

# Ferndown Middle School

## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Message from Acting Headteacher

#### World Book Day Celebration

What an amazing World Book Day we had at Ferndown Middle School! A huge thank you to everyone who put in the effort to make this day special. The costumes were absolutely fantastic, showcasing creativity and enthusiasm across the board. We were also thrilled with the impressive entries for our wooden spoon, potato, and book-in-a-box competitions. The level of imagination and talent was truly remarkable. Stay tuned, as we will be announcing the winners next week!

#### Introducing Our New School Council

We are excited to announce that our new school council has been officially elected, and we are eager to introduce our wonderful representatives. Please join us in welcoming:

- **Year 8:** Rosie, Jake, Leon, and Ella
- **Year 7:** Noah, Ava, Farron, Ryan, and Jack
- **Year 6:** Clayton, Carter, Matilda, Ted, and Max
- **Year 5:** Erin, Henry, Nicole, William, and Freddie

During their first meeting with Mrs Hall and Miss Smith, they focused on understanding the role of the school council, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and that they work together to enhance school life and pupil voice.

**Looking Ahead: Red Nose Day:** Our school council is already busy planning our first big event: Red Nose Day on the 21<sup>st</sup> March! We are looking forward to sharing exciting ideas and updates with you soon. Let's look forward to a day filled with fun, laughter, and meaningful contributions.

Thank you for your continued support and participation in making our school an amazing place to learn and grow.

Mrs Dolan  
Acting Headteacher



*We are pleased to announce the safe arrival of Mrs Southwick's baby Amora, who was born in February. Mother and baby are both doing well.*

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## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



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The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy.

To help struggling readers, many digital platforms offer tools that enhance readability by making text more accessible and engaging. There is also a broad range of accessibility features available, such as screen customisation and text-to-voice technology, which may help children and young people improve their literary confidence. This week's guide offers ten top tips on how you can help young readers engage in text and foster a love for reading.

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## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Drop that funky beat – Ferndown students learning to be DJs

A new 'DJ Club' at Ferndown Middle School is offering students the chance to learn the art of turntablism. The new group is held during the mornings and is proving popular with staff and students.

Head of Music, Scott Welcomme, managed to secure the loan of some high-tech turntables for the benefit of the school, and now students are learning to create their own music and effects on the decks.

Some of the aspiring turntablists are even lined up to DJ at up-coming school discos, and they are now training their teachers on how to use the wheels of steel.

During the sessions, the students learn how to DJ, compile their own setlists, and explore the art of turntablism

Mr Welcomme said: "We were able to obtain the turntables from the Dorset Music Hub – now the Octagon Music Hub – through its music area lead, Pili Lopez.

"It's much more than clicking play on the decks. To nudge and get an exact beat match – while the tracks are playing – is the art of turntablism.

"The enthusiasm has led to other pupils using the decks in class and at lunchtimes.

"It is all digital and enables the children to create their own music and work together to come up with new sounds.

"The group is held during the morning and has proved hugely popular."

Mr Welcomme also used resources provided by DJ School UK to get started and has been updating co-founder Jim Reiss with the pupils' progress so far, and he is excited for future developments.

DJ Dom from Year 6 said: "Music is my life because it calms people. It brings out different emotions while you are doing it. "The music has really inspired me, and I love it."

Meanwhile, DJ Isla from Year 6 said: "It has really given me confidence and makes me want to come to school. It's really fun and cool – there are loads of songs and you have the power to control them."

Headteacher Amber Barter said: "Extra-curricular activities are really important across the trust." This DJ Club is superb and has not only taught them about music but provided many other lessons too."



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## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Careers in Food

Careers in the food industry are varied and exciting and it is never too early to start thinking about a job that might interest you. You might be a budding chef in the making, you want to look after the nutrition of the next gold medallist in the Olympics, you may want my job and teach people to cook and understand food or you simply like working with food but not sure, where it could take you. It can be difficult to know what is out there or where to start.

