it all runs.
Our school council will be visiting Hickory's on Wednesday 4th November.
Mr Butler and Mr Perkes

Sign of the Week "Halloween"



Meet Matt from Reflexions at Parents' Evening

Matt Jones from Reflexions will be available for a drop-in session for parents during Parents' Evening on Tuesday 10th and Wednesday 11th November.
Reflexions provides support for children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing, helping them manage challenges such as anxiety, low mood and worries that may affect everyday life. The service works with children, families and schools to help children develop strategies to support their wellbeing.
You are welcome to drop by for an informal chat at the Reflexions stand in the KS2 Hall to learn more about the service and the support available or to book an appointment with him.
If you would like to book an appointment, please contact the school office once you have arranged your appointment/s with class teacher/s
We look forward to seeing you there!

Menu

Monday 2nd November
INSET DAY

Tuesday 3rd
Tandoori Wrap
Crispy Quorn Dippers (V)
Potato Wedges
Chocolate Brownie

Wednesday 4th
Roast Chicken (H option)
Cheesy Cauliflower & Tender Broccoli Bake (V)
Stuffing & Gravy
Mashed & Roast Potatoes
Muffin Selection

Thursday 5th Bonfire Special
Loaded Bonfire Banger Hot Dog
Loaded Sparkler Sausage Hot Dog (V)
(loaded with crispy onions & tomato sauce)
Wedges
Crackling Carrots and Sweetcorn
Rocket Lollies
Crackle Crunch Biscuits.

Friday 6th
Ocean Friendly Fish Selection
BBQ Plant Based Meatball Sub (Ve)
Diced Potatoes
Fruit Jelly

All dinners must be booked through your Arbour App

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to share some personal news with you. After much thought and consideration, I have decided that I will be retiring from my position as Headteacher of Ashwood Park Primary School at the end of December.

This has not been an easy decision. Ashwood Park has been a very special part of my life, and I feel enormously privileged to have had the opportunity to lead the school and work alongside such a wonderful community of children, families, staff and governors.

Over the years, I have been incredibly proud of all that we have achieved together. Most of all, I will remember the children – their enthusiasm, curiosity, humour and determination. They are at the heart of everything we do, and seeing them grow, learn and flourish has been one of the greatest rewards of being a headteacher.

I would also like to thank you, our parents and carers, for the support, encouragement and trust you have shown me during my time at Ashwood Park. A successful school depends upon a strong partnership between home and school, and I have always valued that partnership enormously.

Although I am looking forward to having more time for friends, travel and some of the things I enjoy outside of school, I know that leaving Ashwood Park will be a very emotional moment for me. I will leave with many happy memories and a huge sense of pride in the school and its community.

I remain fully committed to the school for the remainder of the autumn term and will continue to work closely with the staff, governors and children to ensure a smooth transition. The Governing Body will share further information with you about the arrangements for appointing my successor in due course.

There will, of course, be an opportunity for us to mark my retirement together before I leave at the end of December. Until then, it will be very much business as usual, and I look forward to making the most of the weeks ahead with the children and the whole Ashwood Park community.

Thank you, once again, for everything you have done to make my time at Ashwood Park so rewarding. It has been a privilege to be your Headteacher.

With very best wishes,

Keith Butler

Newsletter

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We are currently seeking a parent/carer to join the Governing Body of Ashwood Park Primary School as a **Parent Governor**.

Our Governors play an important role in supporting the leadership of the school and helping to shape its future. They provide challenge and support to the Headteacher and senior leaders, contribute to strategic decision-making, and help ensure that the school continues to provide the very best opportunities for all our pupils.

We are particularly keen to hear from parents and carers who:

- Have an interest in the education and wellbeing of children.
- Are willing to contribute their time and ideas to support the school.
- Can work positively and constructively with other governors and school leaders.
- Are prepared to ask questions, offer challenge and contribute to discussions.
- Are committed to the values and ethos of Ashwood Park Primary School.

