



Farsley Farfield News

Ready, Respectful, Kind

SEPTEMBER 2021

An exciting new school year ahead

Welcome to all our new Farfield families joining us for the first time this term, and welcome back to all our returning children, parents and carers. We have an exciting year ahead with more and more of our full curriculum offer available and ambitious plans for further improvements over the coming months. This newsletter provides lots of updates about our school.



Residentials return



Focus on Food
Farfield headlines
Food Conference



Show Time!
Show Time club
(hopefully) returns
this term



Goodbye
End of an era

COVID-RELATED ARRANGEMENTS FROM SEPTEMBER

Schools are now operating according to revised guidance and risk assessment. Sadly, risk of infection remains high and the potential consequences - especially for older staff and a few clinically vulnerable members of the school community - can still be significant. We must remain vigilant.

School opening and closing times have reverted to pre-COVID arrangements: 8.50-3.15 in the infants and 8.45-3.20 for the juniors. Class 'bubbles' are no longer mandated and there is no requirement for large groups of children or staff to self-isolate after a single positive case. 'Track and Trace' is no longer the school's responsibility.

Primary school children are NOT required to be tested before coming to school or engage in regular testing at home. Primary age children are not expected to be offered the vaccination. Expectations around regular hand washing and sanitising remain. Children and adults with any symptoms typical of COVID must stay away from school.

Parents and carers will continue to be expected to remain outside the school in most circumstances and younger children will not be accompanied into school at the start of the day. Meetings will continue to be held via Google Meet or telephone in most circumstances. Junior school meals will revert to being served in the infant building.

More stringent arrangements could be re-imposed in the (likely) event of multiple infections. Please continue to be careful.

MAJOR DECARBONISATION WORKS

Work has started on a major decarbonisation project at Farfield. We are one of a handful of Leeds schools benefitting from a government grant to change the way the school is heated. We were chosen as we had already done some preparatory work on this issue prior to the grant's announcement.

The school's roof on both sites is going to have a significant solar installation this month (135KWp) - less than originally planned due to some structural and pitch issues and limitations in the local grid but still at least 30 times bigger than the typical domestic solar array. The infant site is already completed and the junior site will follow in mid September.

Later in the term, air source heat pumps will be installed for both buildings: in the infant car park, and behind the bike shelter in the juniors. These ASHPs will run 24/7, maintaining a constant, comfortable temperature in the school. Some gas boiler capacity will be retained as back up and to support the electric heating on the most extreme of cold days. The solar-powered ASHP system will also provide for our hot water needs as well as other electricity needs.

This work is another very major contribution to decarbonising the school's operations and is very welcome.

Other major capital works this summer will not be so visible: the Junior block has had substantial fire-stopping works in ceiling voids and has many new fire doors. Similar work in the infants should take place next summer. These types of capital works do require some time to be set aside for clearing and reinstating classrooms. **Monday 25th and Tuesday 26th July 2022 will be Training Days to facilitate this.**



Technicians installing panels above Reception classrooms in the infant building

REMARKABLE RESPONSE TO PTA FUNDRAISING

In June, the children (and families) took part in the PTA sponsored Mountain Challenge. Collectively, the children covered thousands of miles and exceeded their targets.

We are very grateful for the fantastic generosity of families who raised **almost £5,000** for PTA funds! We think that this is probably the single most successful fund-raising event we have ever undertaken.

Amongst other things, some PTA funds will go towards big plans for improvements to the Foundation Stage outdoor play environment, with a big new installation due to appear later this term.

Thank you!

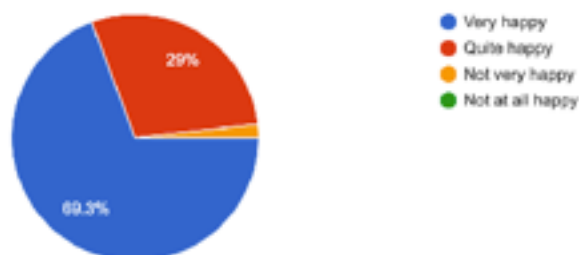


Positive Feedback in annual Parent Survey

Many thanks for the 200+ responses to the annual Parent Survey at the end of the last academic year. It was a tough and very disrupted year again, but feedback was generally very positive and at least in line with previous years. It was good to hear that our remote teaching offer had been very much appreciated.

