



OLD AYSCOUGHFIANS

Issue 4

Special points of interest:

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- Changes in School
- News of Old Ayscoughfians
- From the Archives

Welcome



Welcome to this fourth edition of the Old Ayscoughfians newsletter.

Our aim is to connect with as many of our ex pupils, staff and families as possible to help maintain contact and to share each others news. We would love to hear from you. We have an electronic registration form for Old Ayscoughfians on our school website

at www.ahs.me.uk.

You may also wish to follow our Facebook page, Ayscoughfee Hall School Life, to find out about all the exciting things our children get up to throughout the school year. If you haven't visited it already please do and take the opportunity to like and share our page so we can reach as many people as possible.

Welcome message from the Headteacher



Welcome back!

After we missed the June 2020 edition of the Old Ayscoughfians (for reasons beyond our control!), we are delighted to be sending you this, our 4th edition of the Old Ayscoughfians' Newsletter.

The last year or so has been as strange for us at school as it has been for people everywhere. Overnight, staff had to familiarise themselves with new technology and the language that went with it; who knew, in January 2020 what 'Zoom' meant ... apart from Year 1 who use it in their 'Space' topic? However, everyone in the Ayscoughfee family did us proud, from the staff, many of whom taught at school through various lockdowns, the children who created beautiful rainbow artwork to decorate the front of school and our parents, who supported their children's learning and kept us smiling with lovely emails and even flowers and cakes!

The 2020 Year 6 Leavers were the first to have their 'Leavers' Assembly' remotely and we continued the remote

theme, 'Zooming' our Remembrance and Easter assemblies and the Infant Christmas productions. There were benefits though; for the first time we were able to welcome family members from as far away as South Africa and the Middle East to these performances and there was more flexibility for working parents, who were able to choose 'performance times' to suit them.

During the last fifteen months we have said 'Goodbye' to several members of staff, including Mrs Caron Hendry, Mrs Liz Everett, Mrs McCorry, Mrs Green and Mrs Wood. We welcome Mrs Walker-Forrest and Mrs Fox to our Housekeeping team and Mr Scott as our new Site Maintenance person. They have already made themselves indispensable and we wish them many happy years as part of the AHS family. More news on staff changes follows inside.

As we resume something approaching normality, I can only wish a happy and safe summer to you all. Take care and please, keep in touch.

A Fond Farewell from Mrs Ogden



Mrs Ogden at the opening of the quiet garden in 2014

*"In a world
where you can
be anything be
kind "*

I had always wanted to teach! My mother says it started when I was six and was given an old fashioned desk and blackboard, my poor sister and teddies had to sit in a row while I took registers and made them do lessons. I did not realise that I would dedicate 39 years of my life to teaching. I started teaching 'for real' at the age of twenty two and quickly worked out that getting to know every child well and giving them clear boundaries was key to success.

At this time there was no National Curriculum; we were free to teach them anything and everything! Education has a way of coming full circle. I remember organising cavemen days in History, making dens and cooking outdoors on fires, very similar to Forest School now!

After teaching in a number of different schools, state and independent, covering all age groups from 3 to 18, I think it is fair to say I have had a broad range of experiences in education. I can reflect back on my career as I now retire and say I have loved teaching or managing in all the schools I have been in and would make exactly the same career choices again. I feel my years here at Ayscoughfee have been particularly special and they will always stay with me. I still remember the day of my interview; it was 'Children in Need' day, everyone was so welcoming and the warm, friendly feeling and caring ethos was so evident, within a few minutes I knew this was the school I really wanted to lead as Headteacher.

I genuinely enjoy coming to school each day to be with other staff who choose to be here because of the importance of their work to others and to themselves. We have amazing staff who always go the extra mile for the children and I have really enjoyed working alongside such a lovely group of friends and colleagues, they are all very much part of the Ayscoughfee family. With the help of staff, parents and governors I have instigated a number of initiatives such as a completely refurbished Infant Block, celebrating children's work with success assemblies, creating new playground areas, introducing cookery across the curriculum with a specialist room, creating a new junior library, introduction of Forest School and Spanish as well as Year 6 skills which includes work in the community. All of which have helped to enrich and extend the children's working environment and love of learning.