Use the websites below to choose two of the jobs to research and answer the questions below:

<https://tastycareers.org.uk/>

<https://careerpilot.org.uk>

<https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/whole-school/careers-in-food/>

### What have we been cooking?

**Our new rotations** are really cooking up a storm and I hope you are enjoying their outcomes this week.

**Year 5** have been learning to use peelers and the oven when making **fruit crumbles**.

**Year 6** have been getting our tummies rumbling and learning to use the grill by making tasty **pizza muffins**.

**Year 7** learnt to prepare and cook raw meat to produce delicious **fajitas** with a quick guacamole.

**Year 8** have been learning to thicken sauces with cornflour and producing **crispy chicken bites with a sweet and sour sauce**.

Why not have a go at completing the word search opposite to find out what some of the jobs in the food industry are. There also some websites listed that can help lead you to further information or answer some questions.



# Ferndown Middle School

## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Whisked Survey

Thank you to those parents who have completed the menu feedback survey.

We have extended the deadline for completion to ensure that we gain more information before agreeing the next menu.

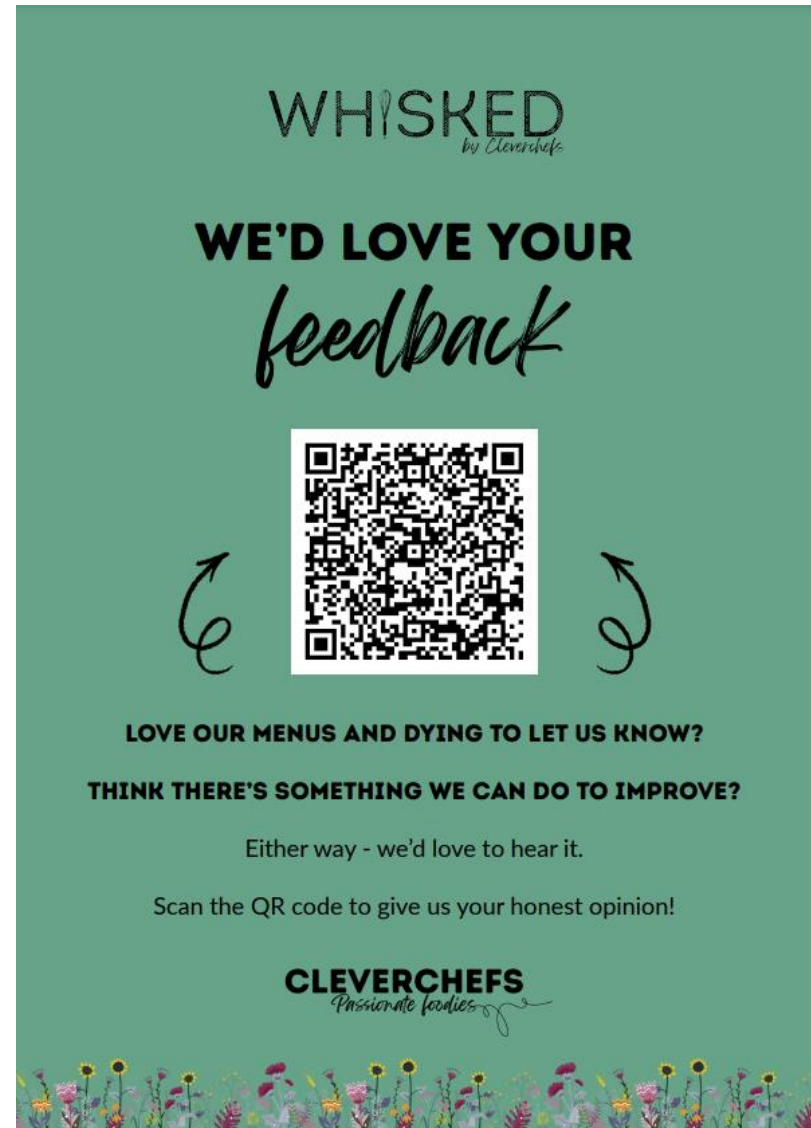
We are presently reviewing the catering services provided by Clever Chefs (Whisked) to ensure that we are meeting the needs and expectations of both you and your children.

We are interested in hearing your thoughts on various aspects, including the quality of food, variety of options, and any other suggestions you and your child might have.

Please take a few moments to complete our survey by using the QR code on the attached poster or use the following [link](#) by Monday 10 March 2025.

