Whole School Attendance from 1st September until today: **95.29%**  Our Target: **97%**

Dear Parents

Further to my message in the last Newsletter, I am pleased to confirm that behaviour has really improved during the lunchtimes. The children have been much happier and settled. They have had much more to do as we have introduced a wider range of resources to use.

We plan to further increase playtime provision for the children and will keep parents updated.

**Year 3 and 4 - Community Reading**

The new Year 3 and Year 4 Reading Leaders for this academic year did a wonderful job reading to some of the residents at Kings Park Care Home on Monday. They read their favourite books clearly and expressively and the residents enjoyed their company a great deal. We will be visiting again in a few weeks’ time.
Children’s Leadership – Playground Leaders’ Academy

On Monday, those children in Year 4 who were selected to be our new Playground Leaders went to Ferndown Upper School to take part in a Playground Leaders’ Workshop.

Being a Playground Leader is an important role and the children are encouraged to think of imaginative ways they can increase the activity levels of all children (and teachers!) in our school - the government guideline is 60 minutes of activity per day for children.

Our Playground Leaders, together with Mrs Lord who oversees the Playground Leaders, will meet regularly so that they can put forward their brilliant ideas.

Online and In Person Parents’ Evening – Wednesday 18th October

In response to parents’ feedback, on Wednesday 18th October we are pleased to advise that parents will have the option to attend Parents’ Evening either in person at school or online via Teams.

- 10 minute in-person appointments will be held in childrens’ classrooms between 3.30pm and 5.50pm. Please enter school through the main office entrance and staff will guide you to the correct classroom.

- 10 minute online appointments will be from 6.30pm to 7.50pm. A link will be sent out the day before for you to ensure your login details are correct.

- Appointments are now available to book via ParentMail.

- Please contact the office if you have any issues with the booking system.

Please can we ask that parents are respectful of the 10 minute appointment time to enable teachers to keep to schedule, whether online or in-person, thank you.

School Photo Day

The school photographer will be in school on Friday next week to take individual and sibling photos. We will advise parents when we expect to send these home in due course.

As this is photo day, please ensure your child is sent to school in their full uniform next Friday, ie no PE uniforms, please. Thank you.
Subject Spotlight - Geography

We have been further developing our geography curriculum to ensure children have opportunities to develop their fieldwork skills. This half term has been successful with Year 1 and Year 3 enjoying taking their geography learning outside of school.

Year 1 - A Walk into Ferndown

This half term in geography the children have been learning about their locality and where they live. The children practised saying their addresses and drew a picture to post home. We went on a walk to Ferndown to post the pictures in the post box, one class even saw the postman collect all of our pictures! During our walk we also spotted many features of Ferndown such as the library and Tesco.

Year 3 - Heath Visit

This week, Year 3 visited Ferndown Common. We learnt about the different plants on the heath, including birch, gorse, common heather, bell heather, cross-leaved heath, purple moor grass, moss, and pine.

The children studied and created a tally chart of the plants in an area unaffected by fire. They then studied the plants in an area that suffered a heath fire in 2018. The children identified that there were fewer plants in the second area and more bare ground.

In groups, the children used their tally charts to create bar charts on the ground using sticks and pine cones!

Well done Year 3 for being exceptionally well-behaved and for representing the school brilliantly.
At Ferdown First School we place great importance on good attendance and punctuality.

We know that a child’s attendance has a direct impact on their learning. Those children who are regularly absent from school and regularly late do not achieve their potential and do fall behind in class.

Requests from parents to take their children out of school for a holiday will not be granted. Only in **Exceptional** circumstances may permission be granted.

Please support the school in this by ensuring that your child attends school regularly and arrives ready to learn and on time at 8.40am.

Attendance matters! It is important that your child gets to school on time and aims for as high a level of attendance as possible.

Children’s attendance is monitored across the school and our family support worker, Mrs Bramley, works alongside families where there are attendance concerns.

