

Farley Hill Primary School

6th December 2024

Newsletter Number 713

Items for Action:

- Dates for the calendar

Items for Information:

- 2024-2025 Term Calendar dates
- Winter Wonderland

Dear Parents and Carers

We are really starting to get into the Christmas spirit at school with rehearsals for Nativities and Christmas shows aplenty. The dress rehearsal for the Year 2 Nativity was this morning in front of the whole school – I can tell you that the Year 2 parents are in for a Christmassy treat next Monday (pm) and Tuesday (am). Year 1 parents will also enjoy their Christmas shows on Monday (am) and Tuesday (pm) as well. Year 5 have been making Greek pots out of clay today – a feat that is trickier than it may seem! They have done well to persevere with the task and I know their pots will look stunning. Year 4 had a great Viking day this week – they baked bread and made brooches, learning how Vikings lived was a tiring business!

We are looking forward to welcoming you to Winter Wonderland this evening. I know the PTA have worked extremely hard behind the scenes to arrange everything for a fun-packed evening for all our families. The school staff would like to thank them very much for everything they do to support the children. They have recently paid for the School of Kindness workshop, classroom resources and will be paying for the pantomime the whole school will be able to enjoy next week. They make a huge difference to the school - please continue to support them as much as you can. Their big project continues to be the redevelopment of the woodland area at the back of the school – if you can offer help and support with that please let us know.

We have had children attend a Boccia event this week on behalf of the school and a football team competed in a tournament in Wokingham today. Thank you to all those children who represented our school so brilliantly and to the staff and Volunteers that supported them. It was lovely to hand out certificates and medals in our Celebration assembly today to recognise their achievements.

Hopefully we will see you later for all the fun of Winter Wonderland – but I also hope you have a lovely weekend.

I will look forward to seeing you all on Monday morning.

Best wishes

Head Teacher

2024 – 2025 Term Calendar Dates

Monday	09/12/24	Year 1 Christmas Play AM
Monday	09/12/24	Year 2 Christmas Play PM
Tuesday	10/12/24	Year 2 Christmas Play AM
Tuesday	10/12/24	Year 1 Christmas Play PM
Monday	16/12/24	EYFS and Nursery Concert / Nativity
Wednesday	18/12/24	Christmas Lunch
Thursday	19/12/24	5-6 PM Yr3/4 Disco
Thursday	19/12/24	6-7 PM Yr5/6 Disco
Friday	20/12/24	Last day of Autumn Term 1PM close
SPRING TERM		
Monday	06/01/25	Inset Day
Tuesday	07/01/25	First day of Spring Term
Monday - Friday	17/02 – 21/02/25	Half Term
Monday	24/02/25	Inset Day
Friday	04/04/25	Last day of Spring Term 1PM close
SUMMER TERM		
Tuesday	22/04/25	First day of Summer Term
Monday	05/05/25	Bank Holiday (School Closed)
Friday	23/05/25	Inset Day
Monday - Friday	26/05 – 30/05/24	Half Term
Wednesday	23/07/25	Last day of Summer Term 1PM close



This Weeks Awards

Unicorn Awards			Values Leaf Awards		
Samuel	R	Acorns	Lilli An	R	Acorns
Hudson	R	Conkers	Freya	R	Conkers
Iyla	1	Holly	Ted	1	Holly
Freddie	1	Silver Birch	Abdullah	1	Silver Birch
Alfie	2	Aspen	Riaan	2	Aspen
Maple Class	2	Maple	Ivy	2	Maple
Oliver H	3	Sycamore	Kayden	3	Sycamore
Ariah	4	Willow	Casian	4	Willow
Jacob	5	Beech	Nisa	5	Beech
Arjun	6	Oak	Wyatt	6	Oak

Weekly Birthdays

We wish the following children, a very happy birthday for this week:

Alona
Grace H
Oscar D
Nisa
Abdullah
Zak DP
Oliver H
Reynolds
Jason



Weekly Attendance Cup Maple Class



Weekly House Winner Neptune



Christmas Post Box

We are very excited to have our Christmas Post Box in the Reception foyer by the office. If your children would like to send cards, please ensure that the cards are addressed to include Name and Class of recipient, then our Elves will sort and process the Christmas Post.

