



Ferndale Primary and Nursery School

Head of school: Mrs Beccy Nolan
Ferndale Primary and Nursery School - Wiltshire Avenue
Swindon - Wilts - SN2 1NX

October 2023 Newsletter

A message from the leadership team

What a great first term! Pupils are now well-settled in their classes and have enjoyed getting stuck into their new topics. Lots of exciting activities have been taking place across the school from survival days in the forest to time machines taking pupils to the beach!

This term, we had our Friends of Ferndale (PTA) AGM and we would like to thank everyone who attended. Consequently, we now have lots of exciting activities planned for the run up to Christmas. We would like to say a massive thank you to the Friends of Ferndale for their dedication and hard work providing exciting activities for the pupils of Ferndale.

Upcoming Dates

- 17th October** – Parents' Evening (3.40pm until 5.40pm)
- 18th October** – Parents' Evening (4pm until 6.40pm)
- 18th October** – Harvest celebration
- 23rd October to 27th October** – Half term
- 30th October** – T.T. Day
- 1st November** – Flu immunisations
- 2nd November** – Year 3 Oxenwood Trip
- 3rd November** – Fire work display
- 13th November** – Odd Sock Day (Start of Anti-Bullying Week)
- 14th November** – School photo day – Individual and siblings
- 15th November** – Year 3 Community lunch
- 17th November** – Children in Need
- 28th November** – Book fair
- 30th November** – FOF School disco
- 6th December** – Christmas Dinner Day
- 13th December** – Christmas Movie Night



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Foundation Stage Learning

FS have been learning about the five senses and finding out how they help us learn. They have already explored creating different sounds with the instruments, used mirrors to look closely at their faces to create self-portraits and next week we will be learning about smell and taste through investigations and creating fruit skewers.

Year 2 Learning

Year 2 have had such an exciting term after finding a magical time machine in the forest. We have used this time machine to find out all about the United Kingdom and Walter Tull. We were even lucky enough to use the time machine to travel to the beach, where we enjoyed ice-lollies, surfing, kite flying, building sandcastles and playing in the sea!

Year 4 Learning

Over the last few weeks in year 4 we have been exploring animal habitats in science. We produced a lovely piece of descriptive writing all about the rainforest. Year 4 used some fantastic vocabulary to talk about what was happening around them. They were all so impressive. This week we are excited to welcome some visitors who have been to the Antarctic.

Year 6 Learning

In Year 6, we have been continuing our exciting 'Call of the Wild' topic and found ourselves stranded in The Amazon Jungle (AKA the Ferndale Forest!) We all showed excellent survival skills by making shelters, collecting water and cooking our very own flatbreads on the open fire - delicious! We have also been reading and performing poems from the beautiful book 'The Lost Words' as well as writing our own kennings inspired by local wildlife. In science, we have enjoyed investigating the effect of exercise upon our heart rates and can't wait to find out more about the heart this week when we do heart dissections.

Nursery Learning

Tiny Acorns have had lots of fun painting, colour exploring and decorating biscuits using coloured icing. Little Ferns have been out collecting leaves and Autumnal items ready to make beautiful pictures. They have been exploring Autumnal colours and the effects of the season.

Year 1 Learning

In Year 1, we have been busy having fun and learning. We have been hands on learning about the GFOL in History and materials in Science, we put our knowledge to the test in our trip to forest. We learnt how to make a fire and how to stay safe, how the GFOL spread so quickly and the properties of different materials. We were so lucky to have some marshmallows with biscuits at the end!

Year 3 Learning

We explored how people survived in the Stone Age and learnt how Skara Brae was discovered. We became archaeologists by looking at photos of evidence found there and what could be learnt about the Stone Age people. For poetry week, we became poets and wrote diamante poems about the Stone Age.

Year 5 Learning

Year 5 have had an exciting few weeks exploring 'The skies above my eyes', 'Spaced out' and 'Look up' as part of our Intergalactic Invaders topic. The children also enjoyed a trip to Florence Street Mission Hall to participate in the fully interactive 'Life' exhibition as well as having a special visit from the Wiltshire & Dorset fire service for a fire safety workshop.



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Attendance



We want all the children at Ferndale Primary School to succeed and to achieve their potential. For the children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly. Requests for absence (excluding illness, but including medical appointments) must be made in advance of leave being taken. Paper copies of the absence request form are available from the school foyer or can be downloaded from the school website.

Exceptional leave is a national term that is used for a request to authorise a child's absence from school in cases such as to attend the wedding/funeral of a near relative, to visit a sick relative or to take a holiday for an exceptional and unavoidable reason (this does not include cheaper holidays, holidays booked by relatives, family birthdays or celebrations, visiting relatives or work constrictions of parents). On our school website, you will find school holiday dates for this year.

This year, Blue Kite Academy Trust has appointed a new Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) who will be working at Ferndale two days a week supporting identified pupils and families and overseeing our late gate on some days. She will meet with us termly to review the patterns of absence and reasons for absence of children whose attendance is causing concern. Where children's attendance is below 90%, parents should expect to receive communication from our EWO who will then liaise with the Local Authority to ensure an appropriate plan of support and action is in place.

