



Farsley Farfield News

Ready, Respectful, Kind

MARCH 2022

Exciting times in Early Years Foundation Stage as their new outdoor playground equipment was unveiled. Initially nicknamed 'The Rigs' and part-funded by our fantastic PTA, the three linked oak and larch structures include climbing challenges, ropes, a net, bridges and firefighter poles.

The very substantial platforms have been designed to be both accessible and challenging for 3-5 year olds. The area is surrounded by rubber matting safety surface and will be grass-seeded later in the year - it's rather muddy at the moment! Whilst physical challenge is the most obvious feature of the installation, we expect the children to also make creative and imaginative use of the various spaces on and under the structures.



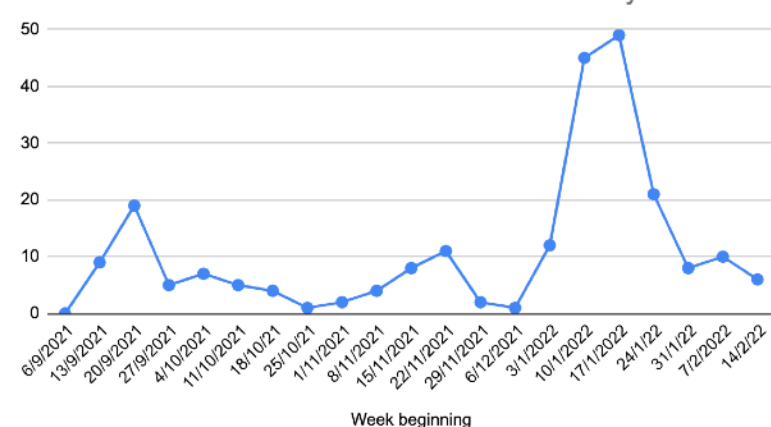
"Perhaps the outside play area for nursery and reception is due an upgrade although this isn't something xxxx ever complained about - I'm just comparing it to other schools in the area." Comment from last year's Parent Survey

COVID-RELATED ARRANGEMENTS

The Jan/Feb half term was extremely challenging in terms of COVID infections amongst children and staff. Attendance was the lowest ever (other than lockdowns) and there was a clear impact of this in terms of continuity of teaching and learning. It simply wasn't possible to run comprehensive home learning and classroom teaching simultaneously.

All COVID-related restrictions have now been removed in society as a whole and this will be reflected in school. We are restarting the remaining elements of school provision that have been suspended for the past two years: e.g. larger in-person assemblies and singing.

New COVID cases at Farfield 2021-22 academic year



Children and staff with positive COVID tests will still be expected to self-isolate, although fewer asymptomatic cases are expected to be identified with the ceasing of routine LFD tests.



Year 6 children enjoying 6 weeks of bouldering at The Depot as part of their PE curriculum

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

The school is facing significant financial challenges. We have been using school balances for a few years to manage in-year deficits and this is not sustainable beyond the next financial year.

There are a number of reasons for these difficulties: underfunding of costs associated with our very large group of children with SEND; cumulative impacts of cuts to capital grants; removal of split site funding and general inflation. We are working hard to manage these challenges but these are difficult times financially. This will have to be reflected in staffing and resource decisions moving forward. We are grateful to Leeds City Council for some support with capital projects, and the PTA for contributions to projects such as the new EYFS playground.

'Sticky Knowledge'

The school is undertaking a major curriculum review, reflecting on the Intent, Implementation and Impact of our long term plans, policies and classroom practice. A key issue is: **how much do children remember of what they have been taught?** How much is retained in long term memory? Expect to see more Key Facts/Knowledge Organisers being shared with children and families, and a more structured approach to revisiting previous learning.



NEW KS2 COOKING DIARIES

In January, the children in Years 4-6 began their 'Let's Get Cooking' diaries to record the work that they do, and the things that they learn, in their half-termly cooking lessons. These Google Slides diaries will grow over the coming years and can be accessed and developed at home. Last half term the children made a soup - spicy parsnip or carrot and coriander - and this half term they are making shepherd's pie (or vegetarian equivalent).



