



Firthmoor Primary School Newsletter

Date: Thursday 20th February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are halfway through the school year and it is lovely to see the mornings getting lighter. The children really enjoyed the Valentines Disco last night so thank you for your support with this. The weather is still very changeable so please ensure that you send your child into school with coats, hats scarves and gloves as playtimes can be very cold.

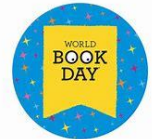
There are lots of events in school so please take note of the events list at the bottom of this newsletter.

Please remember that our newsletter is sent via email and is on Facebook and the school website. It is also on the noticeboard outside of school. It is sent out every other Friday so keep an eye out to keep up to date.

Reminder: School closes on Thursday 20th February for February half term holidays and re-opens on Monday 3rd March.

World Book Day on Thursday 6th March (first week back after half term)

We will be celebrating World Book Day across school and we are inviting children to come to school dressed as their favourite book character or in their pyjamas ready for a cosy story time in class.



Extreme Reading Photograph Competition - We have 3, £10 gift vouchers to award to 3 lucky pupils. Where is the most bizarre/extreme/random place you find your child reading? Capture it on camera and email it to the school office. The photos will form part of a school display and three winners will be chosen.



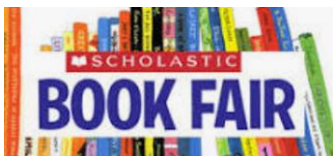
Red Nose Day – Friday 21st March

Children can come into school in non-uniform on this day and can bring a voluntary donation for the Red Nose Day charity.

Parents Evening – Week Beginning: 24th March

Please ensure that you arrange a convenient time to speak to your child's teacher about their progress as it is so important to find out how their learning is progressing. You can choose either an afternoon or an evening appointment and we will send a message out when these are available to book online.

Scholastic Book Fair



The book fair is visiting the school again! You will get the chance to visit the fair during parents' evening week. More details to follow.

My Clothing – discount on school uniforms

We have been informed by 'my clothing' that they can offer discount on school uniforms purchased before the end of march. You will need to enter the code below.

Discount when ordering uniforms from: <https://myclothing.com/>

Code = UNIFORM10%

Expires = 31/03/2025

Pupil Attendance

A reminder that there has been changes to the attendance guidance to schools by the DfE. There is a link to guidance for parents below:

[DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

If your child is absent then please remember to make a phone call to the school office every day that your child is absent from school.

Sports Update

SPRING 2– PE Kit Days



Here are the days that your child will be taking part in PE lessons in **Spring 2 – Please note some classes have changed their PE day.**

Year Group and Teacher	PE Days
Year Reception Mrs Smith & Mrs Coad	Friday
Year 1 Miss Lister	Tuesday and Thursday
Year 2/3 Mrs Irwin	Monday and Tuesday
Year 2 Miss Heslop	Thursday and Friday
Year 3 Mrs Blagg and Mrs Howland	Monday and Thursday
Year 3/4 Miss Trainer	Monday and Wednesday
Year 4 Miss True	Tuesday and Friday
Year 5 Miss Jamieson	Tuesday and Friday
Year 5/6 Mrs Walker	Wednesday Tuesday (swimming continues until Easter)
Year 6 Miss Murray	Monday and Thursday (Spring 2)

Please note – a group of selected children from Year 6 will receive Top Up swimming lessons – letters sent out before Thursday 20th February.

PE Kit

Pupils should wear a plain red t-shirt, plain black shorts, leggings or tracksuit and trainers.

No jewellery to be worn on PE days. Earrings need to be removed for PE.

Our Uniform Guidance can be found on our website in the school prospectus and policy.

Children in Year 1 to Year 6 can come to school dressed in their PE kits on their specified PE days.

Children in Reception will continue to change into their PE kits at school. Please bring kits in a school drawstring bag.

The Harvey McWilliams Foundation is a registered charity that supports young people in developing their interest in football by providing football boots, shin-pads, socks and training strips to those in need. They also receive donations. The charity is situated at 5 Whessoe Road, Darlington. More information can be found on their website: www.theharveymcwilliamsfoundation.org.uk

Music Lessons

Violin lessons will take place on Tuesdays in school.