Harvest



Pupils will be going to our local church to celebrate harvest on 18th October. We would greatly appreciate harvest donations on this date. We would particularly like donations of regular sized tins, jars, bottles, cartons or packets of the following items:

Potatoes; Meat; Fish; Tomatoes; Soup; Vegetables; Fruit; Puddings; Pasta Sauce; Cereals; Small Jars of Coffee; Tea; Small Bags of Sugar; Biscuits; 1L Bottles of Squash; Washing Up Liquid; Laundry Pods; 2 in 1 Shampoo & Conditioner; Male and Female Deodorants

PLEASE NOTE: The food bank has plenty supplies of pasta, baked beans and shower gel so none are currently needed.

Thank you very much for any contributions that you make.



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Children in Need

We are celebrating 'Children in Need' again this year and would like to raise some money to support this incredible charity. The BBC Children in Need Appeal happens every year on the third Friday of November. BBC Children in Need supports children and young people affected by several disadvantages such as poverty, distress, disability, illness, or trauma.

This year, Children in Need is to be celebrated nationally on **Friday 17th November**. On this day, children may come to school wearing non-school uniform and looking 'spot-tacular'. We are asking for a voluntary contribution of £1 paid via parent pay which will be donated to Children in Need.

For more details of the way money raised is spent, please visit the Children in Need website:
<https://www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/>



Tuckshop

After the October half term, we will be setting up and running a school tuck shop at playtime for KS2 pupils. There will be a range of healthy snacks on sale daily for pupils to purchase. Each item will cost 50p. (KS1 pupils will continue to receive free fruit).



Healthy School

In KS1, every day pupils are provided with a piece of fruit for their morning snack. In KS2, pupils are asked to bring in their own healthy snack.

Please can you make sure that the morning snack is a **healthy** snack. This could be a piece of fruit, a healthy cereal bar or similar. No crisps, sweets or chocolate.

We are a **nut-free** school so please consider this when choosing snacks and preparing lunch boxes. Pupils should not be bringing in chocolate bars or packets of sweets. Please can we also remind you to book your child's hot dinners a week in advance to make sure the kitchen can prepare for the correct amount of meals. Thank you for your support.



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Free School Meals

By applying for free school meals, this will help the school to get extra funding from central government, which will be used to buy additional resources to benefit its pupils. You can apply for free school meals if you or your child receive any of these benefits:

- Income support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and your household annual income is less than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (provided your household annual income is less than £7,400 after tax and not including any benefits you get)

You can apply online using this link

https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20032/schools_and_education/408/free_school_meals

Safeguarding News

The theme for anti-bullying week this year is 'Make a Noise About Bullying' and takes place from 13th – 17th November. We will be recognising and celebrating this event by wearing odd socks on Monday 13th November.





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Friend of Ferndale Christmas events

Firstly, we would like to say a massive thank you to Friends of Ferndale (FOF) for raising £11,228 last year through discos, firework night, the Christmas and summer fayre and the Easter egg trail. The money raised is used for various things across the school, last year this included a contribution to the cost of the coach for the Year 6 PGL trip, this year some of the money raised will be used to buy additional ipads to support pupils learning. The school really appreciates the additional funds raised by FOF.

The AGM was held at the beginning of October and we would like to thank everyone who attended. During this meeting, Jane Holden was re-appointed as Chair, Julie Ayres as Co-chair and Jo...as treasurer as well as a number of parents volunteering their support for events across the year.

FOF events planned on the run up to Christmas are as follows:

30th November – FOF School disco

1st December – Christmas topper competition

7th December – Carols by Candlelight (More information to follow)

8th December – Santa event (More information to follow)

14th December – Christmas wrap





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PE

All pupils are required to wear their PE kits in PE lessons. Please ensure that your child has a PE kit in school including a t-shirt that is the appropriate colour for their house (Steam = red, Wyvern = yellow, Coate = blue and Lydiard = green). We expect all pupils to change for PE and we will provide spare PE clothes for them to change into if they do not have a kit.

Please remember that pupils should not wear earrings when doing PE. Pupils can either take them out on the day or if they are unable to take them out they can tape them over (please teach them how to do this and provide them with tape). Thank you for your support.



Pirate ship

Our pirate ship, in the courtyard area, is now unsafe to be used by pupils due to rot and damage. Please can you make sure that your children are not climbing on it before or after school.

In addition, as the forest and adventure zone are unsupervised by staff before and after school, we would kindly ask pupils not to play in these areas. As we often have clubs running after school on both playgrounds, please could we remind you to leave school promptly at the end of the day. Thank you.

Polite Reminder

Please can we remind all parents about the code of conduct that you signed when your child started at the school. Please remember to discuss any issues calmly and politely with staff.

In regards to homework and school uniform, staff are required to follow school policies. If you have any queries regarding school policies these can be found on the website. Thank you.



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Ferndale Book Swap

In the reception area by the school office, is a bookshelf containing books that you can swap! You are welcome to take a book home to read and then bring it back and swap it. If you have a children's book that you no longer use, you can leave it for other children to enjoy. (Books should be in a good condition and appropriate for primary aged children.)

We hope this will be a fantastic opportunity for your children to find new and exciting books to read at home!

Fireworks Display Countdown has begun!