Cooking lessons and diaries will include information about ingredients, cooking techniques, health and sustainability.



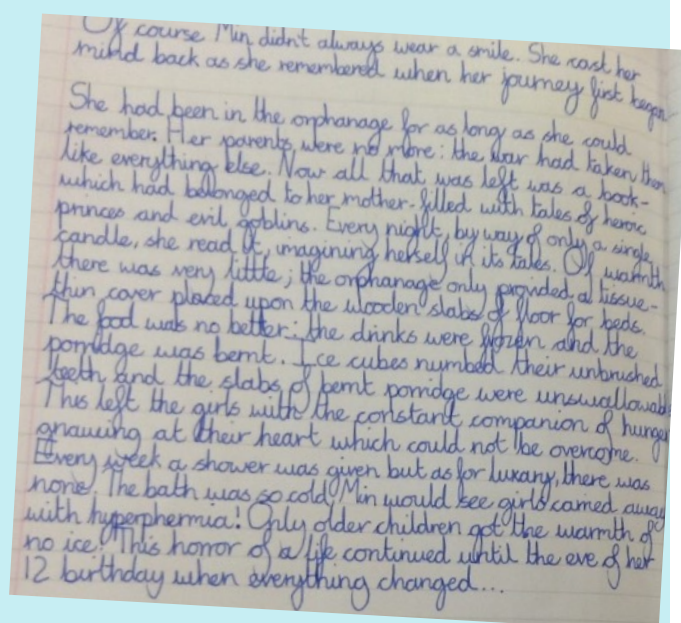
Y2 PHONICS RESULTS AND STANDARDS



In the autumn term, Y2 children took their delayed statutory Y1 Phonics test. The children did well: 83% of children reached the expected standard (32 marks) which is slightly above the national average from 2019 - the last time that the test was delivered. Obviously, the children were 6 months older than when the test is usually taken, but they had missed a great deal of school due to lockdowns. Our mean score was also slightly above the last national mean score.

Having said this, the percentage of children reaching the standard was 5% lower (2-3 children) than the last time that a Farfield cohort was assessed in phonics in Year 1. This reflects both the COVID disruption and the profile of children with SEND in this cohort. The children that didn't reach the expected standard in this test in December, will retake the test later in the year.

We are cautiously optimistic about standards in Years 2 and Year 6 for the end of key stage SATs assessments in the summer term. Practice papers in reading and maths taken in Year 6 suggest that results should be positively comparable to pre-COVID standards, and scores have improved markedly over the year. There has been lots of fantastic writing across the school and a really positive attitude evident. We are working on a writing website to showcase writing standards across the school and this will be published later in the year.





Looking fab-u-lous in Y2 for their 60s day with 'Dan-Tastic'

DECARBONISATION DELAYS

It has been a frustrating period as regards projects to support decarbonisation of the school. The Junior solar installation is working well, but the infant panels are still not switched on and the air source heat pump is still not installed. All this will surely be done by Easter but there have been significant infrastructure and supply chain delays. It is also clear that the council had a less-than-complete view of energy use in the school - exacerbated by COVID-related working from home - and there will be many more projects needed to properly address fossil fuel use in school. It's a start, and we are grateful, but much more needs to be done.



GENEROUS FARFIELD

The Farfield community has been typically generous in charity collections this school year. Thank you.

Back in the autumn, we raised £580 for the annual Poppy Appeal and a further £592 for Children in Need. Last half term, £105 was raised by Year 6 children from a bun sale for the Ocean Conservation Society, and the 'Wear Red' day raised over £500 for the Leeds Children's Heart Surgery Fund.

In March we will mark Comic Relief Day and combine it with fund-raising for a local charity for children with Down's Syndrome.



Super careful artists in Year 1



