



## Firthmoor Primary School Newsletter

Date: Friday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have a disco and an e-safety assembly next week as we come to the end of our half term. 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 20<sup>th</sup> February for February half term holidays and re-opens on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.**

### Staffing Update:

Miss O'Meara has recently joined our team and she is our new Inclusion Support Advisor. She replaces Mrs Kilpatrick who held the role previously. She is based in the school office so if you require any support around your child's behaviour, attendance or any other pastoral issues then please don't hesitate to get in touch. We have included photographs of the new staff in school at the bottom of the newsletter.

### 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.

### Time Keeping – Learning begins at 8.45am!

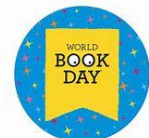


Please can I remind all parents and carers that children need to be in school for 8.45am. Children who are arriving after this are missing out on valuable learning time and it is affecting their attendance. There is a free Breakfast Club at 8.20am (you will need to contact the school office to book in advance) and this will ensure that your child is in school on time.

### World Book Day on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> 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.



### **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



### **Valentines Disco (Rec – Y6) – Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

On Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February, there will be a Valentines Disco for the children to attend. Mrs Smith (Rec), Mrs Coad (Rec/Y1), Mrs Pratt (Year 1), Miss Heslop (Year 2) and Mrs Irwin (Year 2/3) pupils will attend from 3.30pm – 4.45pm.

Reception pupils to come to school in disco clothes as they will be having a friendship themed day.

Miss Trainer (Year 3/4), Mrs Blagg/Mrs Howland (Year 3), Miss True (Year 4), Miss Jamieson (Year 5), Mrs Walker (Year 5/6) and Mrs Murray (Year 6) pupils will attend from 5.00pm until 6.15pm. Tickets will be £2 and will include a cake and a drink. This needs to be paid online via ParentPay. Children can bring money to buy sweets from our sweet shop (**please put this in an envelope/purse with their name on/in**). The funds raised from this event will go towards subsidising our planned end of year beach trip. **All children must be collected by an adult at the end of the disco.**

### **E-Safety Assembly – Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February – 9.15am and 2.30pm**

Parents are invited into school to find out about the e-safety work that has been happening this half term. The same assembly will be shown on both the morning and the afternoon so that everyone can get the opportunity to watch their child. Nursery pupils will take part in the morning assembly only. Please contact the school office to reserve a seat.



### **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 \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/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.**

### ***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.*



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](http://www.theharveymcwilliamsfoundation.org.uk)

### Water Bottles

Polite reminder – children should only have water in their water bottles unless they have a medical need school is aware of.

### 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 21<sup>st</sup> February as this is when the survey will close. Thank you for your support.

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



### 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.

### Diary of Events:

Event	Date and Time	Year Group	Parents Invited
Nursery Valentine's stay and play	Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 10:45-11:45	Nursery	Yes
Valentines Disco	Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 – After School	Rec – Y2 3.30pm - 4.45pm Y3 – Y6 5.00pm - 6.15pm	No
E-Safety Assembly	Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 9.15am and 2.30pm	Nursery morning only Rec – Y6 Morning and afternoon	Yes

## Safeguarding Information for Parents

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

[Childline](#) provides free and confidential advice for children and young people

[Internet Watch Foundation](#) works internationally to remove child sexual abuse online images and videos and offers a place for the public to report them anonymously.

## Meet our new staff



Daisy Kerr  
Admin Apprentice



Auste  
Lukoseviciute  
Admin Apprentice



Hope Walker  
Teaching Assistant  
Apprentice



Lucy McDonough  
Early Years  
Apprentice



Rosie O'Meara  
Inclusion Support  
Advisor

**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	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	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 19<sup>th</sup> 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'.