

Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



Headteacher's comment

Dear Parents, Carers and Pupils

As we come to the end of the half term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and partnership with Ferndown Middle School. It has been a busy and productive few weeks, and we are incredibly proud of the hard work, enthusiasm, and resilience shown by our pupils. Across the school, students have engaged brilliantly with their learning. Classrooms have been full of curiosity, collaboration, and creativity, and it has been a pleasure to see pupils developing both academically and personally. Our staff have also worked tirelessly to provide high-quality teaching, enriching experiences, and a nurturing environment for all.

This half term has included a number of highlights, from last week's Year 5 visit to the church, The visit to school of The Royal Navy for a few days and even the sporting achievements when even getting a game of football or netball on with the weather, we've had is a real bonus. Extracurricular activities and opportunities for personal development are key to what we do and seeing these flourish is great to see. We are grateful to everyone; pupils, staff, and families, who has contributed to making these events so successful. With this in mind I have to tell you about a relaunch event for our PTA. We are holding a Café afternoon in the school hall from 2:30 pm on Friday 13th March. Our Year 8's will be making cakes and also serving any customers who come. It is Mother's Day on the Sunday so children can book a time to bring their mum's and are welcome to sit with their mums on the day and maybe even pay for mum's cake and drink.

As we look ahead to next half term, we remain committed to supporting every pupil to thrive. We will continue to focus on high expectations, excellent behaviour for learning, and a positive, inclusive school culture where each child feels valued and encouraged to achieve their best. I hope all our children enjoy a well-deserved break and return refreshed and ready for the exciting learning and opportunities ahead. Thank you once again for your ongoing support - it truly makes a difference.

Wishing you a restful and enjoyable half term.

Warm regards

Mr Grant Hopkins

Interim Headteacher



Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



Arbor and booking Clubs

Arbor

Thank you to everyone who has created an Arbor account, updated their contact details and consents, and kept us informed if their child is unable to attend school.

After the half-term break, we will begin sending general emails and whole school communications via Arbor (alongside ParentMail for a short transition period). Full details will follow. Please continue to message teachers via Class Charts.



Arbor
Parent Portal
and App

Five good reasons to download the Arbor Parent App

1. Receive important information from school
2. See your child's praise points
3. View your child's attendance
4. Check your child's timetable
5. Access your child's report (when available)

Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



Wraparound Care

You can now book and pay for Breakfast Club and KS2 Afterschool Club for **Spring Term 2** via your child's Arbor account.

- If your child already attends wraparound care, please book by selecting '**Clubs**' in their Arbor profile.
- If you have not booked before, please contact our Finance Team so they can enable access on finance@fernmid.dorset.sch.uk or 01202 856776 (Finance)
- Payments can be made directly through Arbor or by using Childcare Vouchers (reference: *FMS & Child's Name*).

Bookings close 48 hours before each session.

Library After School Homework Club



The Library Homework Club runs on **Monday and Tuesday** and is now available to book via Arbor. You may book your child onto either or both sessions.

If you have any questions, please contact us.

How to book a free club and paid club on Arbor

Please follow the instructions on the link below to register your child for a '**club**' using the Parent Portal or Parent App.

[Signing my child up for a Club on the Parent Portal or Parent App – Arbor Help Centre](#)

You can also watch the following video (sorry there is no sound) <https://www.fernmid.dorset.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/How-to-book-a-club-on-Arbor.mp4>

Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



School News

Chinese New Year

Our children in year 5, have been immersed in the culture of Chinese New Year with learning Chinese Drumming patterns in their music lessons. It's been wonderful to share my own experience of and leading a Chinese drumming group with your child, along with sharing stories and Lion dance rhythms I learnt whilst teaching in Hong Kong.

We've been fortunate enough to have been lent a real Chinese Lion dance outfit, along with a full-size Chinese drum and cymbals. This specialist equipment has been kindly lent to us by Tony Sivyer, leader of the local traditional Chinese Lion dancing team group, Dragon of the South. This has enabled your child to experience the excitement of the lead up to Chinese New Year as well as learn about the culture and traditions surrounding this global event.

The Chinese New Year celebrations last for three weeks, starting during half term next week. Chinese New Year's Day is next Tuesday 17th February.

To coincide with Chinese New Year, I'd like to share with you two great bits of news from Dragon of the South.

This Saturday, 14th February, Dragon of the South will be performing a traditional Chinese Lion dance blessing outside the front of Wah Hing Chinese Supermarket in Poole. This is a fantastic opportunity for your child to see a real-life high-energy Lion Dance in action. Wah Hing is on Didcot Road in the Nuffield Industrial Estate (near Greggs!), not far from Smyths Toys Superstore.

