Newsletter 9th January 2026

ALPINGTON & BERGH APTON
Church of England VA Primary School

Matthew 5 v 16

Dear parents

Let Every Light Shine

Welcome back and Happy New Year! I hope you have all had a lovely holiday. We are so impressed with the way the children have returned to school this week. They are really up for it and ready to learn and there has been a lovely atmosphere around school. I was especially impressed on Tuesday when we were able to get anyone who wanted to out to play in the snow. I loved building a snowman with Isabella and Zara from Swallows and Boyd and friends in year 6 creating the "Great wall of Alpington", which was an impressive structure, even if you couldn't quite see it from space!

New topics are underway in all classes – please see the website for this term's curriculum newsletters and class updates.

Homework
Reading books for children in Robins and Kingfishers and guilded reading for KS2 children is now up and running. Your support with ensuring that children are reading at home is very much apprectiated. Reading is at the heart of all learning and practice is key! If you have any queries or need some help with strategies for reading at home, get in touch with your class teacher who will be happy to help.

Children in year 4 are expected to know their timestables by the time we get to June and parents have received a message about how you can support this process at home – little and often is the key!

Please continue to support children to their mental maths target at home each week. We are looking at ways to support parents to make this more effective – watch this space for further information!

Drop off
Where possible, please could you drop KS2 children at the gate and KS1 children at Robins gate or the back door. Some of the youngest children are finding having adults in the confined corridoor space a bit of a worry while they try to organise their things. We are really working on independence skills so the children are able to organise their own belongings! If your child is struggling to leave you, please get in touch and we are really happy to help.

Weather proof clothes
I think we can safely say that winter has landed this week! Please could you make sure that the children have appropriate clothes for the weather. We will try to get outside where we can, so make sure they are warm and waterproof with a change of footwear. A spare set of socks or tights in their bag might be handy for days when wet feet are inevitable!

Compass
Please could all parents check that "Push Notifications" are enabled for the Compass App. This is now our main way of communicating and it is free for the school to use. We have to pay extra to send a text message.

Please note that ALL payments have now moved over to Compass.

Thank you to everyone for navigating the new booking system for Breakfast Club! You will need to navigate to the clubs section periodically to pay for the sessions your child has attended. If you pay via the tax free child care system, your money will continue to be paid into our bank account. Ms Reeman will then add these funds to your account so you can use them to pay your bill. You should be able to choose to pay using "Third Party Funds". We are still working out exactly how this works so keep talking to us! Those people who have paid into the bank over the holiday should now see that their outstanding invoice has been cleared.

KS2 parents please check that there are sufficient funds in your child's Compass balance to pay for lunches.

Attendance
I'll be honest, I am a bit worried about attendance. Our headline rate has now dropped below 96% and our proportion of children classed as "persistently absent" is now the highest it has ever been. This has implication for those children, who are missing a significant amount of school time, impacting their friendships, academic progress and life chances. It also reflects on the school as we are increasingly subject to scrutiny over our attendance record. The number of people requesting term time holidays remains a bit of an issue It's frustrating as we have the happiest, most settled cohort of children who generally really enjoy school and want to be here. In order to try to turn attendance round, we need to work together. I am contacting parents individually to offer support, but if there is anything else you think we can do or offer, either to your family or the school community in general, I am really open to suggestions. Please just get in touch.

Trips and residential
Please look out on Compass for upcoming notifications of school trips and for the residential to How Hill for children in years 5 and 6.

Welcome
We are so pleased to welcome:

- Mrs Mel Cockburn to our team teaching French to KS2 on a Tuesday afternoon.
- Mrs Claire Cookson taking over from Monika as our PSA and supporting children in school. Claire has met with all the children who were already working with Monika today and will start sessions "properly" next week.
- Mrs Vicoria Johnson who has joined the Robins team in the mornings. She will continue her role in Owls class on a Friday.

Mrs Battle has resigned over the Christmas holidays. We are sorry to see her go and wish her and the Battle clan all the very best in their new adventures.

Ms Godbold will be off work for a little while. We are staying in touch and send her all our love! Thank you to Mrs Powter Robinson for helping out in Swallows while she is away. There will be no art club for the next few weeks until she is able to return.

Best wishes

Rosie Welch and the Alpington Team.

Attached
- Alpington Community Shop – extended hours