No previous experience of being a Parent Governor is necessary. Training and support are available to help you understand the role and responsibilities of a Parent Governor.

Being a Parent Governor is a rewarding opportunity to make a real contribution to the life and future of our school and to represent the views and interests of our parent community.

If you would like to find out more about the role or are interested in standing for election, please contact the School Office. Further information about the election process and nomination arrangements will also be provided.

We would be delighted to hear from any parent or carer who would like to get involved and help us continue to make Ashwood Park Primary School the best it can be for our children.

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Early Years

What a lovely, busy first term we've had! A huge thank you to all our wonderful families for your support throughout the term. We know that starting school is a big milestone and a huge adjustment for both children and parents, so you should all be incredibly proud of how far the children have come! They have worked so hard, settled into new routines and made such a fantastic start to their learning journey.

Now it's time for everyone to enjoy a well-deserved rest! We hope you have a lovely half term filled with fun, family time and making special memories together.

If you can, please keep practising your phonics sounds, sharing reading books and having a go at writing over the break. Just a little practice here and there will help keep those important skills ticking over. However, most importantly, enjoy your time together!

A little reminder for Reception families: We will be starting PE after half term, so please make sure PE kits are in school and ready to go.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back on **Tuesday 3rd November.** Have a wonderful half term, everyone! You've all earned it!

The Early Years Team



Key Stage One

This week we have been working on our book the Tiger Child and creating some conversations between the characters in the story. We have also been looking at different ways to add and subtract numbers - including using known number facts to help us. In Geography we have finished our topic What is it like here? We have completed aerial views and maps of our local area classroom and school. The children have also thought about what their favourite features at Ashwood Park are and have given the school council ideas about how to improve the school. We wish you all a happy and healthy half term and will see you after the holidays.



RBDC

This week in English, Conkers are putting all of the fantastic descriptive vocabulary they have been building throughout the term to good use as they create their own version of the book. We can't wait to see their ideas come to life!

In maths, we have been recapping our knowledge of column addition and will be moving on to subtraction. In science, the children will be exploring the phases of the Moon and finding out how its appearance changes over time.

We're looking forward to another exciting week of learning in Conkers!



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Key Stage Two

KS2 have thoroughly enjoyed exploring their topics this half term! To celebrate their learning, we are setting a fun design challenge for the half-term holiday. Children in **Years 3 and 4** are invited to create a volcano, while children in **Years 5 and 6** are asked to design and create a solar system to round off their learning about space. Children can use a variety of materials, such as recycled materials, Play-Doh, drawings or papier-mâché. Please avoid using food materials. Designs can be brought into school during the first week back after the holiday, or photographs can be emailed to info@ashwood.dudley.sch.uk. Please put your child's class name in the subject line so that our office staff know where to forward the emails to.

We look forward to seeing the children's fantastic creations and hope you all have a wonderful half-term break!



1st	Niamh
2nd	Emily W
3rd	Uzair

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Praise Assembly

Children who gained badges and certificates this week deserve our special congratulations:

