Dear Parents

Setting Expectations

The beginning of a new term always involves resetting expectations with children. My expectations of how children conduct themselves are incredibly high. I expect children to be polite, well mannered, say please and thank you and show great care towards their peers.

This term we have been reminding the children of the importance of being ready for learning. Each class has a set of visuals that teachers use to help the children be ready.

Respectful Play

I love to see children playing imaginatively with their friends. I like to see chase games, role play and pretend play outside. It is important that children have access to equipment and use it to play with their friends.

Recently, there have been times when play is becoming far too rough. Children have been getting hurt and even going home with marks on their bodies. Punching, kicking, pulling, dragging and smacking are not acceptable forms of play. I am raising my expectations of how children are playing together and as a school we are focussing on supporting children to play successfully.

I am asking parents to reinforce the message of safe play at school. Rough and tumble play has its place at home, where boundaries are clear and the environment is safe. The school playground is not the place for rough play.
Art Club

Our brand new Art Club, run by Mrs Ridgway, started on Thursday 21st September. This week the children created artwork linked to the poem ‘Jackdaw’ from the Lost Word. The art looks fab!

A ParentMail was sent home recently providing further details including how to register your child for a place on this independently run club. Please note: There are only a few spaces left, as the club is restricted to a maximum number of 20 pupils.

CAT Football Event

Yesterday, a team of Year 2 children and a team of Year 4 children took part in a football event which was organised by the Castleman Academy Trust. Teams from Broadstone First School and St Ives School also attended the event.

The children enjoyed taking part in a variety of football activities which were set up by a football coach.

There will be many more opportunities for other children to take part in similar sporting events throughout the year.

Invacuation Procedure Today

I am pleased to confirm that today’s invacuation procedure went very well. The children remained calm, followed instructions and did everything that was asked of them correctly. Mrs Errington and I walked around the school and it was as if there were no children or staff on site! I am sure they will tell you all about it!
**BBC 500 Words Competition**

500 Words, the UK’s most successful children’s writing competition, has begun!

Since the competition was first launched in 2011 by Chris Evans on the Radio 2 Breakfast Show, it has received over one million stories from children throughout the UK.

Children of all abilities are encouraged to use their creativity and imagination to write a story they would love to read without the pressure of having to worry about spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The brilliant 500 Word judges are back; award-winning and best-selling authors Frank Cottrell-Boyce, Francesca Simon, Charlie Higson, and former children’s laureate, Malorie Blackman. This year there will be a new addition to the panel, TV legend and children’s author, Sir Lenny Henry. The judges will be casting their expert eyes over the final 50 stories.

This year, BBC Breakfast will be hosting the competition supported by BBC Teach. The winners will be featured in a special 500 Word programme on World Book Day, Thursday 7 March 2024 on BBC One.

We will be encouraging our children at Ferndown First School to take part with a BBC Teach live lesson which launches the competition, over the next week. The lesson will show children how to develop their story ideas, characters, plot and endings. After the lesson, the children can decide if they would like to take part in the competition. Mrs Errington and Mrs Lord will be on hand over the next few weeks, supporting the children with ideas for their stories, however, the majority of the writing will need to be completed at home. The competition is now open and it closes on 10th November.

Keep an eye out for a Tapestry post for more information to follow. In the meantime, all the competition details can be found here.

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/500-words/about-500-words/zctk7v4](https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/500-words/about-500-words/zctk7v4)

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**500 Words 2023: Everything you need to know**

BBC 500 Words 2023 is open for entries from 26 September - 10 November. Check here for information on who our judges are, competition rules and more.

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)
Year 4 News

Junior Duke

I am excited to announce that the Junior Duke booklets have arrived and will soon be going home with the Year 4 children who have chosen to take part. The children will need to complete 7 out of 10 challenges by the end of the school year to receive their Silver Junior Duke Award. I am really looking forward to hearing about the challenges that the children complete and seeing their reflections in the booklets. *Mrs Lord, Junior Duke Leader*

Year 4 Play Leaders

There are many leadership opportunities throughout the year for our Year 4 children. Many children have already expressed an interest in becoming a Play Leader.

The Play Leaders will be supporting children in games and activities on the playground, teaching children how to play in a kind and considerate manner, packing away equipment neatly and safely and will bring enthusiasm and positivity to school every day.

If your child would like to become a Play Leader, they will need to write a letter to Mrs Lord to tell her what skills and qualities they have and why they would be a good Play Leader at Ferndown First School. Play Leader training at Ferndown Leisure Centre takes place on Monday 9th October (further information will be made available) so please ensure your child’s letter is sent to Mrs Lord by Tuesday 3rd October.

One Way Entry and Exit System

The one way entry and exit system remains in place. Parents will not be allowed entry to the playground via the main gate. This is now part of our site risk assessment. Benefits of the one way system include:

- A safer waiting area along the side of the school.
- Easier monitoring of children who may be separated from parents and carers.
- Less risk of collisions of bikes and push chairs.
- Easier identification of any unknown adults trying to access the school site at vulnerable times of the day.

Thank you for support and cooperation.
School Car Park

Our school car park remains restricted to authorised visitors and staff only.

There is a strict one-way system in place indicating where vehicles should enter the car park through the main gate entrance, follow the arrows round and exit through the main exit gate. Parents are also reminded that the school car park has limited accessible spaces for Blue Badge Holders. If you are a permit holder, a parking space is not guaranteed and cannot be reserved.

