

Ferndown Middle School

Parent Weekly Newsletter w/c 4 May 2026



Headteacher's comment

Dear Parents and Carers and Members of the Ferndown Middle School Community



I can formally announce that our little friends 'The Bees' have arrived. I didn't want to announce it too soon as I wanted them to settle in and get used to their new environment. It has become part of my daily routine to check on them when I arrive in the morning, at midday and before I leave in the evening. I honestly don't know what I am looking at but seeing the workers going in and out of the hive satisfies my limited knowledge of Bees. I look forward in finding out more when we introduce the bees to the children who want to be involved in a little while. Meanwhile, I stumbled across 'The secrets of the BEES' on Disney + and ended up mesmerised by the film knowing we had two hives heading our way.

We formally said goodbye to Mr Chase today, I know the children from his form give him a great send off. I know he's asked to pop back when he can which would be lovely to see him.

The build up to SATs test has started for our year six children and I am incredibly proud of the efforts of all who are involved in the preparation leading up to the 11th May when they start. The children and staff are leaving no stone unturned in the preparation for the tests and writing assessments that the children will undertake. I personally want to wish all our children well for the SATs but also to take the opportunity to wish all our past pupils well for their forthcoming (or already started in terms of Art and MFL) exams for their GCSE's. I know as a dad whose daughter is currently in Year 11 doing her GCSE's how stressful a time they are for all members of the family. Go well all!

I am respectfully asking parents to try their best to get the children into school on time. Our gates open at 8:30am and supervision on the playground starts then. Please try to get in before Mr Bebbington closes the side gate at 8:45am. Invaluable work goes on in the tutor groups, and this sets the children up ready for the day ahead.

Lunchtime has seen us have a number of children bring in nut-based products to school. I understand sometimes it is difficult to identify that products contain nuts but please check the ingredients before packing the lunchbox. We have people within the school who have severe nut allergies which could have very serious consequences if exposed, thank you!

Please all enjoy the long weekend, hopefully the great weather we have had recently can continue. We look forward to seeing the children back in school on Tuesday 5th May after the bank holiday. Finally remember to send in anything we can celebrate on the newsletter, I am always so impressed by the activities the children do outside and the success they achieve.

Warm regards

Grant Hopkins, Interim Headteacher

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School News

Tutor Group Photographs and Year 8

Class photographs and the whole of year 8 photographs have recently been taken at school by Fraser Portraits, and you are now able to view and order your child's photograph online. To view and place an order, please visit www.orderphotos.co.uk and enter the relevant proof card ID provided in the Arbor email.

Aspirations Week Careers Fair – Call for Local Participants



As part of our Aspirations Week beginning on 15 June, we are excited to host a Careers Fair on the Friday afternoon. We are currently looking for local businesses and professionals who would be willing to come in and speak with students in the school hall. Participants will host a table and chat informally with students and parents about their industry, pathways into the profession, and what day-to-day work looks like.

If you or your organisation can offer insight into your industry, career pathways, or day-to-day work, we would love to hear from you. Your involvement would help inspire our students as they explore their future ambitions. Please contact Mrs Morris if you can help.

We would like to let parents know that, unfortunately, the planned **Bring Your Child to Work** element of Aspirations Week will **not** be taking place this year for pupils in year 8. We appreciate that some families may have been looking forward to this opportunity and apologise for any disappointment this may cause.