Looking back over my time at Ayscoughfee, the things I have enjoyed the most have been the awe and wonder of education – seeing children enjoying learning. I have watched children being fascinated by Science and the wonder of nature particularly in the Early Years; being proud of something they have made in DT, Cookery or Art; enjoying learning about the past in History; developing a love of reading; mastering a difficult concept in Maths; learning a new language or to write; being keen to explore and build dens in Forest School or engaging in a love of Sport.

I have enjoyed giving out 'Stars of the week' and trying to play football with Year 6 and going on trips from Edinburgh to Spalding market place! I have been impressed by the talents of our wonderful children in music, class assemblies and productions and their impeccable behaviour and genuine enthusiasm. These things have been a joy.



Mrs Ogden meeting Pudsey with Mrs Staples on 'Children In Need' day

I have cherished the individual conversations and shared moments which happen every day when children pop into my office; seeing the children be respectful and polite to any adult who visits, sharing pride in our school, everyone showing acts of kindness which is particularly important to me and a mark of Ayscoughfee Hall School along with our charity work. As Roald Dahl once said "I think kindness is my number one attribute in a human being. I would put it before any of the things like courage or bravery or generosity or anything else.... Kindness - that simple word. To be kind – it covers everything, to my mind. If you're kind that's it."

We have created a wonderful family school – and that takes time; it is a tribute to past Heads, governors and staff as well. Truly great schools don't suddenly exist. You nurture brilliant teachers first, you have the right support staff around you and they in turn make a truly great school. We value respect, honesty and kindness. We look out for one another. We take pride in one another's achievements and truly love the children, ensuring they enjoy school and have the best possible start in life both academically and personally, giving them the best 'foundation for the future'.

I know the school will continue to thrive and develop further under the leadership of Mrs Wright and wish her, all the staff, pupils and parents every happiness for the future.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure working with hardworking, fantastic staff, governors and pupils at such an exceptional school for the last 9 years. I am proud of all I have achieved in my time as Headteacher at Ayscoughfee and retire knowing I did my very best for staff, parents and children and hopefully made a difference along the way. I have many fond memories and will miss you all.

Take care

Clare Ogden

Headteacher September 2012 -2021



Mrs Ogden dressed as 'the cat in the hat' on World Book Day



Mrs Ogden at the opening ceremony of the new school library during the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations in 2016

A Fond Farewell From Mrs Sue Cook



Sadly, this term we also say a fond farewell to Mrs Cook who has taught at the school for an impressive 32 years. Indeed, many of you reading this will have been taught by her.

After having Mrs Cook as a teacher for so many years we can hardly imagine school life without her. It is wonderful to see her teach Year 4 with such dedication and enthusiasm. Only last week we waved her off on her final residential trip with the school; she turned and waved with a beaming smile on her face full of joy. To have that much passion for the career you started at the age of 23 years of age really is remarkable! We will be sad to see her leave but wish her every fun and happiness in her retirement.

I joined Ayscoughfee Hall School way back in 1982 as a fresh faced 23 year old and had no idea at that time I would still be there in my 60s! The headmaster then was Mr Peter Sivil. He and Mrs Driver, an ex- headmistress of Spalding High School where I had been a pupil myself, interviewed me and I still remember my nerves that day!

The school was, at that time, located in Church Street and things were very different. I remember the blackboard and chalk, the messy Banda machine instead of a photocopier and walking the children to games lessons on the field at the Castle Sports Complex, to name just a few. However, the family spirit of the school was always present and I spent 4 happy years there before deciding to leave to have my own family.

*“Since being at
the school I
have climbed
just short of a
million steps!”*

In 1993 and now a mum of 2 lovely daughters, I unexpectedly received a phone call from Mr Brian Chittick, the new headmaster of Ayscoughfee, asking if I would consider rejoining the team. Happily, I did so later that year as the school relocated to its current site, Welland Hall. The only downside was the position of the Year 4 classroom at the top of the stairs, (where it still is) so I can only imagine how many steps I've climbed over the years! (A rough calculation comes to just short of a million!!) Joking aside, I am truly indebted to them both for giving me the wonderful opportunity to become part of the Ayscoughfee family.

