



Freethorpe Primary and Nursery School

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Wednesday 28th February 2018

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- Feedback from Parents' Evening
- Hilltop
- Friends of Freethorpe
- Laying of slabs
- Library van visit
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- Book Fair
- Look out for letters

Currently our whole school attendance is

96%

Well done everyone, we have reached our target of 96%. Now let's see if we can do even better!

The children have all settled in to the second half term and are continuing with their topics. It was a rather unsettled week weather wise last week but the excitement of snow has brought many smiles to the children's faces! I hope that you were all able to remain safe and warm despite the challenging conditions.

In response to some of the recent feedback we have had from parents, we will be putting a red box around the sections in the newsletter that require some form of action from parents, e.g. dress up days, payments to be made or forms to be returned. We hope that this will make it as clear as possible when there is something that needs a response from yourselves, and it will also make a distinction between this and the sharing of general information about school life.

We will also be putting a copy of the newsletter on the display board outside the office window so you should always be able to see a copy of the most recent information.

Meet the staff:

Karen Ellis – Freethorpe Nursery Manager

I have worked in Early Years for 15 years. Starting out in St Justus Montessori Pre-school in Kent, it was here that I started my early year's journey and studied with Montessori International to obtain my qualifications. My family and I moved to Halvergate, Norfolk 10 years ago. My two children both attended Freethorpe Primary. They are now aged 18 & 21 years, so this seems like a lifetime ago!

In 2008 I joined the team at Fairhaven Pre-school in South Walsham, where I worked for almost 10 years as an assistant, progressing to deputy and finally to manager 6 years ago. In 2012 I achieved my Early Years Foundation Degree and Level 5 in Management. Although I am and was very proud of what I had achieved at Fairhaven Pre-school I felt the time had come for a new challenge; so the timing was great when a position for a nursery manager was advertised here at Freethorpe Primary and Nursery School. I will always give 100% effort to whatever I put my mind to, and I am looking forward to working with everyone at here to develop the nursery.

I am very passionate about children's learning and development and Early Years in general. I love helping the children to grow and learn, giving each individual the best possible start in life. It gives me a great sense of achievement to see children develop their skills, providing them with a fun, stimulating environment. I enjoy nurturing children to become more independent, no two days are the same and there is never a dull moment. They make me laugh, make me cry and are inspirational to work with.





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Parents' Evening Feedback:

During Parents' Evening last week we gave you an opportunity to share some of your thoughts with us. We are continually looking to improve the way in which we engage parents in school life and how we can enrich the opportunities that we offer to our children. The following points are some of the key areas raised from last week. In school we are currently looking at ways in which we can respond to these most effectively. One of the things to look out for in future newsletters are Parent's Forums and early evening sessions for parents to attend where you can learn about how we teach maths and English within school.

What do you feel is working well in school?

- House points
- Caring staff
- Email/parent mail updates
- Newsletters
- Security measures in school
- Good parent support
- Children feel safe and happy at school

What could we do even better?

- Earlier communication re reminders
- "plain English" for important documents e.g. governance letter
- Proud moments to be sent to parents directly or invited in for Golden work Assembly
- Lunch – monitoring how much children are eating
- Options for some evening meetings
- Lessons for parents on how the children are taught

It is not possible for us to address all issues immediately but the staff are working together to look at ways in which we can incorporate some activities into the school calendar over the next term and a half. Any dates for events will be included in future newsletters.

Hilltop visit – revised dates: 16th -18th March 2018

A separate letter is being sent home to parents of children who were due to take part in the Hilltop visit at the weekend. The revised dates are included on the letter and we also require a response on the reply slip which is due back on Wednesday 7th.

Although the weather should be more pleasant than the last few days, please ensure that the children have plenty of layers as well as gloves (more than one pair would be useful), hats and waterproofs. Sturdy waterproof footwear will also ensure that their feet stay warm and dry. In addition to outdoor footwear, please ensure they have an indoor pair of shoes or slippers. All belongings should be named and packed in a bag/suitcase that the children can carry themselves. These can be dropped off in the school hall first thing on the Friday morning. The children do not need to come to school in uniform on that day.

Timings remain the same: we will be leaving school at 3:15pm on Friday 16th if you wish to come and wave us off. The children will then return to school on the Sunday afternoon at 2:15pm.



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Friends of Freethorpe:

Diary Dates:

Pocket Money gift shops Wed 7th, Thurs 8th, and Fri 9th March 12.30 pm

Easter Fayre Friday 23rd March 2pm

It's that time of year again where we look ahead towards the Easter Fayre. There will soon be draw tickets coming home to families and we would be grateful if you are able to buy some between you and your extended family and friends. Please could you return any unused ones to the office or if you manage to sell any, the stubs and the money to the office. There will a donations box outside the office next week if are able to donate prizes for the tombola or games.