This survey is designed to be completed by both parents/carers and pupils from all year groups, whether or not the school catering service is currently being used.

Thank you for your time and support in helping us enhance our school's catering services.





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## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Wellbeing

#### Targeted Youth Workers

Due to the increased risk to our young people both online and out in the community, Dorset County Council have appointed a number of Targeted Youth workers to work directly in Middle and Upper Schools.

On 11<sup>th</sup> March Charlotte Throne will have her first day at FMS as our Targeted Youth Worker. During her time in school, Charlotte will spend lunch time on the playground, getting to know the children. Her main focus will be children in Yr7 and Yr8. Charlotte will be wearing a bright yellow rucksack which will help her to be easily identified. During the afternoon she will spend one to one time talking to some children, to build relationships and help young people make positive choices.

We see this as a very positive intervention. Charlotte will be in school every three weeks so will get to know the children over a period of time. At this point we cannot be clear which children Charlotte will speak with so we would request that if you have any objection to your child meeting with Charlotte that you let Veronique Giddens know by emailing the office and addressing it for the attention of Veronique Giddens.

Charlotte may join the Upper School Targeted Youth Worker and be on the King George V playing field at the end of the day. You will know it's Charlotte by her yellow rucksack. Charlotte will engage informally with pupils at this time.

Should you have any questions regarding this please contact Veronique Giddens.

#### [Join Dorset Councils next Let's Talk SEND session!](#)

[Their upcoming online session on 13 March at 11:30 am](#) will focus on provision for children with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities). Featuring speakers from mainstream education, special schools, and learning centres, we'll cover topics like meeting needs in mainstream settings, myth busting around special schools, and the role of learning centres. There will be plenty of time for Q&A, so bring your questions! Perfect for families considering the best provision for their children or those struggling in their current setting.

**Targeted Youth Workers are in this area**

Dorset Council's Targeted Youth Workers are working with young people in your local area.

They will be easily recognisable as they will be wearing fluorescent yellow Dorset Council backpacks.

Our Targeted Youth Workers are actively exploring the places, spaces, and situations in your local area where young people may be out and about.

Although most young people are just wanting to spend time with friends, we know that sometimes young people can end up in situations that they do not want to be in. This could lead to them being exploited, offending, or causing harm to themselves or other people in the community.

Our Targeted Youth Workers engage with young people and assess if they are at risk of harm. They work closely with partner organisations to ensure young people get the right support, at the right time.

We all have a responsibility to keep our young people safe. You may see, hear, or experience things to do with young people in your local area and if something does not feel right, or you have concerns, then please tell us about it.

The information you share helps us plan our work to keep young people safe in your area.

Get in touch with your local Targeted East Dorset Youth Worker:

@ EAST DORSET  
✉ [eastlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:eastlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)  
☎ 01202 868224

If you're worried about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person who lives in Dorset, contact our Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD) on 01305 228866

If a child is in immediate danger, please call the police immediately on 999.

To report a crime, do it online: [www.dorset.police.uk/do-it-online](http://www.dorset.police.uk/do-it-online)

# Ferndown Middle School

## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Community Governor Vacancy

We are seeking new people to join the Schools Standards Board as a Community Governor who can contribute their time, enthusiasm and skills.

Our governors come from a range of different backgrounds, skills and experience but all share a common interest of wanting the best possible education for the children in our school. Our governors support the Headteacher with strategic planning and are the champions of the school experience for pupils, their families and the staff, working with the Headteacher to do all they can to ensure that our school is a great place to be.

We would welcome applications from anyone within our local communities, or further afield, who is interested in supporting local education.

Training will be available to support them in the role. In looking to fill these vacancies we are particularly interested in applications from people with education experience and also people who can occasionally visit the school during the day. However, what is more important is enthusiasm, interest and the willingness to learn.

We would be delighted to arrange a school tour with any interested candidates to give them a greater insight into the role.

To arrange a tour or for further details, please contact the Governance Officer (Clerk to SSB) via email [clerk@fernmid.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:clerk@fernmid.dorset.sch.uk) or call the school office on 01202 876556.



# Ferndown Middle School

## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Key Dates

Below are some of the key dates for the next half term.