As I move on to my next chapter, retirement with my husband, I take with me countless happy memories of time spent with pupils, staff and parents, all of whom have made my time here so special. I feel privileged to have been a small part of such a wonderful school for so many years.

To conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Clare for her excellent leadership in these latter years and wish her much happiness in her own retirement. I would also like to pass on my very best wishes to Theresa and the new senior management team, newly appointed staff and to all staff associated with the school, knowing that it continues to be in safe hands for the future.

Sue Cook



Mrs Cook dressed up for World Book Day in 2012



*Mrs Cook enjoying her last residential trip to Hilltop
this year!*



Introducing Our New Headteacher



We were thrilled to announce in January this year that, after a very rigorous application and assessment process, Mrs Theresa Wright was appointed as the new Headteacher of the school from September 2021.

Mrs Wright will step down from her current role as Deputy Head and Year 6 Teacher. Mrs Jeffries will take over as the Deputy Headteacher and will continue to teach Year 1 whilst Mrs White has been appointed as the new Year 6 teacher. Mrs Wright has been a class teacher for 14 years and has a great deal of experience and valuable knowledge which will help in her role in taking the school forward, along with the rest of the Senior Management Team.

Since joining Ayscoughfee in September 2017, I have grown to love the warm and friendly atmosphere of the school. With the delightful children, all keen and eager to learn, together with the most welcoming and caring staff, the school really is a very special place to be.

When Mrs Ogden announced her plans to retire this year, although very sad to see her go, I was delighted that the Governors bestowed on me the honour of taking her place and continuing the fantastic work she has done at Ayscoughfee. I myself have been with the school for four years now and am very pleased to be the one to lead it into the next one hundred years.

These are exciting times at Ayscoughfee, with new staff joining us in September and a new Kindergarten class too. My first priority, following the turbulence of the past year or so through the pandemic, is to be able to welcome back all of the parents and friends of the school and to return all of the lovely things that Ayscoughfee is renowned for. After so much uncertainty in the world, I know that the staff, children, parents and families of Ayscoughfee Hall School will all want to get back to normal school life and the wonderful family atmosphere that we enjoy so much.

I would personally like to thank Mrs Ogden for her inspirational leadership and for leaving the school in such a great position for me to take over – hers will be very big boots to fill! I look forward to the challenges ahead and to a happy future for all at Ayscoughfee.

Mrs Wright showing that she isn't afraid of taking on new challenges!



Introducing Our New Deputy Headteacher



Mrs Jeffries joined Ayscoughfee Hall School as Year 1 teacher in 2016, she is an exceptional and inspirational teacher and has already proved herself as a valued member of the Senior Management Team in her current position as Senior Teacher. Mrs Jeffries will take on her new role as Deputy Headteacher from September 2021.

I have been fortunate to be part of Ayscoughfee Hall School as the Year 1 teacher for the past 5 years. However, my contact with the school started 2 years earlier when my daughter Jenna started her schooling in the Kindergarten class. My husband and I came for a tour of the school with Mrs Ogden and were blown away by the overall 'feel' in the school. We could see straight away how Ayscoughfee was a happy, thriving school with dedicated and hardworking staff, and knew immediately it was where we wanted our daughter to be educated.

After 2 years of her being in the school the Year 1 teaching job was advertised. I had been teaching in my then current school for about 15 years and knew that becoming part of the Ayscoughfee teaching staff would be a privilege and an honour. The rest, they say, is history! After 5 years I am now excited to be taking on the role of Deputy Headteacher. Mrs Ogden has been such a supportive and inspirational Headteacher, and I am extremely thankful to her for making me feel such a valued part of the school and for giving me opportunities to develop my career and experiences. I, along with many other children, parents and staff alike, will miss her greatly.

