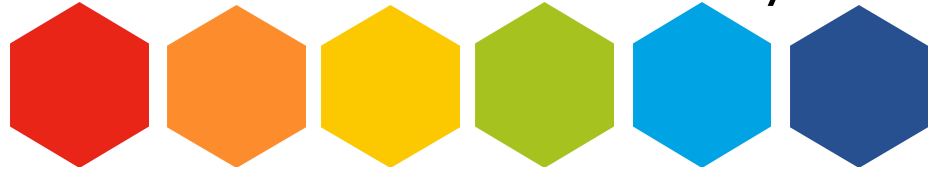


Curriculum News



July 2016



Hard work and success

Our children and staff have worked so hard this year and it has been rewarded with some wonderful progress for so many pupils.

Our Reception pupils achieved our highest percentage of 'Good Level of Development' at 76%: well above local and national averages. Our Year 1 phonics pass rate continues to rise and our Year 2 phonics pass rate is well above average again.

Year 2 SATs were a completely new system this year so historical benchmarks are not appropriate and national figures haven't been released yet. Our reading, writing and maths scores were around the Leeds average in terms of children meeting the expected standards, but the numbers of children at Farfield reaching the more challenging 'greater depth' standard in all areas seems higher, especially in reading.

Year 6 SATs were also new. Our test results and average scaled scores in reading and maths were around the national average (with some marks being appealed), but our Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar score was a bit lower. Most disappointingly, our writing teacher assessment figures were much lower than expected. This is not reliable data as it was a completely new system that we know has been interpreted differently in different schools. Our pupils were strong writers - this was a good cohort of children - but only half could be judged as meeting **every** criteria in the government's list of requirements. These tests were very challenging; I am told that only three children in the whole country got the last question correct on the reading paper!

Nevertheless, there were some very strong results which pleased and impressed everyone: a boy who progressed from level 1 in maths in Year 2 to meet the enhanced standard, and a different boy who was 'only' level 1 in reading at age 7 who has progressed to be amongst the strongest readers in the year.

We will reflect on these results and tailor our teaching accordingly. At the same time, the government should also reflect on their expectations and shambolic implementation of these new arrangements that has resulted in nearly half of the country's eleven year olds being told that they haven't met the expected standards for reading, writing and maths. That can't be right...



Year 6 working on some collaborative history work relating to the Romans.



Staffing News

There is a lot of staffing news this time.

Mrs Nicola Cruse is leaving Farfield at the end of the week to take a new post much closer to home that is more suited to her family life. Nicola leaves with our understanding, thanks and very best wishes.

Miss Ruby Cuthbert also leaves the school on Wednesday. Ruby is so young and talented that she is able to take a look at life and try many different things before she settles on her chosen path. We are all a little bit jealous..

Miss Hayley Hainsworth leaves us to take up a post at a specialist provision in Bradford. We would like to thank Hayley for many years of good service and we wish her the very best of luck on the next stage of her career.

Mr Brian Carr has left the post of grounds person and assistant site manager and has returned to his first love: being a golf course green-keeper.

New staff joining the school include:

Miss Philippa Levett: Y5 teacher

Mrs Amanda Campbell: LSA

Mrs Katrina Wallace: LSA

Mr. Karl Roome: Groundsperson and Assistant Site Manager

We will also welcome Mrs Kathryn Lace to the team in September when she finally takes up her post as assistant head teacher for the infants. Good things are worth waiting for...

Investment in school

We are delighted to have been able to invest in new interactive panels to replace old projector systems in KS1. These panels are much brighter and clearer and enable the classrooms to actually keep their curtains open! These panels will also be installed in 6T and the Reception classrooms over the summer. We hope to be able to extend this to other KS2 classrooms at some date in the future.

Classrooms and outdoor areas for Nursery, Reception and Year 1 are to benefit from almost £20,000 of investment over the summer holidays. Lots of cardboard boxes with exciting contents are beginning to arrive...



Year 4 visited Horton in Ribblesdale in July as a contrasting village study.



Year 5 visited Malham to study rivers, waterfalls and geology.



Straining for a closer look: Reception visited the Yorkshire Wildlife Park. Sadly, this proved to be the last trip for the 'old bus'.



A tasty trip: Year 3 at Pizza Express.

Sports and PE News

We had a very successful Sports Day and the weather was fine: reasonably dry and not too warm. Well done to Mr Cooke and to Miss Hutchinson for organising such wonderful events.

The school is also very pleased and proud to announce that we have been awarded an Active Mark gold award in recognition of our work in PE, sports and physical activity.

Achieving gold is obviously something to be proud of but there is more to come. Next year, we really hope to be able to develop racket skills using our new mini-tennis courts (thanks PTA!) and we are looking into how we could incorporate the 'daily mile' initiative. We are also hoping to be able to change the way football practices are organised so that we can play in many more competitive matches against other schools.

School News



Olympic Honour

Former pupil Nile Wilson has been selected for Team GB at Rio! Be sure to cheer him on in the gymnastics!



PTA News

The Camp-Over was another huge success: many thanks to all those that attended and were able to help in any way. 500 people attended the event altogether and we raised nearly £2500. The PTA have paid for the new KS2 playground markings and the new portable PA. They have also made a BIG donation towards our brand new, shiny minibus that is due to be delivered in September.



Omnishambles?

The phrase 'omnishambles' seems to have appeared first in the brilliant TV political comedy 'The Thick of It' about a decade ago. Of course, reality at Westminster now goes beyond fiction and, as we approach the new school year, we are being treated to more nonsense and incompetence.

The interim framework for assessment in Years 2 and 6 that should have been for just this year because it was...err... interim, is now going to be in place for another year. Just one more year, they promise... I assume that their thinking is that it was so bad in the first year, that things must get better with a bit of practice.

The new KS2 Year 6 online times tables test due to be taken in May of 2017 is now just optional. There is no explanation of this latest change.

Meanwhile, our new Reception cohort will begin their year with their teachers having no idea how their progress will be assessed. The government has made the established 'Early Years Foundation Stage Profile' non-statutory despite its own new baseline assessments having been recently abandoned as they were chronically flawed. We will continue to assess against the established EYFSP until a better system is agreed upon.

New assessment summaries

Over 90% of parents seem to have welcomed the new colourful assessment summaries that we were able to send out with reports this year in Years 1-6. We were able to do this as teachers have been making judgements against these objectives all year as part of their planning and assessment cycle. The creation of the reports is just an admin task and does not require more work from the teacher as some parents had feared.

Good luck to Year 6

On Thursday, families and I had the pleasure of watching the Leavers' Show performance. I already knew that they were a talented, confident group, but they excelled themselves with super acting, singing, dancing and comedy. Well done!

It is time for this wonderful group of young people to leave Farfield and move on to high school. They should do so with plenty of confidence: at last week's Priesthorpe awards, I am told 70% went to former Farfield pupils!

I would like to wish all the children and, especially, the staff a very happy and relaxing summer holiday. They have worked so hard and deserve their break. Enjoy!

Mr Harris, on behalf of the governors

School News



Juniors harvesting as part of their Farfield Farm summer sessions. From September, this will be added to Year 2 as well. Younger children will still be able to visit with their classes.