The performance starts at 2.00 pm, but I would advise getting there early to make sure you can park somewhere on a side road, plus - it gets very busy quickly and you'll want to be able to see everything (and be in with the chance of getting a fortune cookie!)

If you're able to take your child to see this - I can promise you it will be a core memory for you both. Plus it will be great for your child to see Tony in real life and shout a huge 'Thank you' for his generosity.

The second great news is that Tony and a member of his team will appear on the BBC show Repair Shop on Wednesday 25th February. Tony tasks the Repair Shop team with bringing a broken baby Lion costume back to life. That's no easy feat!

Mr Welcomme

Co-ordinator of Music



Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



World Book Day

We're excited to announce that we will be celebrating World Book Day on **Thursday, 5th March 2026**. The day will be dedicated to reading and book related activities.

We are passionate about the power of reading and encourage our pupils to read daily. World Book Day is a wonderful way to excite children about all the different kinds of books available, from fantasy to factual, classics to comics, there really is something for everyone!

Dressing up

Children and staff are invited to dress up as a book character on World Book Day. This could involve a full costume or just a prop relating to a favourite book or character. We are always impressed by the amazing and inventive ways the children dress on the day characters. If they do not want to dress up, they could bring in their favourite book or an object that is associated with their favourite book.

Don't worry about purchasing new costumes. Get creative with items you already have at home. This day is all about celebrating our love for books and having fun. If your child doesn't have a favourite book, use a hobby as inspiration. A favourite fact or illustration from a graphic novel attached to a t-shirt is just as good as a full costume.

You can find loads of ideas for World Book Day and resources you may want to look at on this website: [Bring Joy to Reading at Home with World Book Day](#)

Please note that dress up is optional and we ask that football kits are not worn unless they relate directly to your child's chosen book character.

World Book Day Tokens

All children will receive a £1 book token as part of the World Book Day event. This can then be used as part payment for a more expensive book, or they can be exchanged for the specially published £1 books. You can view the books available to buy on the website and also find a list of booksellers who stock the books. <https://www.worldbookday.com/books/>

Digital World Book Day Tokens can also be downloaded [HERE](#).

We look forward to seeing all the fantastic costumes and sharing our favourite stories together.

Thank you for your support in making this a memorable day for everyone.



Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



AFC Bournemouth Football Club

We are delighted to share an exciting opportunity for our student's next term.

Starting on the first Friday after half term, students will have the chance to attend a **football club** led by professional coaches from **AFC Bournemouth**. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to develop their skills, build confidence, and experience high-quality coaching in a fun and supportive environment.

Even better, the club will be completely **free** to attend.

It will run from Friday 27th February to Friday 20th March (inclusive). Please note there will be no club on Friday 27th March as we finish early at 2.00 pm on that date for the end of term.

Year 5 – Lunchtime 12.05 - 12.30

Year 6 – Lunchtime 12.30 – 12.55

Year 7 & 8 – After school 15.20 - 16.20

Bookings can be made by selecting 'Clubs/AFCB Football Club' within your child's Arbor profile. Sign-ups will go live on Friday 13th February at 6:00pm.

Please note that places are limited to 30 students, and spaces will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

We expect this to be a popular opportunity, so we encourage you to secure your child's place as soon as possible. As spaces are limited, we do ask that students who sign up commit to attending regularly. If a student does not attend without prior notice, their place may be offered to another student to ensure the opportunity is fully utilised.

Please also be aware that all sessions will take place outside, so students need to be prepared for all weather. We recommend that they bring appropriate outdoor clothing (jogging bottoms and a jumper). Football boots and shin pads are encouraged but not essential.

We look forward to seeing many of our students take part in what promises to be an exciting and rewarding experience.

Best wishes

The PE Team



Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



Wellbeing

Children's Mental Health Week - Resources from Kooth

February brings us Children's Mental Health Week. It's a moment to pause and reflect on how children and young people are feeling within our communities. [Kooth](#) have kindly shared resources and sessions for parents and carers designed to support conversations about feelings, resilience, and belonging.



How to get support for your child



When your child is finding things difficult with their mental health or emotional wellbeing, it can sometimes be really hard to navigate. Figuring out how best to support them and actually knowing where to find the help they might need can be a bit of a minefield.

Kooth is here to support your child. No problem is too small.

It's quick and easy to sign up to Kooth and will only take a few minutes. No formal referral from a GP is needed and you can self refer at anytime.

Support options

Your child can access a range of support options including:

- Chat with a member of our team (*live chat or send us a message anytime)
- Goal setting and journalling
- Mini activity hub
- Community support (discussion boards and live forums)
- Helpful articles (from the Kooth team and our community)

Live chat hours

You can live chat with a member of our team between:

- 12pm - 10pm on weekdays
- 6pm - 10pm on weekends

Visit [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com) today to find free, safe and anonymous support.