Year 6 – Lunch with Your Child

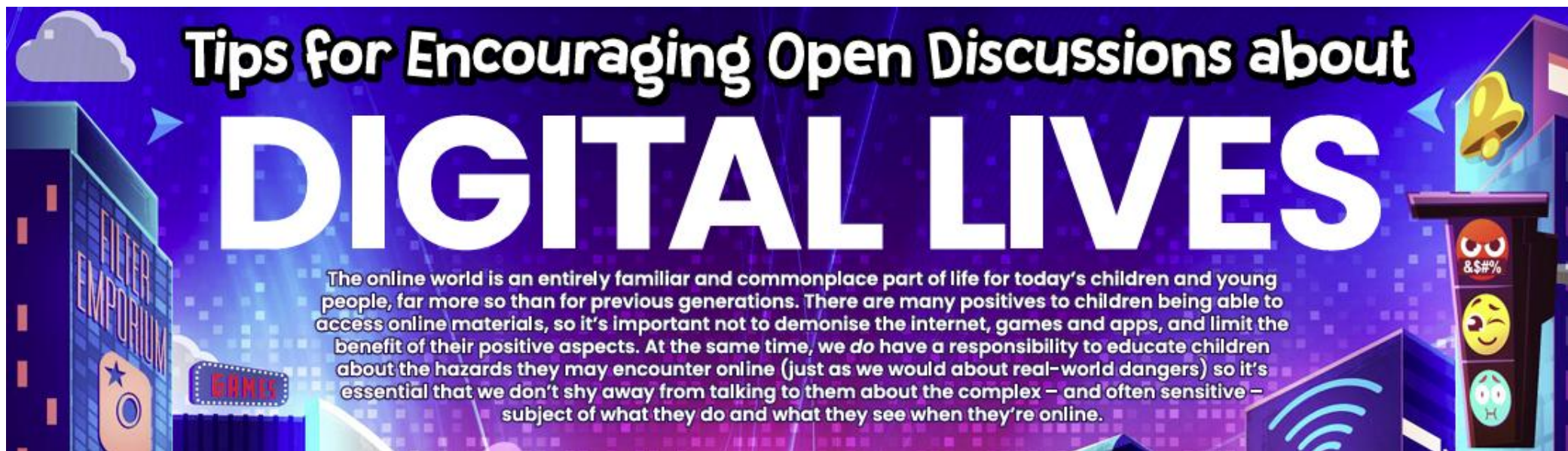
Parents and carers are warmly invited to join their child for lunch on **Wednesday 20th May, between 12.05pm and 12.30pm**. You will see on Arbor the option to buy a lunch which will close one week prior to the event to allow the chef to buy in the ingredients for the extra lunches. The price for the meal is £2.95 plus vat. If your son or daughter is normally a packed lunch then it will be a great opportunity for them to try a school lunch, but it matters not what the children eat you are all still welcome.

Year 6 SATS

On Monday, 11th May, SATs week will begin. To help all pupils have a positive start to the day, we would like to offer every child in Year 6 an opportunity to have a small breakfast at school before they head to their classrooms to prepare for the tests ahead. Breakfast will be available Monday through to Thursday only at 8.15am in our school hall, giving the children about 20 minutes or so before they go to registration. The breakfast will consist of some juice, a biscuit and a pastry - all free of charge.

There is no need to let us know if your child can attend, as we will welcome anyone who decides they'd like to attend on the day. However, if your child has any dietary requirements, please complete this form before the 11th May so that we can make sure alternatives are available: [SATs Breakfast Dietary Requirements – Fill out form.](#)

Mrs Draper, Head of Year 6



Tips for Encouraging Open Discussions about **DIGITAL LIVES**

The online world is an entirely familiar and commonplace part of life for today's children and young people, far more so than for previous generations. There are many positives to children being able to access online materials, so it's important not to demonise the internet, games and apps, and limit the benefit of their positive aspects. At the same time, we do have a responsibility to educate children about the hazards they may encounter online (just as we would about real-world dangers) so it's essential that we don't shy away from talking to them about the complex – and often sensitive – subject of what they do and what they see when they're online.

Most parents frequently chat with their child about how things are going at school or what's happening in their friendship groups – but those discussions often don't extend to youngsters' online activities. In fact, National Online Safety conducted a recent survey which found that only slightly more than half (54%) of parents regularly talk to their children about staying safe online.

It can be an awkward topic to broach and, of course, it needs not to feel intrusive. However, just checking in with your child about their digital life can get them thinking about online safety and alert you to any issues they might be having.

In the guide, you'll find a number of useful tips such as being as honest as possible, discussing how misleading the online world can be and creating a 'family agreement.'

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Dorset
Mental
Health
Support
Team in
Schools

NHS
Dorset HealthCare
University
NHS Foundation Trust

MHST: SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WITH SIGNS OF ANXIETY Y6 AND UNDER

Join the Dorset Mental Health Support Team for Schools for a webinar designed for parents of young people in year 6 and below who are struggling with anxiety.

