



Term 5 2026 - Week 2

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to Term 5, we have had a lovely sunny start to the new term. Please make sure that your child is prepared for the warmer weather with a sun hat and sun cream, as well as a fleece / jumper for the chill that is still in the air. There has been a lot going on already with the year 3/4 trip to the Hindu Temple in Crawley earlier this week and welcoming our Cherry and Pips Class parents into the school to see how we teach reading in key stage 1. We have added some more dates to our diary below for your calendars at home!

Some very exciting news is that we are in the process of trying to get a therapy dog at Firle. Some children will be involved in an assessment for Mrs Sadler's dog, Rufus, and if he passes the test, he will be joining us. If not, we will be putting in other plans until Rufus is ready. Mr Carter's dog, Hank, is also undergoing training but it may be a bit longer! We recognise that not all children feel comfortable around dogs so will of course be sensitive to how this is managed in school.

There was a very informative presentation at Laughton this week promoting a 'Smart phone Free Childhood' led by Magda Bannister, a parent with children at a local primary and secondary school. Parents from Firle were invited to this but we can see if we can arrange for a separate one at Firle as it is only in working together we can help to tackle the issues that smartphones bring. The statistics shared were quite shocking, not only in the age that children see uncensored material but also the effect on mental and physical health when exposed too early to the pressures that social media can bring. Please see the link below to find out more directly from their website.

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/>



ATTENDANCE

Congratulations to Pips Class who achieved highest attendance both last week and this week!

Our target for this year is **96%** and our current whole school attendance is **93.6%**

HEADTEACHER AWARDS

Congratulations to the winners for following our school values of

*Kindness Respect Working Together
Perseverance Aspiration Forgiveness*

Last week

Pips Class **Cherry Class**
Faye Finn

Beech Class **Holly Class**
Fred and Frieda Eve and Maisie

This week

Pips Class **Cherry Class**
Rowan Isaac

Beech Class **Holly Class**
Augie and Trinity Bella and Torren

DIARY

May 2026

11th – 14th SATs week
Fri 15th Ascension Walk – whole school
Tues 19th Cherry Class vision and measures check
Thurs 21st Year 6 Patina Big reveal

June 2026

Tues 2nd Class photographs
Tues 23rd- Fri 26th Arts week
Wed 17th Year 6 Patina workshop at Laughton
Wed 24th Year 6 Patina workshop at Laughton
Wk beginning 29th Year 6 transition sessions at secondary school

July 2026

Fri 3rd Year 6 Patina
Fri 10th Sports day
Thurs 16th KS2 performance
Fri 17th Year 6 leavers trip
Tues 21st Leavers' service and whole school summer party
Wed 22nd INSET

INSET days 2026

Mon 22nd June / Weds 22nd July



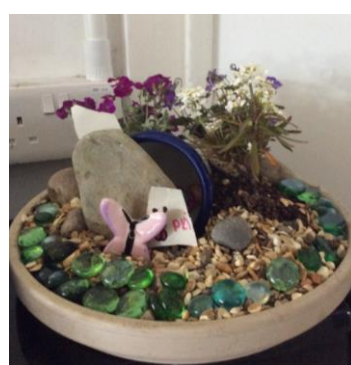
BEECH CLASS TRIP TO CRAWLEY HINDU TEMPLE

Beech Class visited Crawley's Apple Tree Centre on Monday. They were able to participate in a service and listened to a talk on the various Deities (Gods) and the Hindu way of life and culture. They had a demonstration of how the Sari is worn (thank you, Monika) and a discussion on the Indian language and alphabet. They also had an opportunity to perform a ritual clap, a Bollywood dance and join in laughter therapy. Augie said that they enjoyed learning about Hinduism and the Monkey King.



EASTER CELEBRATIONS: EASTER GARDEN & EASTER BONNET PARADE

It was wonderful to see the effort and creativity that was put into designing and making such beautiful Easter bonnets and Easter gardens - the children looked fabulous! Thank you to all of you who joined us at our Easter church service – it was a lovely time to come together as a community and the children shone as always!



BEHAVIOUR

At school we have 3 rules regarding what good behaviour is. These are **to be ready, be respectful and be safe**. We always reinforce these in class and, when needed, to individuals. It is important to recognise how we can be more supportive of others and how our behaviours impact those around us. We ask that you support us with this by using these terms at home so that we can embed their meaning and reinforce what they look like. If your child is finding either their behaviour or that of others difficult then we urge you to come and speak to their class teacher so that we can action it. Many thanks.

DENTAL CARE



Last term, Faith from Mermaid Dental Care in Lewes popped in to share some top tips on how to look after our teeth and mouths. Our children were very engaged, showing how to clean a model set of teeth and asking and answering questions. Faith talked about:

- How to brush properly (and why it matters!)
- Tooth-friendly food and drink choices
- What happens at the dentist
- Simple ways to prevent tooth decay



Faith gave each child a goody bag and was super-impressed by how much the children already knew! Mermaid Dental Care is taking NHS patients and will take on whole families.

