Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a very busy few weeks in school. As I write, the children are thoroughly enjoying the Cinderella pantomime! We have had teachers up and dancing and children singing along at the top of their voices. A great way to end the week.

**Celebrate Learning**

**Reception**

Our focus this half term is traditional tales. This week, we have read the traditional tale ‘Hansel and Gretel’. We enjoyed writing about the witch and her sweets!

In our understanding the world sessions, we have learnt about the season of winter.

Last week, we were lucky enough to see snow which made our winter walk very exciting! We also made some ice pots with frozen natural items inside. We thought about ways that we could thaw the ice and came up with some inventive ideas.

**Year 1**

This half term the children have begun ‘The Write Stuff’ approach. We have been practicing sentence writing skills, focused on the book ‘The Way Back Home’. Next week the children will write an independent story using key points from the book.

In maths, we have been learning all about 20; counting, ordering and comparing. We are now moving onto addition within 20.

In art, the children enjoyed beginning our sculpture unit, exploring junk modelling materials to make their own sculptures. We will continue to build on this over the coming weeks.
Year 2

In maths, we have been focusing on addition and subtraction using money. We have used our knowledge of counting in 2s, 5s and 10s to find the total and work out change. We have been using a number line and a hundred square to count on and used part-whole and bar models to represent the problem we are trying to solve. Continuing to improve our recognition of notes and coins will help us as we continue our learning.

Our English text, ‘The Building Boy’, has encouraged us to use complex sentences using subordination. We have included the words: because, which, when, that, as and if. In our independent write, we created our own story about the boy, Tom, and his new building project.

The theme of architecture has continued in our art curriculum. We have been learning about the role of the architect. We observed design features in our local area and sketched the interesting features. We will apply what we have learnt to the design and creation of our own building.

Year 3

In Year 3, we have been reading ‘Letters to Pluto’ by Lou Treleaven. The children have found this book hilarious! It is about a boy called Jon Fisher who is assigned a penpal from Pluto! The book is full of his letters to Straxi, his penpal, and her letters back to him. It is full of interesting aliens from Pluto.

We have started our new design technology unit. Linking to ‘Letters to Pluto’, children will be designing and then creating their own pneumatic alien from Pluto! So far children have learned about how pneumatics work and started designing their own alien. Please continue to bring in egg boxes. Thank you.

Year 4

This half term in art the children have been learning all about how art is presented and how this affects how powerful our message is to the audience. We have been researching 'plinths' and how artists use them to display their art in exhibitions. The children enjoyed learning about The Fourth Plinth in London and seeing how different artists use their time on the plinth.

We have also had an opportunity to use clay this week where the children created small sculptures of themselves taking part in a PE lesson. This involved 'freeze-framing' in a position we would be in when playing a racket sport and then transforming it into a small, clay sculpture.
Parking in Mountbatten Drive - Incidents and Complaints

The Police visited school this week to meet with me and discuss the ongoing issues regarding parking in and around the local vicinity of the school.

We have received several complaints from parents that they are being verbally abused and their cars are allegedly being tampered with by residents in Mountbatten Drive. Complaints have also been received from residents on Mountbatten Drive regarding inconsiderate and dangerous parking, together with the disappointing behaviour of some adults.

Ultimately, the use of the public highway is not the responsibility of the school. We ask parents regularly to park considerately in local roads and be respectful to our neighbours in Mountbatten Drive and Brabourne Avenue.

In the last six months, the Police have only received one complaint regarding parking issues from a resident in Mountbatten Drive. They have not received any complaints from parents.

Police Officers and PCSOs are under considerable pressure as the number of officers is very low in our area. We were advised that the Police will monitor the parking situation when operational demands allow and, if necessary, will take the appropriate action to ensure that parking issues and any other incidents are dealt with.

If parents have a complaint or incident they would like to report, we have been asked to advise that the best course of action is for parents to report these on either the Dorset Police 101 website, the Dorset Road Safe website or the local council website and, if able to, attach any photo evidence supporting your complaint (links for the websites have been provided below). The more records the Police have regarding these incidents in our local vicinity, the more likelihood they may be able to enforce any action they need to take.

https://www.dorsetroadsafe.org.uk/enforcement-operations/reporting-traffic-concerns/
https://www.dorset.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us-beta/contact-us/driving-vehicles-traffic/
https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/-/parking-problems

M & M Productions - Cinderella

We welcomed M&M Productions back to school today with their fantastic production of Cinderella. We always receive some wonderful comments from the children about how much they have enjoyed watching the show. More pictures are available on our website.
Life Education Workshop Visit

Usually known as ‘The Life Bus’, the Coram Life Education & SCARF team will be visiting the school on **Monday 29th January to Thursday 1st February**. Workshops will take place in classrooms, to support our work teaching a variety of themes in Personal, Social and Health Education.

### Car Park Safety - Pedestrian Routes

With the cold, icy weather at this time of year, parents are asked to ensure that they and their children **keep to the marked pedestrian walkways** into and out of school at all times please, as these are gritted when necessary, and avoid walking through the middle of the car park.

### Dates for your Diary - Reminder - Staff Training Day

Parents are reminded that Friday 9th February is a Staff Training Day. This is the Friday before half term which runs from Monday 12th - Friday 16th February, so children will finish for this half term on Thursday 8th February.

**Finish time will be 3.05pm.**

### Adverse Weather - Information for Parents re School Closure

As the weather can become unpredictable at this time of the year, arrangements need to be in place to cope with sudden snowfalls or severe weather that may prevent staff from reaching school.

- Parents are advised that, in the event of a heavy frost, there may be occasions when site staff have to lock all access gates until gritting of key areas has been completed.
- There may be days when we have to close the waiting areas and bring year groups in to school from doors at the front of school.
- Parents will be notified of any changes to the entry and exit arrangements but this might be at short notice, so we ask for your patience, understanding and co-operation.
- Parents must:
  - adhere to the designated, gritted pathways into school only
  - supervise their children before and after school whilst on school premises
  - ensure that their children are wearing sensible footwear and warm coats
- Please check ParentMail text messaging service and updated notices on our website.

Parents can also access information on:
[https://mapping.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/closedservices/Service/schools](https://mapping.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/closedservices/Service/schools)
Our next Newsletter is due to be published on Friday 2nd February.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Watts
Headteacher
# FERNDOWN FIRST SCHOOL
## TERM DATES & HOLIDAYS
### SEPTEMBER 2023 - JULY 2024

### AUTUMN TERM 2023

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Starts</td>
<td>Tuesday 2 January 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inset Day</td>
<td>Friday 9 February 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Term Holiday</td>
<td>Monday 12 February – Friday 16 February 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Ends</td>
<td>Thursday 28 March 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter Holiday</td>
<td>Friday 29 March – Friday 12 April 2024</td>
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### SUMMER TERM 2024

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term Starts</td>
<td>Monday 15 April 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May Day Holiday</td>
<td>Monday 6 May 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Term Holiday</td>
<td>Monday 27 May – Friday 31 May 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inset Day</td>
<td>Monday 3 June 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Ends</td>
<td>Friday 19 July 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inset Day</td>
<td>Monday 22 July 2024</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inset Day</td>
<td>Tuesday 23 July 2024</td>
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