Our whole school attendance is currently **95.29%** and, while there has been a drop in attendance nationally, this is simply too low. It must improve. Please support the school by sending your child to school every day.

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**Reading with your Child**

Studies show that reading for pleasure makes a big difference to children’s educational performance.

Evidence suggests that children who read for enjoyment every day not only perform better in reading tests than those who don’t, but also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures.

In fact, reading for pleasure is more likely to determine whether a child does well at school than their social or economic background.

We are passionate about encouraging parents to support their children at home with their reading. It has a huge impact! Take a look at this useful poster from the Open University which has ideas on how to support your child effectively at home.
Supporting Readers at Home

Open University research suggests there are three important ways to support readers and a love of reading.

- **Read Aloud**: Reading aloud to your children shows them reading is a pleasure, not a chore. Older children can read to younger ones too.
- **Family Reading Time**: Making time to read alongside one another helps develop children's reading stamina and interest. Let them choose what to read and relax together.
- **Book Chat**: Book Chats encourage readers. Invite them to make connections and share their views. Join in with your thoughts too.

For more ideas see the OU website: www.ourfp.org

Top Tips for listening to early readers:

- If your child is easily distracted, make sure you are in a quiet space. Look at and talk about the picture on the page first, then cover it up to focus on the text.
- Remind your child to use their pointy finger to point to each word as they read.
- Allow your child to read to the end of each sentence. If they make an error, wait until they get to the end of the sentence and then say, ‘Did that sound right?’ Then go back and support them to reread correctly.
- At the end of each page, ask the children to reread it but this time with fluency. You could say... “Now read it again like a story teller.” or “Now read it like an expert.” Rereading will really help develop confidence.
- Remember, you don’t need to read a whole book all at once. Depending on your child’s concentration, ask them to read, perhaps, just 3 or 4 pages at a time, rereading each page for fluency.

Celebrating National Poetry Day

On 6th October the children spent time celebrating National Poetry Day by reading, learning, listening, writing and performing poems to their friends in class. Please take a look at our website where you can download and listen to the children reciting their poems.
Year 4 – Peter Pan Production

We are looking forward to our production of Peter Pan on Thursday 23rd November at the Barrington Theatre, Ferndown. In the meantime, children have been busy auditioning this week with parts being allocated next week.

Rehearsals begin next week! More details will be sent home in due course.

Did you know we have a Facebook page 'Ferndown First Pre-loved Uniform’?

Pre-loved uniform will be available again at the end of the school day on Friday 20th October. A table will be set up on the slope on the left hand side as parents walk down to queue to enter the school playground.

If there is anything you need, please help yourself. For anyone who wishes to make a voluntary donation, this can be given via the school office.

If you have any spare or unwanted uniform, donations are welcome throughout the year. We would be happy to receive trousers, shorts, skirts, pinafore/summer dresses, jumpers, cardigans, joggers, T-shirts, socks, tights and shoes. Our thanks go to Mrs Saunders for organising this.

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

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**EAST DORSET YEAR 3, 4 and 5 FUN RUN**

**Wednesday 18th Oct 2023**

**AT ST MICHAEL’S MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**First Race - 4pm**

Year 3, 4 and 5 are invited to enter the **EAST DORSET FUN RUN** either as an individual runner or as part of a school team. Teams are 3 runners of the same gender from the same school. The fun run will be approximately 1km. Year 3 and 4 will compete together. Year 5 will be in a separate race. Please arrive at 3.45pm at St Michaels Middle School.

**To enter scan the QR code and fill in the form**

You can use the form to enter an individual or school teams.

Link to the form is also here: [https://forms.gle/qroGF8umJFHQLYq9](https://forms.gle/qroGF8umJFHQLYq9)

**Organiser:** Mrs Katrina Cole. School Games Organiser

sco4eastdorset@gmail.com Schools will be told if event is cancelled.
# FERNDOWN FIRST SCHOOL
## TERM DATES & HOLIDAYS
### SEPTEMBER 2023 - JULY 2024

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