



Ark Atwood: Newsletter, Friday 17th September

Dear Parents and Carers,

We all know that the last 18 months have seen us have to pause and adapt many of the things that we do at school. One of these has been assemblies – an important opportunity for the children and adults to come together to sing, to learn or celebrate. It was therefore fantastic to restart assemblies this week including, on Wednesday and Thursday, singing assemblies. These really are one of the most wonderful parts of primary school life and I was very lucky to join Key Stage Two on Wednesday for their singing. An enormous thank you Miss Harris and Miss Gbeworo for leading them with such energy and passion. From next week, we will be restarting our Friday Achievement Assemblies. These will alternate each week by key stage with parents of children receiving certificates invited along to celebrate their child's success.

We will be running our first Parent Forum of the school year on Tuesday 28th September from 9am to 10am. This will be in

person in the Hall. This meeting will be a chance for our parents to come for a cup of coffee and to meet with my both myself, Harriet Barclay (our new Chair of Governors) and Vivian Paxinos (Chair of Friends of Ark Atwood). We are keen for more parents to join the Friends of Atwood so do let us know if you are interested in joining the team. At the Parent Forum I will also update parents on school news and, of course, answer any questions you may have.

Have a great weekend.

Best Wishes

James Evelyn
Headteacher, Ark Atwood Primary Academy

House Captains

Congratulations to our new House Captains who were elected this morning. House Captains badges will be given out next week.



Amira



Persie



Ahmed N



Robin



Zayd



Isabella

Class Photos

Class group photos are taking place in the next two weeks.

Wednesday 22nd Sept: Early Years/KS1

Wednesday 29th Sept: KS2

Secondary Transition

A reminder for Year 6 parents that we will be hosting a session from **9am to 10am on Tuesday 21st September** with the Principals of Paddington Academy and Westminster Academy where they will introduce their schools and answer any questions you may have. Please come to the back gate.

*** Summer Term Finishing on Thursday 21st July ***

Ark Schools has informed Headteachers that there is an additional bank holiday in 2022 to accommodate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Due to the fact this bank holiday falls during May half term, the DfE has decided to reduce the statutory number of schools days from 195 to 194. The Ark network has therefore agreed to all schools working 194 days.

In order to minimise disruption and maximise time for learning, we will finish the school year one day early in the summer term. The final day of term will therefore be Thursday 21st July 2022. The information on the website has been updated to reflect this change.

Parent Information Sessions

This week we kicked off our Parent Information sessions for families of children in Year 1 and Year 2. See below for the remaining sessions taking place next week.

The sessions are run by your child's year group teachers where they will share with you details of what children will be learning and lots of other information. You will also have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have. Sessions run from 8.00am to 8.15am and will be held in your child's classroom.

Monday 20th Sept: Year 6 Tuesday 21st Sept: Year 4
Wednesday 22nd Sept: Year 3 Thursday 23rd Sept: Year 5

A year group adult will be available to look after your child during this time.

KSI: Homework Reading Books – Starting Next Week



We are very excited to announce that we are starting KSI reading homework this week. Whether your child is on the RWI phonics programme or in Comprehension, your child will be sent home with an additional decodable book to practise their reading skills.

Schools nationally are pushing a big emphasis in reading at the moment and we would like to remind you that research has shown that reading to an adult regularly (at least 5-10 minutes a day) dramatically improves a child's reading ability so please ensure you are doing this with your child. We will be tracking this by checking in on seesaw recordings of reading as well as by sending a new reading record sheet home each week where you can leave parent comments on how you are finding your child's reading.

For more information on KSI reading homework, please see below. This will also be sent home in a letter today.