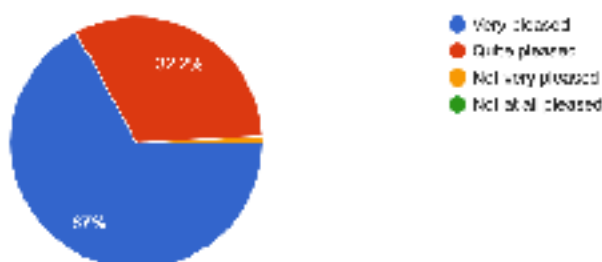
Q6. Generally, how happy has your child been in school this year?

231 responses



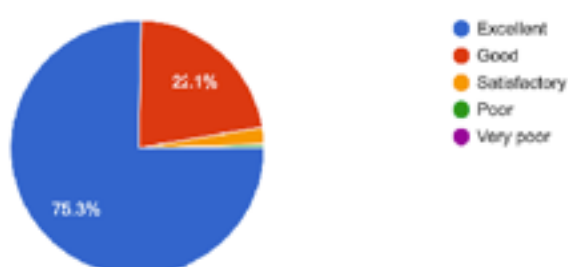
Q19. How pleased are you with the educational progress of your child?

230 responses



Q20. Overall, how highly would you rate your child's experience at Farfield?

231 responses



Detailed feedback is going to staff and to governors, but some of the key bits of feedback are summarised in the charts here.

The overall picture is very positive but can always be improved. Reports of bullying were much lower than when this data was last collected in 2019 and reports of on-going bullying were, thankfully, rare.

A few parents who did express concerns or who made specific suggestions may be contacted separately and directly.

"Great school, leadership and teaching. Adaptable during lockdown and all opportunities given to develop my child's learning to be their best. Another year of exceeding expectations academically and helping to grow confidence." Y5 parent

"An outstanding school with outstanding staff, an unbelievably quick & professional response to setting up & running home schooling during the pandemic lockdown." Y1 and Y6 parent

"During lockdown, the school adapted and responded extremely well to remote learning. Very impressive in challenging circumstances. I couldn't have asked for a better school or response. I only wish all pupils in all schools could have had the same positive experience of remote learning as my daughter (and me as a working parent/teacher from home). Well done and thank you." Y6 parent



Some of our new wildflower patches took very well but others will need another go next year. These areas were enjoyed by bees and butterflies; hopefully, humans appreciated them too! We have many more trees to plant this autumn/winter.

SAYING GOODBYE TO COLLEAGUES

At the end of term, Mike Wilson and Di Hodgson took retirement after decades of service to our school. Rebecca Parry has left the school as she is moving across the Pennines. Between them, they have decades of great service to our school and they will be greatly missed.

Over the holidays, Sarah Sykes - our senior learning mentor - has secured a similar role closer to her home. Sarah has supported lots of families and children at Farfield for more than a decade. We are very sorry to see her go and wish her the very best of luck for the future.



Rebecca Parry



Di Hodgson and Mike Wilson: decades of fabulous service to our school

SUMMER ASSESSMENTS

All the children were assessed in the summer term and results were, generally, pleasing.

Standards certainly haven't dropped off a metaphorical cliff due to COVID, but the effects of the disruption were typically more evident in the younger year groups: these children were less able to work independently at home, and the lockdowns represent a greater proportion of their total school time to date.

As the table shows, last year's Y6 children performed favourably in their Y6 unofficial 'SATs' this year compared to their performance in Year 2 (2017), despite two lockdowns. This is testament to the hard work of the children, families and staff.

	Y2 SATS EXS+ %	Y6 'SAT' EXS+ %
Reading	82	81
Writing	65	76
Maths	73	78
Combined RWM EXS+	60	64



SHOW TIME

Show Time is a club for **Years 5 and 6** that gives children the opportunity to attend a range of concerts and performances in theatres over the course of the year. These performances are in the evenings and are supervised by staff. The group travels in school minibuses.

Obviously, this club has been suspended for the past 18 months, but we have been able to put an initial programme together of four shows: Gangsta Granny, The School of Rock, Wendy and Peter Pan and The Lion King. The cost is £68 for all four shows and transport. Children in receipt of Pupil Premium can go for free. We have 45 child places: if these are unsold in Y5 & 6, we will offer the remaining tickets to Y4.

Ideally, this programme would have included other events such as ballet, opera or a classical concert but we haven't yet been able to find suitable events in these genres; they may be added later as theatres offer a wider programme.

More details of the current programme is here:

<https://www.farsleyfarfield.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Show-Time-21-22.pdf>

To apply for a place, click here: <https://forms.gle/ukqY8644XXpzAG5b7>



SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PROVISION

The acquisition of strong speech and language skills is essential.