RBM Hedgehogs – Noah-James

RR Foxes – Reuben

1/2B Squirrels – Mason

1/2JB Moles – Harry

2W Badgers – Luca

3/4D Chestnut – Bobbie

3/4H Elder – Amelia

3/4R Oak – Eden

5D Beech – Jacob

5/6BB Rowan – Lillianna

5/6E Holly – Marnie

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Diary Dates 2026

Thursday 22nd October

Monster Mash Disco

Friday 23rd October

Break up for Half Term

Monday 2nd November

INSET –Closed to Children

Tuesday 3rd November

'flu inoculation catch-up session

Tuesday 10th November

Parents Evening

Wednesday 11th Nov

Parents Evening

Thursday 3rd December

PTA Christmas Film Night

Wednesday 9th Dec

Carol Concert at Holy Trinity Church

Friday 18th December

Break up for Christmas

***Please note INSET day has changed from 19th October to 2nd November**

Diary Dates 2027

Monday 4th January

INSET Day—Closed to Children

Tuesday 5th January

Children Return to School

Friday 12th February

Break up for Half Term

Monday 22nd February

Children Return to School

Thursday 25th March

Break up for Easter Holidays

Monday 12th April

Children Return to School

Thursday 6th May

Local Elections—Closed to Children

Friday 7th May

INSET Day—Closed to Children

Monday 10th May

SATS Week

Friday 28th May

Break up for Half Term

Monday 7th June

Children Return to School

Wednesday 21st July

Last Day of Term

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Dinner Dates

The following staff will be in the lunch hall:

Mr Dimmock, Miss Harris —Monday

Miss Benson—Friday

It would be wonderful to see as many children as possible joining the teachers in enjoying a school dinner. We hope this helps make lunchtime a highlight of the day!

Uniform

Please remember that the school tie is part of our uniform, even with a polo shirt.

Smoking and Vaping

The smoking of cigarettes and the use of vapes is not permitted anywhere on the School site.

Dogs

Dogs are not allowed on the School site.

Nut Allergy

We have several children in School with a severe nut allergy, please do not send any food that contains nuts into School.

Breakfast and After School Club (OSCA)

Please note that breakfast food is served before **8.15 am**. If you are new to OSCA or haven't been for quite some time please pop to the School Office to complete the essential paperwork.

Fruit

Please could all soft round fruit (eg grapes, strawberries, cherry tomatoes) be cut into quarters before sending into School, to avoid being a choking risk.

Emails

Please note, class email addresses will be removed after October half term. Class Dojo, the School Info email address and Arbor will be used for all communication instead.

Privacy Notice

Please take a moment to read our **Privacy Notice**.

Facebook

Do remember to take a look at the School's **Facebook** page.

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At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

DEEPFAKES

A deepfake is a piece of artificial intelligence (AI) trickery designed to make you believe that a person has said or done something they haven't. AI models are able to use audio, video and photos of a subject to produce misleading mimics. Initially unsophisticated and easy to spot, deepfakes are improving every day. And with the spread of user-friendly AI, it's easier than ever for children to make their own, or be the unsuspecting target of them.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

A BULLYING RISK

AI has got easier to use and more widespread, making it a "gift" to bullies. Children can generate fake audio of peers saying damaging things, or pictures of them doing something embarrassing. More disturbingly, Metro recently highlighted cases where fake sexualised images of teens are spread through social media. Mainstream apps don't allow this usage, but with AI becoming widespread, easy-to-use sites without guardrails keep emerging for darker uses.

FAKED CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

With the technology getting easier to use and public figures having lots of clips for training, celebrities are a frequent target. According to McAfee, the most deep faked celebrities are Taylor Swift, Scarlett Johansson, Jenna Ortega, Sydney Sweeney and Sabrina Carpenter, and their AI dopelgangers are usually pushing scams. Even YouTuber MrBeast has been deepfaked by scammers on TikTok. It can be used for propaganda too, making politicians appear to do or say things to improve or harm their reputation.

FAKE FAMILY SCAMS

With a few seconds of audio — from an Instagram reel or TikTok — scammers can clone a person's voice. They can then use this to scam relatives with phone calls asking for money or assistance. This is a widespread tactic for scammers, with the FBI reporting 22,000 such cases in 2025, defrauding victims out of $893 million that year alone.

EXTORTION RISK

You might not be the one being tricked by a deepfake — you could also be the star of it. Blackmail videos are as old as film itself, but with deepfake technology you don't have to have done anything wrong to be a target. A deepfake video showing a person in an uncompromising position could make the victim pay up, even when the content never happened.