If your child is on the phonics programme, the books they will take home are:

Type of book	Purpose	What should you do?	When returned?
RWI banded book 	For the children to read to you and show off their accuracy, 'fred in head' and expression they have practised at school.	Listen to your child read this at least 2 times before sending back. Your child should record on seesaw so	Wednesday – Please return as we are running very low on our supply of the paper copies.

		teachers can hear them read at home too.	
RWI book bag book 	For the children to read an additional book using the sounds they know at home.	Listen to your child read this at least 2 times before sending back. Write in reading record sheet to give feedback to teacher.	Wednesday – Please ensure this is returned otherwise your child will not be able to get another book.
Atwood library book 	This is chosen by your child as a book they would like to listen to but not might be able to read themselves.	Please read this book to/with your child. Please read it twice before you send it back ,	Wednesday – Please return so your child can receive their next library book.

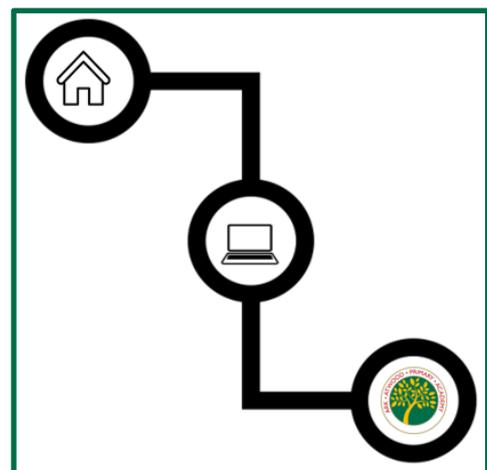
If your child is in comprehension, the texts they will take home are:

Type of book	Purpose	What should you do?	When returned?
Comprehension extract 	For the children to read an extract which they can practise their comprehension technique with.	Listen to your child read this extract. Your child should record on seesaw so teachers can hear them read at home too as well as submit their comprehension answers.	n/a - submitted on seesaw by Wednesday
Additional decodable book 	For the children to read an additional decodable book at home to continue to develop their fluency.	Listen to your child read this at least 2 times before sending back. Write in reading record sheet to give feedback to teacher.	Wednesday – Please ensure this is returned otherwise your child will not be able to get another book.
Atwood library book 	This is chosen by your child as a book they would like to listen to but not might be able to read themselves.	Please read this book to/with your child. Please read it twice before you send it back ,	Wednesday – Please return so your child can receive their next library book.

Ark Digital Strategy – Year Three

The Ark Schools Digital Strategy provides all children in an Ark school in Year 3 and upwards with a Chromebook to use for learning at home (including weekly homework). This device will be provided by the school, for exclusive use for schoolwork and independent learning and parents will not need to make a financial contribution.

All pupils in Year 3 will be provided with a Chromebook before half term. If you do not have the internet at home, we will look to support with this too. Therefore, if you are considering buying your child/children a device to support their schoolwork in the coming weeks and months, we would urge you not to. It is important to note, however, that the Chromebook is for



schoolwork only, so your child/children will not have access to games or social networking sites on the device.

Distribution Process To begin the process, we will be running a Parent Meeting to share more information so that you are clear about the use of the laptop at home and can ask any questions you may have. **The Parent Meeting will be held at 3.00pm on Thursday 30th September.** On this same day, children will be introduced to their new device and will come home with the Home School Agreement for you to sign. (The Agreement must be signed for the device to be released).

If you want to find more about the Digital Strategy ahead of the Parent Meeting, please have a look at the Atwood website here: <https://arkatwoodprimary.org/life-school/home-digital-learning>.

I am sure you will have lots of questions which we can answer at the Parent Meeting. If you would like to ask questions at this stage, please contact Miss Harris (e.harris@arkatwoodprimary.org).

Friends of Ark Atwood - Update

Friends of Ark Atwood are pleased to be hosting their first event on the 24th September. You're all welcome to join our coffee morning in the studio from 9-10am.

The event will be in support of Macmillan cancer, all funds raised will go to Macmillan cancer. Please bring lots of yummy cakes!

This will also be a great opportunity for new parents to meet the FofAA committee and other parents.

We look forward to seeing you there! Yours FofAA team



E-Safety

We share E-Safety information with parents in the Atwood newsletter. This is to help you in ensuring that your child can use technology safely. Please read the following information.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one game of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



What Parents and Carers Need to Know About...