Wed 12 March	National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) for Year 6 only
Wed 5 March and Thurs 6 March	Book Looks 3.45 pm – 6.30 pm
28 March	Year 5 Mexicolore
4 April	Last day of term
Tues 22 April	Start of summer term
Fri 25 April	Fraser Portraits on site – Tutor group and year 8 group photographs
Mon 12 to Thurs 15 May	Year 6 SATS
Wed 25 June	Sports Day
Fri 27 June	Transfer Day
Mon 30 June	INSET Day



### Term dates for 2025/26

A copy of the Dorset term dates for 2025/26 has been uploaded to the school [website](#). Please note the inset training days have yet to be agreed upon, these will be shared with you at a later date.

# Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



**Do you know about...**

**free school meals**

If your child qualifies for free school meals, they will have a **healthy meal every school day**, and can get:

- access to **free holiday clubs**
- **extra money for their school** towards more teachers and activities

**You could save over £450 a year!**

Dorset Council logo

It's easy to find out if you qualify - complete our confidential checker at [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/free-school-meals](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/free-school-meals) or phone **01305 221090**

**Pupil Premium**

If your child is in reception to year 2 and you receive qualifying benefits, **you could get extra £££'s for your school!**

Apply for the Pupil Premium at [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/pupil-premium](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/pupil-premium)

## The Dorset Parent Guide to support your child's special education needs

A copy of the Dorset Parent Guide to support your child's special education needs can be found on our [website](#).

**The Dorset Parent Guide to support your child's Special Educational Needs**  
0 to 25 years

Images of children and adults interacting.

Dorset Council logo and Dorset Parent-Care Council logo

## Dorset Education Advice Line (DEAL)

Dorset Education Advice Line is a phone line for parents, carers and professionals who support children who may have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

This advice line is part of Dorset Councils Local Offer to children, young people and families and will work alongside existing services such as SENDIASS and the Education Psychology helpline.

Further details and a contact form can be found on the following link:

[Dorset Education Advice Line \(DEAL\) - Dorset Council](#)

# Ferndown Middle School

## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Extra-curricular clubs – Spring Term 1

Day	Club	Duration	Times	Room/area	Leader
Monday Lunchtime	Girls Football - All years	30 mins	12.15–12.45	Field	JB
	Fitness – All years	30 mins	12.15–12.45	Field	SH
	Library - All Years Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books	30 mins	12.15-12.45	Library	GB
	Music Theatre Group - All years	30 mins	12.15–12.45	Music Room	SW
	<b>**New**</b> KS3 Maths Homework Club			PA03	SL
Monday After School	Rippa Rugby – All years (External club paid) 6 Jan to 10 Feb <a href="#">Welcome to Rippa Rugby</a> 24 Feb to 31 Mar	1 hour	3.20–4.20	Field	External
	Orchestra – Invite only	1 hour	3.20–4.20	Music Room	SW
	Tennis – All years (External club paid) Collection outside the school reception office <a href="https://www.live4tennis.co.uk/">https://www.live4tennis.co.uk/</a> 24 Feb to 31 Mar	1 hour	3.20–4.20	Ferndown Tennis Courts	External
	Homework Club – All years	1 hour	3.20–4.20	Library	GB
Tuesday Lunchtime	Boys Football – Year 7 & 8	30 mins	12.15-12.45	Field	JB
	Basketball – Year 8	30 mins	12.15 – 12.45	Gym	SG
	Library - All Years Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books	30 mins	12.15 – 12.45	Library	GB
	Singing – All Years	30 mins	12.15–12.45	Music Room	SW
	Chess Club	50 mins	12.20 – 13.10	LA07	JS/MT
Tuesday After School	Dodgeball starting on 14 Jan – 1 Apr <a href="#">teamthemesportscoaching</a>	1 hour	3.20–4.20	Gym/Hall	External
	Homework Club – All years	1 hour	3.20–4.20	Library	GB
Wednesday Lunchtime	Sports Leaders – Year 8	30 mins	12.15–12.45	Gym	KB
	Cross Country Club – All years	30 mins	12.15–12.45	Field	SH
	Spanish – All years	30 mins	12.45-1.10	LA11	FS
	Library - All Years Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books	30 mins	12.15 – 12.45	Library	GB
	Singing – All years	30 mins	12.25–12.50	Music Room	MB
	Art Club – All Years Max 20 children, sign-up sheet on the Art room door	30 mins	12.15-12.45	Art Room	LM
	Samba - All years	25 mins	12:50–1:10	Music Room	SW
	<b>**New**</b> Parents reading session (parents to sign in via the office)	30 mins	3.20 - 4.15	Library	GB