You are advised to leave plenty of time to park and walk from one of the local car parks at Tesco or the Leisure Centre. Please be respectful to our neighbours in Mountbatten Drive and Brabourne Avenue and avoid parking here if possible.

School Parking

We have recently had two near-miss accidents involving children as they walk along Mountbatten Drive with their parents. This has happened because of inconsiderate parking and driving.

Parking outside schools has long been a problem for many schools nationally. I am deeply grateful to those of you who are not only mindful of our children’s safety, but also considerate of our neighbours around our school site. Thank you.

Unfortunately, particularly of late, we are receiving many complaints from our neighbours telling us about unsafe and inconsiderate parking in the streets directly around the school. It is clear that the biggest problems occur at drop off and pick up times, which can only mean that it is school families who are creating dangerous situations for our children and residents. We do appreciate that it’s not only school families parking in the street. The public, who we have no authority over, use the road as well, adding to congestion problems.

These are all incidents that put our children deeply at risk of injury or worse. Most frustratingly, the school has absolutely no authority to act on these matters and relies on the goodwill of our families to ensure our children’s safety.

A suggestion of opening the car park will not help ease the situation. Over the years, pupil numbers have increased substantially and with that, the numbers of staff. The car park is needed to accommodate staff who work in the school. There is simply no room for any other vehicles.

I know that so many of you try to be supportive about parking. Many of you park further away from school and walk the last part of the way. We are really grateful to you for your support and ask you to encourage others to behave in the same way. If we work together, park responsibly and show consideration and respect to others, we will be able to ensure we keep our children safe.
To help us to achieve this, please:

- Don’t park across drive ways – Parking across driveways causes frustration for the residents who may be trying to drive in or out of their property.

- Don’t park on bends or junctions – Parking on bends or junctions causes cars to have to drive out on to the other side of the road to pass the obstruction. They may meet another car coming the other way, or a pedestrian trying to cross the road in between the parked cars, who can’t see properly to cross.

- Don’t speed past schools – Drive slowly and with extra care around schools during drop off and pick up times. There are normally parked cars along the side of the road that can hide children who may suddenly run out.

- Don’t park on yellow zig zags – Yellow zig zags outside schools are there to create a clear area where it is safe to cross the road and the motorist has a clear view. You should not park on these markings. If your vehicle is parked on zig zags, you could put a child at risk as well as you being at risk of receiving a ticket.

- Don’t obstruct the road for an Ambulance or Fire Engine – Parking in a manner that would restrict an Ambulance or a Fire Engine from driving down a road could put lives at risk.

Thank you for your support.

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**Avon Tyrrell Year 4 Residential Visit 2024**

The dates for next year’s Year 4 residential have been booked for Wednesday April 17th to Friday April 19th. Thank you to parents who have paid the non-refundable deposit of £30.00. Closing dates for parents to sign their children up for this residential visit and pay the non-refundable deposit of £30.00 is **30th September**.
Breakfast Club – Reminder to Parents

Parents are reminded that, if they would like their child to attend Breakfast Club, then they MUST book their child onto the club BEFORE attending. We have a maximum number of children that can attend the Breakfast Club and, therefore, booking is essential to secure your child’s place.

If your child is attending Breakfast Club, we would also ask that children are escorted to the door and handed over to a member of staff so that they can be registered. Children should not be left to make their own way into Breakfast Club. Thank you for your cooperation.

Easyfundraising

Please help us to raise money for the school when making online purchases! The brand you are purchasing from donates the money so it doesn’t cost you a penny! Ferndown First School has a dedicated page. You can sign up and support this cause by clicking the link below: https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ferndown1st/?searchSessionId=36a76bba-a437-4adc-8758-0839d59218d3

We greatly appreciate any help from parents.

Have a great weekend.

Yours sincerely

Mr Sean Watts
Headteacher
Do you need to apply for your child’s new school place?

Is your child due to leave their current school in July 2024 and transfer to the next school in September 2024?

**Secondary Applications**  
Closing date 31 October 2023  
- Primary - Secondary School  
- Middle - Upper School

**Primary Applications**  
Closing date 15 January 2024  
- Starting School  
- Infant - Junior School  
- First - Middle School

**Dorset residents apply online at:**
www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/apply-for-a-school-place

or call 01305 221060

Working together for a strong and successful Dorset
# FERNDOWN FIRST SCHOOL
## TERM DATES & HOLIDAYS
### SEPTEMBER 2023 - JULY 2024

### AUTUMN TERM 2023

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inset Day</td>
<td>Friday 1 September 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Starts</td>
<td>Monday 4 September 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Half Term</td>
<td>Monday 23 October – Friday 27 October 2023</td>
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<td>Term Ends</td>
<td>Friday 15 December 2023</td>
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<td>Christmas Holiday</td>
<td>Monday 18 December 2023 – Monday 1 January 2024</td>
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### SPRING TERM 2024

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<td>Inset Day</td>
<td>Friday 9 February 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Half Term Holiday</td>
<td>Monday 12 February – Friday 16 February 2024</td>
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<td>Term Ends</td>
<td>Thursday 28 March 2024</td>
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<td>Easter Holiday</td>
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### SUMMER TERM 2024

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<td>May Day Holiday</td>
<td>Monday 6 May 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Half Term Holiday</td>
<td>Monday 27 May – Friday 31 May 2024</td>
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<td>Inset Day</td>
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