Please note that unfortunately we cannot print class lists due to GDPR. It's a great memory exercise for your child to write a list of their friends.



Christmas Lunch

Our fabulous Christmas Lunch is on **Wednesday 18th December**, Christmas Jumpers are welcome to be worn over school uniform, instead of school jumpers or cardigans.



Football Teams

We have now completed 6 games with 2 still left to play and another match tonight!

Here are photos from boys playing Gorse Ride on Tuesday 26th November. It was a rough match but the boys played fantastically.



Girls team playing Nine Mile Ride on Friday 29th November. We won 3-1. The girls were so proud as you can see from their celebration photo.



Parking – Polite reminder

Please refrain from parking in the residents and visitor car parks on the residential roads near the school.

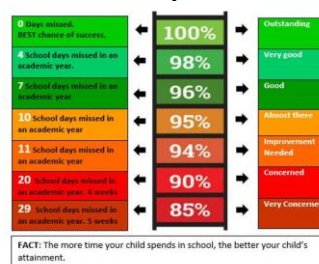
Several people have had an idea that may help the traffic flow through the school and on Baston Road. If all drivers could make a left hand turn onto Biggs Lane where it meets Baston Road (after exiting the school). This may help the flow of traffic leaving the school site not come to a standstill.

By driving down to the roundabout and coming back up Biggs Lane it may actually save time for everybody.

Thank you for your support,
Mrs Bateman

Attendance

In the Government's document 'Working together to Improve Attendance' it states: 'All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils. This is why we continue to set expectations about attendance levels for our children. **However, we work with all families, and especially those with children who have SEN or medical needs, to support them with any attendance concerns regarding their children. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if support would be helpful.**



Playground at Pickup

Please note that the Pirate Ship and Adventure Playground should not be used outside of the school day. We would appreciate it if you could ensure that your younger children do not play on these whilst you are collecting your school children.

Thank you for your support,
Mrs Bateman

Sickness

Please be aware that if your child has been sick (vomited) or had an upset tummy (diarrhoea) they cannot return to school until 48 hours have passed since the last bout of illness.

Please see NHS guidelines here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Leave of Absence Forms

If your child requires time off school for any medical appointment, please ensure that you complete a Leave of Absence form which can be obtained from our website or paper copy from the Office Reception.

Disabled Parking Bays

A polite reminder that disabled parking bays are for parents, grandparents and visitors who require these specific bays. Please do not park in these bays unless you are a blue badge holder. The disabled bays have designated space around the parking bay to allow for easier access. Please also consider that there are a wide range of impairments or conditions not necessarily visible to others, please be considerate and respect others.



WINTER WONDERLAND 2024

ONLINE AUCTION IS NOW LIVE!

The Farley Hill Primary School Online Auction is officially open for bidding!

Amazing promises are up for grabs—perfect for everyone!

- Visit auctionofpromises.com/FarleyHillWinter2024 to place your bids now
- Bidding closes soon – don't miss your chance to get involved!

All proceeds go to Farley Hill Primary School PTA (Registered Charity no: 1041931). Thank you for your support!




SCAN ME!
TO MAKE YOUR BID.

FARLEY HILL PTA

The Auction includes donations from:



TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING APPS

When looking at options for supporting a child's mental health, the sheer volume can be overwhelming. There are many wellbeing apps available, but unfortunately not all are trustworthy. It is important to evaluate which resources are suitable, reliable and effective. This guide lets you know what to consider before installing such an app, to determine just how useful it's going to be.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

QUALITY & RELIABILITY

Mental health apps can be a useful starting point when looking for wellbeing advice and strategies and can be a useful extension to the in-person services available. However, they aren't a substitute. Information on the quality of some of these apps is scarce. They may look cute and child-friendly, but have they been designed by a mental health professional? Furthermore, do they have research to back up their content?