# Ferndown Middle School

## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



Thursday Lunchtime	Football – Year 6	30 mins	12.15-15.45	Field	SH
	<b>**New**</b> Lego Mindstorm Club – Years 5 & 6 Run by Year 7 Computing Ambassadors, Max 15 children	30 mins	12.30 – 1.00	PA3	MM
	Ukulele– All years	30 mins	12.15–12.45	Music Room	SW
	Library - All Years Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books	30 mins	12.15 – 12.45	Library	GB
	The Ark – All years With Miriam Biggs local youth worker. A club where they explore the Christian faith through games, crafts, and fun	30 mins	12.40–1.10	LA13	MB, VG
	Tumbling, Acrobat and Dance Club – All years	30 mins	12.15 – 12.45	Gym	DC
Thursday After school	Netball – Year 7 & 8	1 hour	3.20–4.20	Gym/Playground	SG/KB
	Lego – All years To book a place email Mr Emes at <a href="mailto:Demes@live.co.uk">Demes@live.co.uk</a>	1 hour	3.20-4.20	PA7	External
	Wargaming – Year 7 & 8 See Mr Chase for places	1 hour	3.30 – 4.20	LA17	AC
Friday Lunchtime	Football – Year 5	30 mins	12.40-13.15	Field	MW
	Dance – Year 5 & 6	30 mins	12.15–12.45	Gym	KZ
	<b>**New**</b> Scratch Coding Club Run by Year 8 Computing Ambassadors, Max 15 children	30 mins	12.30 – 1.00	PA3	MM
	Library - All Years Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books	30 mins	12.15 – 12.45	Library	GB
Friday After School	Warhammer Club – All Years	1 hour	3.20 – 4.20	LA3	AM

### Please note the following:

- Please read through the options with your child and ensure they are clear on where the club is held and the joining instructions.
- Please be aware that it is the parent’s responsibility to ensure the child knows that they are attending an after-school club.
- Parental permission is required for your child to attend an after-school club, please use this [link](#) to confirm your consent.
- Please make arrangements to collect children following an after-school club and make sure that the child is aware of these arrangements.
- We will endeavour not to cancel after-school clubs at short notice - if however, this is necessary; either ParentMail, telephone call, or SMS will notify parents.
- External club arrangements are with the club and not the school.

# Ferndown Middle School

## Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 10 March 2025



### Term Dates 2024 - 2025

Autumn Term 2024	<b>Autumn Term Monday 2 September 2024 to Friday 20 December 2024</b>	
	Staff Training Day	Monday 2 September 2024
	Staff Training Day	Tuesday 3 September 2024
	Welcome Back to School	Wednesday 4 September 2024
	Half Term	Monday 28 October 2024 to Friday 1 November 2024
	Last Day of Term	Friday 20 December 2024
	Christmas Holidays	Monday 23 December 2024 to Friday 3 January 2025

Spring Term 2025	<b>Spring Term Monday 6 January 2025 to Friday 4 April 2025</b>	
	Welcome Back to School	Monday 6 January 2025
	Half Term	Monday 17 February 2025 to Friday 21 February 2025
	Last Day of Term	Friday 04 April 2025
	Easter Holiday	Monday 7 April 2025 to Monday 21 April 2025

Summer Term 2025	<b>Summer Term Tuesday 22 April 2025 to Tuesday 22 July 2025</b>	
	Welcome Back to School	Tuesday 22 April 2025
	Bank Holiday	Monday 5 May 2025
	Half Term	Monday 26 May 2025 to Friday 30 May 2025
	Staff Training Day	Monday 30 June 2025
	Last Day of Term	Friday 18 July 2025
	Staff Training Day	Monday 21 July 2025
	Staff Training Day	Tuesday 22 July 2025