This session is available for parents/carers who are looking to understand and support their child with anxiety or worries.

The session covers theory around anxiety in young people, potential triggers and maintenance factors, and key strategies to support their child with managing worries. It also explores parental wellbeing and the importance of this when supporting their child.

Join us on
Thursday 7th May at 2pm:

<http://bit.ly/4tJuBDn>



enquires to: dhc.mhsteam.northandeastdorset@nhs.net
To leave feedback: <https://gthr.co.uk/d34c>

@DORSETMHST



Dorset
Mental
Health
Support
Team in
Schools

NHS
Dorset HealthCare
University
NHS Foundation Trust

MHST: SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WHEN THEIR BEHAVIOUR IS CHALLENGING

Join the Dorset Mental Health Support Team for Schools online for a webinar exploring how you as parents/carers can support your child when you are finding their behaviour challenging.

This session provides information on how to respond to children when their behaviour becomes challenging. The sessions covers the theory of behaviour as communication, the importance of play, and the power of positive praise to encourage behaviours parents would like to see more of. It includes practical tools that parents can use to support children when they are dysregulated.

Join us on May 14th 2026 at 1pm

<https://bit.ly/4cjQwd7>



enquires to: dhc.mhsteam.northandeastdorset@nhs.net
To leave feedback: <https://gthr.co.uk/24f9>

@DORSETMHST

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Key dates

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| 7 May | Matilda Mayflower Trip |
| 11 –14 May | KS2 SATS – Year 6 |
| 15 May | Year 6 Moors Valley celebration |
| 18 May and 21 May | Y8 Bournemouth University Trips |
| 19 May | Y5 Explore the Orchestra – The Lighthouse 9.00 am – 1.00 pm |
| 2 June and 4 June | Year 6 Dorset Heath Partnership, Fire Awareness |
| 5 June | Year 7 Trip to Lulworth Castle |
| 10 June | Year 7 FUS Sports Morning |
| 11 June | Charity Fun Run |
| 15 – 19 June | Aspirations week and Careers Fair |
| 22 – 24 June | Year 8 Residential at PGL |
| 26 June | Transfer Day |
| 29 June | Training Day – School Closed |
| 1 July | Sports Day |



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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 |
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| 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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| MARCH 2027 | | | | | | |
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| APRIL 2027 | | | | | | |
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| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
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Summer Term 2027

| MAY 2027 | | | | | | |
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| JUNE 2027 | | | | | | |
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| JULY 2027 | | | | | | |
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| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | |

| AUGUST 2027 | | | | | | |
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| 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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Extra-curricular clubs – Summer Term

| Day | Club | Duration | Times | Room/Area | Leader |
|----------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|----------|
| Monday Lunchtime | Library – KS2 Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books | 50 mins | 12.05 - 12.55 | Library | GB |
| | Golf – KS2 Max 20 children, on rotation | 30 mins | 12.10 – 12.40 | Field | MW |
| | Homework Club – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | LA14 | MT |
| 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 |
| | Library 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 | CH |
| Tuesday Lunchtime | 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 |
| | Cricket – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | Field | JB/JS |
| | 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 |
| 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 |
| | Library Homework Club – All years – Booking via Arbor | 1 hour | 3.20–4.20 | Library | GB |
| Wednesday Lunchtime | Library – KS2 Max 30 children, quiet reading, choosing, renewing and returning books | 50 mins | 12.05 - 12.55 | Library | GB |
| | Volleyball – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | Gym | SG |
| | Homework Club – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | LA14 | MT |
| | KS3 Singing Group | 25 mins | 1.00-1.25 | PA1 | SW |
| Thursday Lunchtime | Sports Leaders – Year 8 | 30 mins | 12.15–12.45 | Gym | KB |
| | 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 |

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| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| | 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 |
| Thursday After school | Athletics – All years | 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 |
| 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 |
| | 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 – 1.25 | Music Room | SW |
| | Golf – KS2 Max 20 children, on rotation | 30 mins | 12.10 – 12.40 | Field | MW |
| | Homework Club – KS3 | 25 mins | 13.00 – 13.25 | LA14 | MT |

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.