It can be challenging for parents and carers to know whether children are spending too much time on their devices. Furthermore, it's even more of a challenge to know whether a child is addicted to the internet and social media. As technology is becoming more pervasive, children and young people are experiencing tech - related dependencies. Do we as parents and carers have the knowledge to identify and support children and young people who may be developing an addiction to their devices?

47% of parents said they thought their children spent too much time in front of screens

What parents need to know about SCREEN ADDICTION

It can be challenging for parents and carers to know whether children are spending too much time on their digital devices. It's even more of a conundrum to decide whether a child is just deeply engaged with the internet and social media or genuinely addicted to it. As technology becomes more pervasive in all of our lives, many children and young people in particular are beginning to experience tech-related dependencies. As trusted adults, do we have the right knowledge to identify and support children and young people who might be developing an addiction to their devices?

In this guide, you'll find tips on avoiding potential risks such as damage to health and wellbeing, app addiction and a lack of sleep.



How will it work ?

During week commencing
Monday 23rd February

Mother's Day Sale

ORDERS CLOSE ON FRIDAY 27th FEBRUARY

There will be an Order Form and a selection of Mothers Day Gifts and Cards in each class room – to order just give your Teacher the money and write your name against the gift or card (or both) that you want.

ALL GIFTS are just **£3** each

ALL CARDS ARE JUST **£1** each

ALL GIFTS WILL BE GIFT WRAPPED AND DELIVERED TO YOUR CLASS ON
FRIDAY 13th MARCH FOR YOU TO TAKE HOME



100% of profit goes to
Ferndown
Middle School

Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



Key dates

| | |
|------------------|---|
| 16 – 20 February | February half-term |
| 24 February | Year 8 HPV vaccinations |
| 5 March | World Book Day |
| 17 and 18 March | Book Looks |
| 20 March | Mexicolore visiting Year 5 |
| 27 March | Last day of term, 2.00 pm finish |
| 26 April | Tutor group and year 8 photographs (Fraser Portraits) |
| 11 –14 May | KS2 SATS – Year 6 |
| 18 – 22 May | Aspiration' Week |
| 22 – 24 June | Year 8 Residential at PGL |



Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



Term Dates 2026-2027



Autumn Term 2026

| SEPTEMBER 2026 | | | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa | Su |
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| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |

| OCTOBER 2026 | | | | | | |
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| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

| NOVEMBER 2026 | | | | | | |
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| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | | | | | | |

| DECEMBER 2026 | | | | | | |
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| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

Spring Term 2027

| JANUARY 2027 | | | | | | |
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| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

| FEBRUARY 2027 | | | | | | |
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| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
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| MARCH 2027 | | | | | | |
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| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

| APRIL 2027 | | | | | | |
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| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

Summer Term 2027

| MAY 2027 | | | | | | |
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| JUNE 2027 | | | | | | |
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| JULY 2027 | | | | | | |
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| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

| AUGUST 2027 | | | | | | |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
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| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

Bank and Public Holidays 2026-2027

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| 25 December 2026 | Christmas Day |
| 28 December 2026 | Boxing Day |

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|----------------|----------------|
| 1 January 2027 | New Year's Day |
| 26 March 2027 | Good Friday |

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|---------------|-----------------|
| 29 March 2027 | Easter Monday |
| 3 May 2027 | May Day Holiday |

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|----------------|---------------------|
| 31 May 2027 | Spring Bank Holiday |
| 30 August 2027 | August Bank Holiday |

Key

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| School Holidays |
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| Bank Holidays |
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| Staff Training Days |
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| Last Day of Term |
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Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