ROCKET LEAGUE

Age Restriction
PEGI 3

Rocket League is a free-to-play multiplayer vehicle football game. It was developed by Psyonix, now part of the Epic Games family (which also includes Fortnite and Gears of War). Rocket League is essentially a football game where, instead of running, the players drive rocket-powered cars. The game was a surprise hit that took the world by storm when it first released in 2015. Rocket League is available for the Xbox One, Xbox Series X, PlayStation 4 & PlayStation 5, Nintendo Switch, Windows PC, MacOS and Linux.

Fiercely Competitive Community

Competitive gaming isn't necessarily bad. However, playing purely to win (as opposed to simply having fun) can result in aggressive behaviour among some players if they're not successful in the game. Certain people can become hostile or "toxic" towards other players. Continually seeing this behaviour can cause children to think it is acceptable and lead to anger issues while playing.



Unsuitable Online Interactions

18+

A video game's age rating cannot take player-generated elements into account. Rocket League is rated PEGI 3, but its online features mean that appropriateness can't be guaranteed. Audio and text chat, player usernames, player-to-player trades and other user-created content may not be suitable for young players. The game is moderated, but catching everything can be difficult.

Grinding and Increased Screen-time

Features like the Rocket Pass and the ranking system can make Rocket League a grinding-focused game. This means players need to spend a lot of time on the game to progress through levels and collect rewards. Grinding encourages regular long gaming sessions for players seeking to climb the rankings (meaning increased screen time) but it doesn't always result in making much headway.

Scams and Bad Trades

Player-to-player trading is common in Rocket League. The game has lots of cosmetic items to collect, and some can be very valuable. Players can trade items among themselves, but younger gamers are not always the best judges of what constitutes a fair deal. This can lead to them being swindled in trades - or to children signing up to illegitimate trading websites, where they then get scammed.

In-App Purchasing

Free-to-play games (so called because they don't cost anything to download) like this depend on players making in-game purchases to turn a profit. Rocket League's in-game currency, called credits, are used to buy items in the game. Credits can be earned by playing the game or can be bought with real money - which could prove expensive if a child lets their love of the game and desire to progress get the better of them.

Advice For Parents & Carers

Use Parental Controls

Psyonix has added some safety measures into the game. The text and voice chat can be disabled, for example, limiting contact from strangers. However, it's not currently possible to block contact from other players, about trades. It's a good idea, then, to talk with your child about the possibility of scams and bad trades either before they download the game or early in their Rocket League 'career'.

Stay Aware of Spending

Free-to-play games can become money sinks without children realising. For peace of mind, make sure you don't have any payment methods attached to your child's gaming account to avoid accidental purchases. Rocket League credits can be earned through gameplay or bought with real money; encourage your child to use their earned credits first before they ask you to top them up.

Monitor Gaming Time

It's impractical to sit and watch your child every time they play Rocket League. Keeping an eye on their gaming hours is crucial, however. It's easy to lose track of time while playing (even for adults), so "one more game" can soon turn into ten more games. Helping your child to balance their gaming time with their homework, chores and other activities is a life lesson in time management.

Encourage Regular Breaks

Sitting in the same position all day while gaming isn't healthy, but it is an easy habit to fall into. A short break every hour or half hour is important. It allows players to rest their eyes, brains, hands and arms. Learning the value of an occasional break from any activity is good practice for the future. Encouraging your child to rehydrate regularly can also help to lower any rising competitive tempers!

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books. With experience in esports and content creation, Clare has seen the benefits and drawbacks of all aspects of gaming.



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SOURCES: <https://support.rocketleague.com/hc/en-us/articles/360015613074>, <https://support.rocketleague.com/hc/en-us/articles/360053542814-Parental-Controls>, <https://support.rocketleague.com/hc/en-us/articles/360039907893-How-can-I-protect-my-child-from-online-interactions->, <https://theglobalgaming.com/rocket-league/credit-system-free/>



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