Advice for Parents & Educators

KEEP PROFILES PRIVATE

To make a convincing deepfake, you need a supply of images, audio or video of the subject. That means that most non-celebrity victims are targeted via social media where there's a ready-made repository of media to train a deepfake from. Most social media companies have privacy settings to prevent unauthorised access. Enable these to keep strangers and bullies away.

KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR

While deepfakes are getting harder to spot, there are still telltale signs to look out for. Deepfake creation can leave blurry edges and flickering textures, especially around hair and teeth. It can also look too sleek, with models often trained on professional video. Make sure the mouth shapes match the spoken words, too. As for audio, listen out for mispronounced phrases and a slightly unusual, robotic rhythm of speech.

USE RESEARCH AND COMMON SENSE

Even perfect deep fakes rely on trust, so think critically. If it's someone you know claiming to need help, then ask them to prove they're who they say they are with an inside joke. For public figures, try Googling the person along with a bit of the contentious speech in quotation marks. Also question why you're seeing the video. If it's a paid promotion, then ask yourself who's paying and why. If someone is sharing the clip, do they dislike the target?

TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

As well as emphasising the need for privacy and to not trust everything they see online, it's important to ensure children realise why deepfakes are problematic in the first place. With deepfake technology getting more accessible and easy to use, children can start using the technology to make deepfakes of schoolmates, teachers or other adults. Ensure they're aware of the serious trouble the technology can cause, and the ethical problems of manipulating someone's image without consent.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of The Guardian, The Telegraph, The i, Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



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St John Ambulance Badgers – Local Spaces Available

Would your child like to learn first aid, make new friends and have fun?

St John Ambulance Badgers is open to children aged **5–10 years**, and we currently have spaces available within our local groups.

Badgers take part in a range of fun and educational activities, including learning basic first aid and important life skills, while working towards badges and awards.

If you would like to find out more or are interested in your child joining, please check our website here and sign up to join your local group.

https://www.sja.org.uk/get-involved/young-people/badgers/

Thank you for helping us share this opportunity with families in the local community.

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Starting primary school in September 2027

Why not apply for a place online?

If your child was born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023 they will be due to start primary school in September 2027.

You **MUST** complete an application form either online at **www.dudley.gov.uk/admissions** or by completing an application form from your home local authority by **15 JANUARY 2027**. You can include five school preferences on the application; there is nothing to gain by only putting one preference.

Applications will be available from **1 October 2026.**

Benefits of applying online

- E-mail decision received by 2pm on day of offer
- It's quick and easy to use
- You can apply 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- There's no risk that your application will be lost in the post
- You will get email confirmation that your application has been received
- It's safe and secure

The online system will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from 1 October 2026 until the closing date for applications on **15 January 2027**.

Please note: Even if your child already attends a school nursery or has an older sibling at school, do not assume that your child will automatically gain a place at that school. This is a common misconception and often the biggest cause of disappointment for parents who believe otherwise.

For further information please contact Dudley School Admissions Service on **0300 555 2345**.

Dudley
Metropolitan Borough Council

one click . . . makes it quick
www.dudley.gov.uk/admissions



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Starting secondary school in September 2027

Why not apply for a place online?

If your child is due to start secondary school in 2027 then you will have to apply for a school place before 31 October 2026.

You **MUST** complete an application form either online at **www.dudley.gov.uk/admissions** or by completing the application form provided by your home local authority. You can include six school preferences on the application form; there is nothing to gain by only putting one preference.

Benefits of applying online

- E-mail decision received by 2pm on day of offer
- It's quick and easy to use
- You can apply 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- There's no risk that your application will be lost in the post
- You will get email confirmation that your application has been received
- It's safe and secure

The online system will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from 1 September 2026 until the closing date for applications on **31 October 2026**.

You should not assume that your child will get a place at a secondary school without you having to apply, even if you have an older child already attending the same school. This is a common misconception and often the biggest cause of disappointment for parents who believe otherwise.

For further information please contact Dudley School Admissions Service on **0300 555 2345**.

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

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