Extra-curricular clubs – Spring Term 2

| Day | Club | Duration | Times | Room/Area | Leader |
|----------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Monday Lunchtime | Football – Year 6 Boys | 30 mins | 12.10 - 12.40 | Field | MW |
| | Library – KS2 Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books | 50 mins | 12.05 - 12.55 | Library | GB |
| | Homework Club – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | LA14 | MT |
| | Sing Group – KS3 | 25 mins | 1.00 – 1.25 | Music Room | SW |
| Monday After School | Rippa Rugby – All years (External paid club) Welcome to Rippa Rugby Rugby Coaching and Consultancy in Dorset | 1 hour | 3.20 - 4.20 | Field | External |
| | Orchestra – Invite only | 1 hour | 3.20 - 4.20 | Music Room | SW |
| | Tennis – All years (External paid club) Collection outside the school reception office. https://www.live4tennis.co.uk | 1 hour | 3.20 - 4.20 | Ferndown Tennis Courts | External |
| | Homework Club – All years – Booking via Arbor | 1 hour | 3.20 - 4.20 | Library | GB |
| | Warhammer – All Years | 1 hour | 3.20 - 4.20 | LA8/LA9 | AM |
| Tuesday Lunchtime | Board Games - KS3 | 30 mins | 1.00 - 1.50 | LA17 | AC |
| | Library - All Years Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books | 50 mins 20 mins | KS2 12.05 - 12.55 KS3 1.30 - 1.50 | Library | GB |
| | Football – KS3 boys | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | Field | JB/SG |
| | Homework Club – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | LA14 | MT |
| | Computers – Year 7 and 8 Drop-in Session - Completing classwork, Homework, Printing, Creating projects (Strictly NO GAMES) | 30 mins | 1.00 – 1.30 | PA3 | MM |
| | Fun Science – Year 7 – Not on this half term | 30 mins | 1.15 – 1.45 | PA2 | LB/KD |
| Tuesday After School | Dodgeball – All years (External paid club) https://bookwhen.com/teamthemesportscoaching | 1 hour | 3.20–4.20 | Gym/Hall | External |
| | Paragon Football – All yeas | 1 hour | 3.20–4.20 | Field | External |
| | Homework Club – All years – Booking via Arbor | 1 hour | 3.20–4.20 | Library | GB |
| Wednesday Lunchtime | Football – Year 5 Boys | 30 mins | 12.10 – 12.40 | Field | JS |
| | Library – KS2 Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books | 50 mins | 12.05 - 12.55 | Library | GB |
| | Basketball – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | Gym | SG |
| | Football – KS3 Girls | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | Field | JB |
| | Homework Club – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | LA14 | MT |

Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



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|-----------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| Thursday Lunchtime | Sports Leaders – Year 8 | 30 mins | 12.15–12.45 | Gym | KB |
| | Board Games - KS2 | 30 mins | 12.05 – 12.55 | LA17 | AC |
| | Library - All Years Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books | 50 mins 20 mins | KS2 12.05 - 12.55 KS3 1.30 – 1.50 | Library | GB |
| | Tag Rugby – KS2 | 25 mins | 12.25 – 12.50 | Field | MH |
| | Homework Club – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | LA14 | MT |
| | The Ark – KS2 With Miriam Biggs local youth worker. A club where they explore the Christian faith through games, crafts, and fun | 25 mins | 12.05 – 12.30 | LA9 | MB/VG |
| | Football – KS2 Girls | 30 mins | 12.10 – 12.40 | Field/Gym | MW |
| Thursday After school | Netball – KS3 | 1 hour | 3.20 – 4.20 | Gym/Playground | KB/JB |
| | Mr Higgins Fun Fitness Club All years (External paid club) Call/ Message: 07980 301728 | 1 hours | 3.20 – 4.20 | Playground | External |
| | Wargaming – KS3 | 1 hour | 3.30 – 4.20 | LA17 | AC |
| Friday Lunchtime | Computers – Year 5 and 6 Drop-in Session - Completing classwork, Homework, Printing, Creating projects (Strictly NO GAMES) | 20 mins | 12.05 – 12.35 | PA3 | MM |
| | Library - All Years Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books | 50 mins 20 mins | KS2 12.05 - 12.55 KS3 1.20 – 1.50 | Library | GB |
| | Touch (T1) Rugby - KS3 | 30 mins | 1.00 – 1.30 | Field | AC |
| | Spanish – KS2 | 20 mins | 12.05 – 12.25 | LA11 | FS |
| | Singing – KS2 | 25 mins | 12.05 – 12.30 | Music Room | MB |
| | Music Theatre – All years | 25 mins | 1.00 – 1.225 | Music Room | SW |
| | Homework Club – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | LA14 | MT |
| | AFC Bournemouth Football Club – Year 5 (Friday 27 th February to Friday 20 th March) Max 30 children – sign up via Arbor | 25 mins | 12.05 – 12.30 | Field | External |
| | AFC Bournemouth Football Club – Year 6 (Friday 27 th February to Friday 20 th March) Max 30 children – sign up via Arbor | 25 mins | 12.30 – 12.55 | Field | External |
| Friday After School | AFC Bournemouth Football Club – Years 7 and 8 (Friday 27 th February to Friday 20 th March) Max 30 children – sign up via Arbor | 1 Hour | 15.20 – 16.20 | Field | External |

Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 23 February 2026



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.
- If a pupil is absent from the club and we have not received prior notification, the school office will first check to see if the child has been absent from school, and if not, a text message will be sent home to inform parents/carers promptly.
- 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.