PLACE RESPONSIBILITY ON CHILDREN

Some apps add the words 'kids' or 'children' to their title or use cartoon icons to make them more appealing to young people. When signing up for some of these apps, some will speak to the parent directly, saying something along the lines of "our child is going to go, let them take it from here". It's important to remain involved in the child's mental health journey, so regular check-ins are recommended.

DISREGARDING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Young people who feel anxious and have trouble sleeping may download a mindfulness app to help. While this is a good strategy initially, it's not addressing the root of the problem. A child could simply try managing these symptoms themselves (as opposed to speaking out and seeking professional help), which could potentially worsen their anxiety in the long run.

LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Mental health or wellbeing apps are useful tools for the short term, teaching users several helpful habits to manage their condition – such as keeping an illness diary, improving nutrition and practicing mindfulness exercises. As every person is unique – and children especially will grow and develop in different ways – these apps struggle to tailor themselves to users' individual needs. For example, many apps don't distinguish between the ages of users and can offer extremely generic advice.

DATA SECURITY

As with any other app – not just those for mental health and wellbeing – it's wise to check out the privacy policy before downloading it. Some of these applications may share data with third parties for numerous reasons (such as targeted advertisements), and if a user is sharing personal and sensitive information within the app, they probably don't want it ending up elsewhere without their consent.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Many apps will provide their most basic features for free but will require you to pay for other aspects – such as a more tailored experience or access to additional resources. This could be a one-off fee or a regular subscription. Consider whether this is actually required, is it benefiting the child, or could they receive the same support from a medical professional?

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHECK THE CREDIBILITY OF THE APP

Before you download a mental health and wellbeing app, investigate the developers. Have they consulted with qualified mental health professionals to create their resource? Also check whether the app is affiliated with any government or mental health organisations, as these are solid indicators of legitimacy. Reviews can also be a useful signpost to the app's quality. There are many good apps out there, but there are just as many that miss the mark.

READ THE PRIVACY POLICY

Look into the app's terms of service – especially its privacy policy. Do so by yourself first, then go over it with the child who is considering using the app, to ensure they know what data will be collected and how exactly it will be used. Use all of this information to make an educated decision on whether or not to download that particular app.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Trusted mental health and wellbeing apps designed by qualified, reputable organisations can be used alongside the personalised advice and support of fully trained professionals. These apps should never be considered a substitute for counselling or other tailored medical help. If you have real concerns about a child's mental wellbeing, you should seek appropriate advice from a suitable source, such as their GP – or a Childline, who can be contacted by calling 0800 1111.

ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Mental health and wellbeing apps can be useful for writing down feelings, tracking your own health and other such activities. These can help if the problem is short-term and temporary – such as a child getting stressed about approaching exams – or if you're waiting for professional support. Nonetheless, it is important that children aren't solely reliant on the app and have a safe space to talk about their feelings and experiences in the real world.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Subramaniam is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.






Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://thenationalcollege.com/guides/mental-health-apps>

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WBC Consulting on school admission numbers

We are looking to reduce the number of school places offered to reception pupils in eight primary schools in the borough to help schools to better plan for future resources.

We want to make sure people have the chance to have their voice heard, so please see our [consultation document](#) for full details.

The changes would be in place for the school year 2026/27 at the following schools:

- Radstock Primary School
- Robert Piggott CofE Infant School
- The Colleton Primary School
- Gorse Ride Infant School
- Gorse Ride Junior School
- Bearwood Primary School
- Winnersh Primary School
- Walter Infant School

There are currently significantly more primary school places in Wokingham borough than are needed.

This is due to a decline in the birth rate, which is steeper in the borough than the national average. Families moving into new housing as well as other demographics of local areas mean not all schools have experienced the same decline in applications.

These changes have a major impact on school operations, as funding received is per child, not per class.

By reducing school places offered, these proposals will allow schools to structure and plan more effectively and be more financially stable, all leading to better quality education.