THANK YOU FROM GARDENING CLUB



We are hugely grateful to Lori, Polly and all the family for donating an amazing greenhouse. Gardening Club can't wait to have it up and ready to use, and are already discussing what is going to be planted in there.

BUT FIRST... it needs to be built! Please get in touch if you would be willing to come and assemble our greenhouse after or during school one day.

OUR CROSS-COUNTRY STAR

Scarlette looked very comfortable at the Area Cross-Country competition

coming in the top 25% of these amazing athletes. We are very proud of her determination and stamina! Well done Scarlette.



YEAR 6 SATS

Our year 6 pupils will be sitting their SATs tests next month, the timetable is as follows:

- Monday 11th May: English grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) papers 1 (questions) and 2 (spelling)
- Tuesday 12th May: English reading paper
- Wednesday 13th May: Mathematics papers 1 (arithmetic) and 2 (reasoning)
- Thursday 14th May: Mathematics paper 3 (reasoning)

We will need to make sure that movement around the school at the times of the test is limited to provide quiet conditions for the children to focus. It will also impact on staffing as some of our support staff will be needed as readers or prompts for particular tests. It would be helpful if you can remind your child/ren during this week that there may be some changes to normal routines, thank you.

SATS BREAKFAST CLUB

During SATs week we will be offering the year 6 children the chance to come into school early for their breakfast. They can arrive at 8.10am in plenty of time to eat and settle before their tests. A separate letter has gone to Year 6 parents about this.



WHOLE SCHOOL WALK

We are looking forward to our annual school walk on **Friday 15th May** where we will be joining the children, staff, and parents from Firle School. It is always a lovely opportunity to enjoy our beautiful local area and time together as The Oak Tree Federation. We would be delighted if any parents or carers would like to join us on the walk.

Letters were sent home last week with further information.

CENSUS DAY AND UIFSM – THURSDAY 21st MAY 2026

Thursday 21st May 2026, is national School Census Day and, in an effort, to increase the uptake of the Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM) on that day, the menu will be fish and chips. There will also be a jacket potato on offer on this day.

Census Day is when the Local Authorities collect information electronically from every school in their area, partly to guide them in planning and funding. They collect details such as pupil numbers, numbers of pupils with Special Educational Needs, entitled to Pupil Premium funding, entitled to Free School Meals, attendance information and so forth. One thing in particular they are looking at this term is the number of children taking the Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM), to provide schools with appropriate funding for this service such as utility costs.

To maximise our potential funding, we would encourage all families with children entitled to UIFSM to enjoy their free meal on Thursday 21st May, rather than bringing a packed lunch that day. It is the number of children in Key Stage One eating the free meal on the actual day's lunchtime that informs our funding, rather than meals ordered for that day or children attending school. Pupils who bring a packed lunch from home unfortunately are not able to be included, nor are children who normally take UIFSM, but who are absent on 21st May. Once again, we encourage as many as possible to commit to eating the UIFSM on Thursday that week; this will record those children as having eaten on Census Day and therefore count towards the total Government funding that will be allocated to our school for UIFSM for a whole year. We hope that it will also create some enthusiasm amongst the children who don't normally take the meals and lead to more of them eating over the rest of the school year.

PATINA

We are delighted that the year 6 children are once again taking part in the Patina Parade on **Friday 3rd July**, in Lewes. The overall theme will be announced on 21st May when they have the 'Big reveal'. This will take place at Firle in the afternoon. The making days with our allocated artist will be on 17th and 24th of June at Laughton

SPRING/SUMMER LUNCH MENU

We have a new Spring/Summer Menu. The menu was emailed out at the end of last term, but if you would like a hard copy please ask the office. Copies are also available on our school website.



HEADLICE

Our little friends are back and are making visits across the school. Please can we be vigilant and treat headlice quickly with treatment from a pharmacy or, if you would prefer, shampoo then condition and comb with a nit comb. Moving forward, please condition and comb your children's hair every weekend – this method works wonders for keeping headlice out of school. It takes everyone to be vigilant about

this to make it work. Thank you



EVENTS FOR SEND PARENTS

The government has recently released the White Paper on SEND and there is currently a consultation for parents to share their views on how the current system should change. James MacCleary MP is keen to speak to as many parents as he can before the consultation closes on the 18th May 2026.

There will be two events in May and places can be booked following the links:

- SEND online event on 12th May at 7pm on TEAMS
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1987306749986?aff=oddtcreator>
- SEND drop-in event on 14th May from 5-7pm at Mercread Hall in Seaford
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1987306749986?aff=oddtcreator>

If you would like any more information, please email james.maccleary.mp@parliament.uk . Please note you must be constituents of James McCleary MP to attend - you can check here <https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>. If you are unable to attend either of these events, please do participate in the consultation at <https://consult.education.gov.uk/send-strategy-division/send-reform-putting-children-and-young-people-first/>

Thank you for all your continued support.

Kind regards,
Mrs Rachel West and Mrs Jeannette Fuller