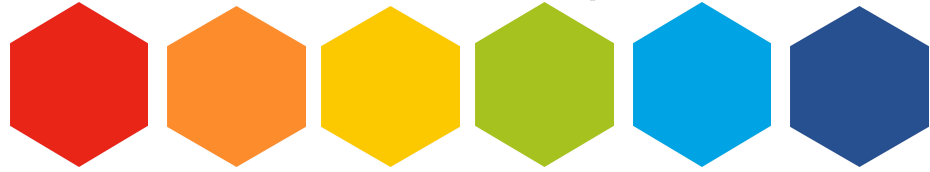


Curriculum News

September 2015



Welcome to a new school year!

Extreme Learning

We have launched our new "Extreme Learning" home reading and mathematics challenge for children in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6. This will replace the "Extreme Reading" challenge that we have run in Key Stage Two in previous years.

We are going to increase the profile of maths across the school and encourage more regular practice of basic skills so they become more fluent and embedded.

Children will be expected to complete 10-15 minutes of either reading or Maths each evening during the week and once over the weekend. Of these six opportunities each week, three should be reading and three should be maths. It is up to individual families to decide what works best for them. Some may wish to alternate reading and maths over the course of the week, whilst others might like to be more flexible.



First Honey Harvest

A number of children joined Nicole and Susan to help produce the first pots of honey from the Farfield bees. Despite difficult weather conditions this year, they have managed to produce some delicious honey - congratulations! Nicole and Susan have also been working with Y2 classes in support of their topic on bees - many thanks!



Farsley Farfield
Primary School



Statutory Assessment

The children did well in statutory assessments in the summer term. The statutory assessments are at the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6. In addition, there is the 'new' Phonics test in Year 1. This year, our assessments and systems were subject to statutory moderation in Reception, Year 2 and Year 6. Some of the standards in Year 2 were so high that an inspector had to come out to verify our judgements! All the moderator reports were very complimentary and affirmative.

"The reception provision is a very welcoming, rich and stimulating environment. It is well resourced and organised, enabling children to practice and embed learning through child initiated activities. Pastoral care is strength in both reception classes. The practitioners demonstrate a good knowledge of the children as individuals and understand the importance of looking at a child holistically, taking their family and community into account."
Early Years Moderator Report May 2015

Reception: The percentage of children assessed as having a 'Good Level of Development' rose again to 63%.

Y1 Phonics: The phonics pass rate at Farfield has risen from 54% in 2014 to 67% this year.

Y2 SATs: The children attained well, with 88%, 86% and 90% of children attaining the expected level 2b standard in reading, writing and maths respectively. Many children attained level 3 and, for the first time in at least a decade, two children attained a level 4 at age 7: one for writing and one for maths.

Y6 SATs: The overall percentage of children attaining the expected level 4 standard in literacy and maths remained consistently good. The percentage of children attaining level 5 in maths and in the technical aspects of writing improved, but there was a slight dip in reading.

Percentage of Children Attaining Level 4 or above *(national expectation or above)*

| Subject | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|----------------|------|------|--|--|--|
| English | 76 | 84 | 88 Reading 81 Writing 74 Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar | 92 Reading 87 Writing 75 Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar | 88 Reading 88 Writing 80 Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar |
| Maths | 79 | 92 | 84 | 87 | 86 |

Percentage of Children Attaining Level 5 or above *(above national expectation)*

| Subject | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|----------------|------|------|--|--|--|
| English | 38 | 60 | 65 Reading 26 Writing overall 60 Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar | 53 Reading 28 Writing 49 Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar | 41 Reading 28 Writing 55 Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar |
| Maths | 43 | 48 | 51 | 25 | 35 |

"I was impressed by the standard of work I saw from your children and the hard work put in by your teachers. Congratulations!"

Year 6 SATs moderator report

New staff

This term, we welcome two new teachers to Farfield:

- Miss Abigail Bradley (left)
- Miss Ruby Cuthbert (right)

We also welcome a number of new support staff: Deepa Patel, Kimberley Jackson and Amelia Barraclough. We welcome back Michelle Webster after a short period away from the school. Mr Chris Sharp is now employed as a class teacher, having previously been a member of support staff.



Life without Levels

In their wisdom, the government has abolished national curriculum levels and replaced them with... nothing. It is now up to schools to devise their own assessment systems.

Farfield will be assessing children's attainment against year group expectations, determining whether a children has met, almost met or exceeded a particular curricular target. An aggregate of these judgements will result in an overall attainment grade for a subject which describes a child's attainment as 'beginning', 'developing', 'secure' or 'exceeding' a year group expectation. For example, a Year 4 child with a grade of '4beg' for maths would be only just beginning to perform at a level expected at the end of Year 4. Mid way through Year 4, most children would be expected to be at '4dev'.

Staff will be using an online markbook called Classroom Monitor to assist us with managing our new assessment arrangements. Classroom Monitor will also allow us to contribute to the school reports all year round and share curricular targets more easily with children and parents.

School Improvement Plan priorities 2015-16

School Improvement Plan priorities include:

- Implementation of new assessment arrangements for 'Life after Levels'
- Improvements to school reports
- Improvements in maths 'fluency'
- Extending musical opportunities in Years 3 and 4

Training Days

Each school must have five statutory training days per year. We didn't have training days at the start of the academic year this time as it was a very long summer holiday and we didn't think parents would appreciate it being extended! The first three confirmed training days for this academic year are: Friday 23rd October (assessment systems), Tuesday 15th December (minibus refresher) and Monday 4th January (Child Protection). There will be two more training days in the spring term: Wed 23rd March and Thursday 24th March (just before the Easter weekend).

Care and Support Survey



Many thanks for the 144 replies to our 'Care and Support' survey last half term. The feedback was generally very positive with 96% of our children appearing to be happy in school and care rated as good or excellent by 97% of respondents. There is, nevertheless, room for further improvement.

Just a few parents reported that they felt that their child was being bullied - much lower than when we first recorded this data a decade ago. In a couple of cases, we couldn't identify who that child may be. Please make sure that you let us know if this is the case; in a majority of cases, parents reported that the school's response to reports of bullying was good or excellent.



The staff and governors are studying your responses in detail and we are seeking to improve our systems further for 2015-16. One change this year is that we will try to get a member of the school's senior leadership team onto the KS2 yard before school to ensure a positive start to each day. This will be difficult on Mondays (due to staff briefing) but we will try to be out on most days Tuesday-Friday.

Volunteers

We have a number of great regular volunteers in school and we would welcome many more! We have lots of opportunities for volunteering to support a wide range of activities. You might like to offer general support in class, individual reading, gardening or cooking in the juniors (any afternoon Monday-Thursday) or run or support an after-school club. As well as being hugely beneficial for our school, volunteering can be great work-related experience for the volunteer and can also be very positive for physical or mental health. If you are not able to volunteer, do you know a friend or member of your extended family that might have something to offer? Please contact School Business Manager Janet Spencer to discuss options.

Mounting the Pavement?

A few drivers are mounting the pavement at peak times on Cote Lane. This manoeuvre is putting pedestrians - adults and, particularly, children - at risk. **Please don't.** Parking around the Cote Lane/Farfield Avenue/Westway junction seems particularly problematic at the moment and some drivers are being rather selfish or thoughtless e.g. parking in such a way that Westway is blocked. Infant parents should consider parking further away, e.g. by the shops on Farfield Avenue. Farfield Avenue can be accessed via Farfield Drive rather than Cote Lane. I am in correspondence with Coun. Carter on this issue and I am meeting with the Senior Highways Engineer about the problems this week.

Peter Harris, Headteacher, on behalf of the governors