Parent Voice Survey

We would like to find out your views on our school and your opinion on communication. Please could you complete the following survey which will be anonymous and should take you less than 5 minutes. This can be completed by clicking on the following link or scanning the QR code on your phone's camera. We will use the information and any suggestions you may have to help improve communication between yourself and school. The survey is now open. Please complete the survey **before** Friday 21st February as this is when the survey will close. Thank you for your support.



<https://forms.office.com/e/tbeC2ajijW>

Parent Teacher Association

We are looking for any parents who would be interested in helping our school to set up a parent teacher association so that we can access additional funding for our pupils, support school events and fundraise for new projects. More information can be found on the 'Parentkind' website. It wouldn't need to take up a huge amount of time and the more support we get the easier it is to share the load. If you are interested then please could you contact our school office and leave your name, telephone number and email address with a member of staff.

Struggling with School Attendance? Support Is Here.

When your child faces challenges with school attendance, it can feel overwhelming. Outdated terms like "school refusal" and "school phobia" may sound familiar, but compassionate alternatives like Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) and Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) reflect a more supportive approach—and help is available.

If you're feeling unsure about how to support your child, you're not alone. Families across the UK face similar challenges, and understanding the emotional roots of EBSA is the first step toward making a positive change.

This session offers practical strategies to support your child, improve attendance, and build confidence for both of you.

link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/struggling-with-school-attendance-ebsa-session-for-parents-and-carers-tickets-1235998477719?aff=oddtcreator>

The link is also on the @DarlingtonVS X/Twitter account

The event is online and is free. It will be held on Friday 21st February 10-3.

Darlington FC



This is a reminder that we have a school season ticket for Darlington FC which was donated to us by the football club. This is for one adult and one child to attend. It is worth noting that children aged 12 and under do get free entry, so the child season card could be used for an older sibling. If you would like to add your name to the list to use the season ticket, then please contact the school office.

After School Clubs

After half term letters will be sent out about the following clubs:

Singing Club – will continue on Mondays and the children will be performing at the Mayor's Song Contest on Friday 7th March. Letters will be sent out with information for parents to purchase tickets for the event. Miss True and Mrs Coad will be offering additional singing club places to interested children as from Monday 10th March we will be expanding the size of our club. Letters for these additional places will be sent home after half term. Singing club will run up to Monday 7th April.

Games Club – Our After School Games Clubs on a Monday (Y4) and Friday (Y2/3) will continue in Spring 2. The Monday club will finish on Monday 7th April and the Friday club will finish on Friday 11th April.

Dance Club – Miss Trainer's dance club will run until Thursday 13th March.

Y6 Maths Clubs will continue to run on a Monday

Art Club – Miss Heslop will be running an art club on a Tuesday after school. Letters will be sent out with further information about this.

Diary of Events:

Event	Date and Time	Year Group	Parents Invited
E-Safety Assembly	Thursday 20 th February 2025 9.15am and 2.30pm	Nursery morning only Rec – Y6 Morning and afternoon	Yes
World Book Day	Thursday 6 th March	All children can come into school dressed as their favourite book character or they can wear pyjamas.	No
Red Nose Day	Friday 21 st March	Children can come into school in their own clothes and make a voluntary donation to Red Nose Day charity.	No

Safeguarding Information for Parents

Please see below some links to useful websites with safeguarding information for parents and carers:

Smart TV's - <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers/smart-tvs>

Term Dates:

FIRTHMOOR SCHOOL CALENDAR

2024 - 2025

2024	July	August	September	October	November	December
Mon			2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30
Tues			3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31
Wed			4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25
Thurs			5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26
Fri			6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27
Sat			7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28
Sun			1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29

2025	January	February	March	April	May	June
Mon	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30
Tues	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24
Wed	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25
Thurs	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26
Fri	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27
Sat	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28
Sun	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29

2025	July	August	September
Mon	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 30
Tues	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23
Wed	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24
Thurs	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25
Fri	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	5 12 19 26
Sat	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	6 13 20 27
Sun	6 13 20 27	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28

Teacher Training Days

- Monday 2nd September 2024
- Tuesday 3rd September 2024
- Friday 20th December 2024
- Friday 21st February 2025
- Monday 21st July 2025

- Public Holidays
- School Holidays
- Staff Training



Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools **after 19th August 2024**.

Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

For example: a 5-day holiday would meet the national threshold.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

Second Offence

(within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent (who allowed the holiday), per child, payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.