Have you heard of Matched Funding/giving? There are a lot of companies out there who will match an amount of money that is raised by an event for free, if you are able to ask the company you work for if they do this scheme Friends of Freethorpe would be really grateful. We managed to get an extra £1000 from our Christmas Fayre a couple of years ago from a local bank, which I'm sure you can imagine boosted our money pot quite considerably and enabled us to purchase the last of the mini iPads that the children use at school. If you need any more information please let Lyn in the office or one of the Friends committee know, we would be happy to speak to you.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to Tony Patterson for giving up some of his time on Saturday and laying the pathway that goes to nursery. Previously it was a slippery muddy mess that was not ideal for the children to walk across, and he also did some slabs in the Nursery play area too. We put some pictures on the Freethorpe Hub page on Facebook. Thanks also goes to Jim Ramadan at SLS Stonecrete Landscaping Supplies for giving us the slabs and stones. Thanks Guys!!

Friends has purchased a couple of items this week for school - some Lego for the Lego club and some Talking Tiles that play back up to 80 seconds of recorded voices. There is one per class for now and if the classes like them we will purchase some more! Next on the list is a 3 sided painting easel for Nursery to replace their broken one as well as supplementing your children's coach trips too.

At our Friends Meeting last week, Mrs Burns approached us about helping to paint update and utilise the village phone box for things like a book swap, a memo board, plant sales and lots more ideas. The first job would be to paint and board it, whilst we have the boards and a small amount of money to renovate it, we really could use some help. Would any local parents be able to donate an hour or two to helping the village with this? Please could you let one of the Friends committee or the office know. There is no date for this as yet, but the planning is under way!

Laying of Slabs: The slabs that have been laid look fantastic and we would like to reiterate the words of thanks that Friends of Freethorpe have already said above – the school really appreciates all the time, donations and support that we receive from the whole community.

I am sure you will agree how good the new paving looks!





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Library Van Visit:

Within school we have a visit from the county Library Van, which is part of the Norfolk County Council Library service that the school buys into. It enables us to regularly change the books that we have in school, without having to continually restock the school library. Each visit a group of children from each class are selected to choose the books that they would like to have in their classroom and this year we received some fantastic feedback, which we felt you would be pleased to hear about – we are always very proud of the way in which our children behave but it is lovely to have this qualified by visitors to the school.

“After the ELS mobile library visit to your school this week on Tuesday 20th February I thought it would be nice to email you with some comments that I observed throughout the day, all of the children who came to me were very polite and very well behaved and were extremely engaged into selecting items not just for themselves but also for their class mates with able guidance and support from the member of staff attending.”

Junior Tree Wardens: We mentioned the hard work that our Junior Tree Wardens have been doing in the last newsletter. Since then they have made an appearance in the local press. The following link will take you to the story which recognises the significant work that the children have been carrying out.

<http://www.greatyarmouthmercury.co.uk/news/education/junior-tree-wardens-plant-saplings-at-wrongs-covert-1-5392876>

Book Fair update:

Thank you very much for your support of the Book Fair that we had in school before half term. The children always enjoy the opportunity to browse the books and see what is available and it often gives them a chance to think about different types of books that they may enjoy, rather than repeatedly choosing genres that they are already familiar with.

As a school we have raised a fantastic amount to spend on new books for our library. Thank you again, and we will share with you our purchases once they have been made.



Look out for letters:

Please look out for the following letters in your children's bags, all of which require a response in the form of reply slips being returned to the office. Many thanks.

- *Peter Rabbit Easter School Dinner Special (Nursery – Year 6)*
- *Hilltop revised date (KS2 pupils previously booked on the Hilltop trip)*
- *Country Dance Party (Reception – Year 6)*



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Diary Dates: (updates have been highlighted)

Thursday 1 st March	Cluster multiskills activity – Year R, 1 & 2 – date to be rearranged
Tuesday 8 th March	KS2 Railway Safety Talk in school
Friday 16 th -Sunday 18 th March	Rearranged Hilltop visit
Wednesday 21 st March	Red and Green Class Cathedral workshop in school
Thursday 22 nd March	Cluster Country Dance Party after school
Monday 26 th March	Key Stage 1 Cluster Football
Tuesday 27 th March	Year 6 Easter Egg Hunt – Acle Academy, details to follow
Wednesday 28 th March	Cluster Film Festival
Wednesday 28 th March	Easter lunch
Wednesday 25 th April	Yellow Class farm visit – meet at Oaks Farm, Southwood at 9am.
Monday 14 th May	Year 6 SATs week
Monday 21 st May	Year 6 level 2 cycling course taking place this week, details to follow
Thursday 7 th June	Year 6 Tea Party at Acle Academy, times tbc
Thursday 14 th June	Cluster Open Concert
Friday 29 th June	Sports Day and family picnic
Tuesday 10 th July	Year 6 Parents Information evening at Acle Academy
Friday 13 th July	Choir performance at Freethorpe Methodist Chapel - evening
Tuesday 17 th and Wednesday 18 th July	Key Stage 2 Summer Production, including 2 evening performances at 7pm
Tuesday 24 th July	Leavers Assembly 10:30am

2017/18 Term dates:

Wednesday 28th March	3:30pm School closes for Easter holidays
Monday 16th April	8:45am School opens for Summer 1
Monday 7th	May Bank Holiday
Friday 25th May	3:30pm School closes for half term