September is certainly an exciting time for the school with the appointments of the new members of staff and Mrs Wright taking the reins as the new Headteacher. I am excited about working with everyone at the school to ensure Ayscoughfee continues to be the outstanding place that it is, and to help move the school forward with many new ventures. I know my new role as Deputy Headteacher will offer fantastic opportunities and I look forward to playing a part in the future of a much loved and remarkable school.

News of Old Ayscoughians

We haven't heard from as many of our Old Ayscoughian's as usual this year but we hope you are all well and starting to get back to some sense of normality.

Mark Le Sage

During lockdown our charity had to change, Ella's Project normally collects and redistributes children's clothes 0-5 years to families in crisis. Overnight we could not accept donations or do any fundraising, however due to the shortage of PPE for our front line NHS workers we worked alongside the Spalding scrub hub and helped to provide, deliver and collect old duvet covers, curtains and material for our local sewing talent to turn into scrubs, face masks or bags. Over lockdown we also delivered home baked cakes to the Johnson hospital nursing teams as well as our local ambulance and fire crews, which I have to say they seemed very happy to receive. It was a busy year and although we still cannot accept donations we are looking forward to a little more normality in the near future.



Rosie Ibbs

Lockdown has given me time to spend with my family, going for walks, redecorating, baking and cooking specially themed meals on Saturday nights - so far we've had Mexican, 1920's, Roald Dahl and many more. Since leaving Ayscoughfee and before the pandemic hit in Year 7, I joined a literary quiz team, that competed against many other teams in our region and resulted in us coming 3rd out of a total of 23 teams. I joined my school netball team, but unfortunately could not take part in a match due to COVID-19. My time in year 8 has been very different. Not much in terms of events have occurred but going back into school and not having to do video call lessons has been wonderful. I am enjoying school, with my favourite subject being history, closely followed by maths and I continue to enjoy new educational challenges throughout school.

Lydia has been getting on very well. She is just finishing her final exams that will go towards her final GCSE results and her grades so far have been great. I could not be more proud of her. Next year, she will be going into sixth form and shall be studying biology, chemistry and textiles, which will hopefully progress into her getting into medical school and becoming a doctor.

I wish you all the best with hopefully returning to normal soon and hope you all stay safe, happy and raring to learn in the coming months and years.

With my sincerest wishes for normality for a safe and happy school for the next 100 years.

Sophie Mills

I have no real personal news, but as a very proud big sister I thought I would share some news of my brother Patrick who also attended the school. In July 2019 he married the wonderful Gina Chapman in a woodland ceremony near their home in Loughborough. In July 2020 he officially became Dr Patrick Mills, after passing his viva with minor corrections and in July 2021 he had his official graduation (delayed due to covid) from Loughborough University with a PhD in Mathematical Physics. Patrick is currently working in finance in London and excelling, and his wife is a lawyer for HMRC, also in London.

Ellie Feuerhelm

After graduating from Portsmouth with a BSc Hons in Marine Biology and getting my Masters, I spent time working in Quality Assurance at a Pharmaceutical Manufacturers making leukaemia medication before leaving in 2019 to work at a company making PCR detection kits in Southampton.

Last year was a crazy time, as we launched the first CE marked COVID-19 in Europe and I found myself in Germany approving an additional manufacturing site to help us increase our outputs as the first UK lockdown was announced. It's been a lot of hard work and long hours but the support we've been able to provide to the NHS testing programmes and to UNICEF have helped make it worth it.

And finally from the Archives

June 20th 1967

On arrival at school this morning I noticed that the store cupboard had been broken into and a lock stolen. A window pane had been removed from Mrs Slipper's classroom and various things stolen. Detective came to investigate.

Stolen Items

Cricket bat
Brown duffle bag
4 prizes (possibly multi-biros)
Box biscuits
1/9 cash
Red pencil case and blue pencil case
Lock
White tractor and plough (Corgi)
Various small cars etc.

Special thanks to all those who have contributed to our newsletter this year. It has been an unprecedented few years in the school life of Ayscoughfee Hall School but we very much look forward to being able to provide a full diary of extra curricular activities and events next year whilst welcoming our parents and visitors back into the school.