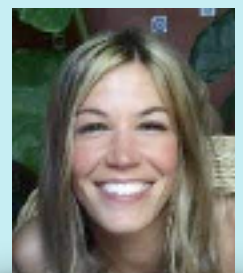
This academic year, Farfield will have significantly greater capacity for Speech and Language support following investment in provision from 'Away with Words'.



We will have an experienced practitioner - Lauren Green - on site for a full Wednesday every fortnight leading assessments, modelling interventions and supporting classroom staff.

This provision will supplement NHS and cluster provision that has proved to be insufficient for our needs.

We are delighted to welcome Lauren to our team and expect this to provide a major boost for our work with families of children with SEND.



This provision will be coordinated by our SENDCo Lucy Swindlehurst.

GOOD LUCK!

Last year's Y6 didn't get the full transition for high school or the usual end of year celebrations, but we did get an outdoor Leavers' Assembly, Sports Days and some fun events such as a mass water fight on the top field (right).

They were a super year group and will excel at high school. We wish them all the best of luck this week as they start at their new schools.



RESIDENTIALS RETURN FOR YEARS 5 AND 6

We held two very successful residential in the Yorkshire Dales in the summer term for Years 5 and 6. Year 5 went to Ribbleshead and Year 6 went to How Stean Gorge. We hope to repeat these residential this academic year: probably Y5 in May and Y6 in June. We will share details as soon as possible but the Y6 venue is having a change of ownership and accommodation, and the Y5 cycling teacher has retired. We are working with the Y5 venue to get safety rails installed on the bunk beds so we don't get any further 'bumps in the night'.

Particular thanks go to Mrs Hawkhead for all her organisation, all the staff for attending, Northern Rail for the free train tickets, Phil Jackson for his volunteering with the caving and Chris Young from British Cycling for his many years of support.



NURSERY AND RECEPTION OUTDOOR SPACE

Plans are developing for a major investment in the Foundation Stage outdoor space.

We will be relocating the tree trunk play installation (not quite sure how yet) and we intend to replace it with a multi-use playground before Christmas.

We are grateful for some PTA financial support with this.



SEN REVIEW MEETINGS

This academic year we will be changing the way that we organise termly review meetings for children with SEND. Meetings will now be held on set evenings towards the beginning of each term with 30 minute appointments. Some children will have additional meetings at other times. These meetings can be in person or via telephone/Google Meet.

FAMILY FARM SESSIONS

Over the holidays we had lots of families giving us some time on the school farm. In exchange for some watering and weeding, the families did lots of harvesting and went home with plenty of tomatoes, eggs, beans, carrots, potatoes, courgettes, beetroot...

Many thanks to Ms Howells, Mrs Longhorn and Miss Gregory for supporting these sessions.

Look out for food stalls by the Junior pedestrian entrance most Tuesdays and Wednesdays. These food stalls will have farm produce and deliveries from Rethink Food: surplus food from a range of supermarkets and wholesalers and would otherwise been wasted.



NEW STAFF JOIN FARFIELD

We have a number of new classroom colleagues joining us this September: Tricia Higgins, Aimee Vardy, Sabina Alushaj and Hannah Gaunt.

All these new staff members will be based in the infant building in the first instance and we are delighted to welcome these talented new colleagues to our team.



Tricia Higgins



Aimee Varley



Sabina Alushaj



Hannah Gaunt

HEALTHY SCHOOLS ACCREDITATION

Teams of staff have been working through the national Healthy Schools validation process and we have successfully completed this over the summer. We await a final 'in person' confirmatory assessment.

Whilst many sections of the assessment were unsurprisingly very strong - we were national Healthy School of the Year in 2017 after all - some newer sections e.g. those relating to mental health were a useful check and positive process. We have a small action plan to work through for further improvement over the course of this school year.



FARFIELD FEATURES AT FOOD EDUCATION CONFERENCE

In July, our school was featured as a case study for a national conference about school food education.

We presented a film to the conference and Leeds' Nutrition and Healthy Eating Advisor commented: **"(I) feel very proud to be able to have one of our schools in Leeds share such amazing good practice and share such passion."** If you have a spare 10 minutes, the film is hosted online: <https://youtu.be/3-Rf-yLikjo>



QUICK POINTS:

- ▶ School meals will all be served in the infant building this year with KS2 children coming across in two sittings
- ▶ SEND review meetings will now be held at set points towards the start of each term rather than spread across the term
- ▶ We have entered four football teams into the West Leeds leagues: Y4, Y5, Y6 and all-girls
- ▶ We hope to extend the 1:1 Chromebook scheme into Y3 later this term. The new Y4 cohort will get their own Chromebook by the end of the first week of term.
- ▶ Assemblies will remain largely remote or outside in the first instance this term

