Newsletter

Term 1 2026

WELCOME BACK!

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to a new school year at Fairfields School. We hope you all enjoyed the summer break. It has been wonderful to see the children return to school so positively and settle so quickly into their new classes and routines.

The start of a new academic year is always an exciting time. New classrooms, new opportunities and new experiences lie ahead, and we are looking forward to supporting every child to achieve their very best. The children have returned with enthusiasm and confidence, and we have already seen many examples of excellent learning, kindness and teamwork around school.

As always, we value the strong partnerships we have with our families. Working together helps us ensure every child feels happy, safe and supported throughout their time at Fairfields.

EXCITING CHANGES AT FAIRFIELDS

Many of you will have noticed some significant changes around the school site over the summer holidays. Builders have been working hard to improve our car park and continue the development of our school extension. The progress made so far has been fantastic and we are excited to see the project continuing throughout the year.

We would like to thank everyone for their patience whilst this work continues and we will keep families updated as the work progresses.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW TEAM

We are delighted to welcome several new members of staff to Fairfields this year.

Our New Teachers

- Mollie-Ann Smith
- Samuel Mallard

We have also welcomed a number of new Learning Support Assistants who have already become valuable members of our team.

We understand that meeting new adults can sometimes feel unfamiliar for both children and parents. Please remember that all staff wear black staff lanyards with identification badges and are always happy to introduce themselves and answer any questions you may have.

ALLERGY UPDATE

Over the summer, the Department for Education introduced new guidance relating to allergies, often referred to as Benedict's Law. Schools are now required to have a whole-school allergy policy and maintain spare adrenaline auto-injectors on site.

At Fairfields, safeguarding children's health has always been a priority. We already work closely with families to implement individual healthcare plans and ensure staff receive appropriate training. The new policy will strengthen these arrangements further and provide additional reassurance for families of children with allergies.

🚫 **Nut-Free School Reminder**

Please remember that Fairfields is a nut-free school. Even small traces of nuts can pose a serious risk to some members of our school community. We kindly ask that no products containing nuts are brought into school. Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe.

🟧 **ACTION REQUIRED**

Keeping Your Child's Information Up to Date

Accurate information is essential in helping us support your child effectively and contact you quickly if necessary. Throughout the year, circumstances can change and we want to ensure that our records remain up to date.

Please complete our School Contact Questionnaire using the link below:

School Contact Questionnaire – Fill in form

The questionnaire allows you to update emergency contact details, medical information and other important information about your child. Paper copies are available from the school office if you would prefer.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS & ENRICHMENT

Learning extends far beyond the classroom and we remain committed to providing exciting opportunities that broaden our pupils' experiences.

Throughout the year children will enjoy educational visits, visitors, and special events designed to enrich the curriculum and make learning meaningful and memorable. These experiences help children develop confidence, independence and new interests while bringing learning to life.

Your generosity will help us cover the costs, making these events successful and memorable for our pupils. Please send your donation to the office in a labelled envelope. Alternatively, you can use our SUMUP Link to pay online. SUMUP-FAIRFIELDS

This link can also be found on our website. All contributions are entirely voluntary, and any amount you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

GPS TRACKERS & AIRTAGS

We understand that some families choose to use GPS trackers or AirTags to provide reassurance when their child is travelling to and from school. We appreciate that this can help parents feel more confident and informed.

If your child brings a tracker into school, we ask that:

- The device remains inside their school bag.
- The school is informed that the device is present.
- Families understand that bags remain on pegs during the school day.

Whilst we will do our best to care for children's belongings, we cannot accept responsibility for trackers that become lost, damaged or stop functioning.

MOBILE PHONES & TABLETS

Updated government guidance now states that schools should be mobile-phone-free environments. We recognise, however, that some pupils may benefit from having a phone or tablet during their journey to and from school, particularly if they travel independently or use school transport.

Any device brought into school will be collected at the beginning of the day and stored securely in the school office before being returned at home time.

Where a child relies on a device for communication, accessibility or other individual needs, special arrangements will always be considered in discussion with families.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Good attendance is one of the most important factors in helping children succeed. Children who attend school regularly are more likely to make progress, build positive relationships and feel connected to the school community.

School Day: Start: 8:45am **Finish:** 3:00pm

Did You Know?

A child with **90% attendance** misses the equivalent of around **19 school days per year**, which is almost a whole month of learning.

Of course, we understand that illness and other exceptional circumstances can sometimes affect attendance. Many of our pupils face unique challenges, and we remain committed to working closely with families to provide support where it is needed.

This may include:

- Working with the EHC Team.
- Offering a Family Help Conversation.
- Making referrals to outside agencies and support services where appropriate.

If you are concerned about your child's attendance, please speak with their class teacher or contact the school office to speak with our Senior Family Worker, Janice Crane. We are here to help.

Absence due to exceptional circumstances

We understand that family events and significant occasions can arise during the school year. However, government regulations mean that leave of absence can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Examples that are not usually considered exceptional include:

- Family holidays taken during term time.
- Holidays booked because of lower costs.
- Travel arrangements linked to work commitments.
- Overseas visits to relatives unless there is a serious or terminal illness involved and supporting evidence is provided.

If you believe your circumstances are exceptional, please complete a Request for Absence form, available on our website or from the school office. We will carefully consider each request individually.

LOST ITEMS AND SAFETY REMINDER

Over the past year, we have seen an increase in items being thrown onto the school roof. Unfortunately, these items can include both school equipment and children's personal belongings.

Due to health and safety regulations, staff are unable to access the roof to retrieve items. Retrieval can only take place when a qualified roofing contractor is working on site, which may mean a significant delay before items can be returned.

If your child is prone to throwing items or misplacing belongings, it may be helpful to keep spare items available at home where possible. Thank you for supporting us in keeping everyone safe

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HEALTH & WELLBEING

As we move into the autumn term, we would like to remind families about our approach to illness and attendance.

Please consider keeping your child at home if:

- They are too unwell to participate in learning.
- They may pass an illness to others.
- They require rest and recovery before returning to school.

If a child becomes unwell during the school day, we will contact parents or carers and request prompt collection.

Important Reminder

As a school we have to follow the UK Health Security Agency's exclusion guidance. This guidance tells us if an individual needs to stay away from school and for how long (public health exclusion period) e.g. If you child has been sick or had diarrhoea they are required to remain off school for a minimum of 48hrs. If your child develops a temperature of 38°C or above, we will contact you to arrange for them to be collected.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Could Your Child Be Eligible for Free School Meals?

If your family receives certain benefits, your child may qualify for Free School Meals. Applying can also provide additional funding for the school through the Pupil Premium Grant, helping us provide extra resources, support and opportunities for pupils.

Why Apply?

Depending on eligibility, your child may:

✅ Receive free school meals

✅ Help the school access additional funding

✅ Benefit from additional support and resources funded through Pupil Premium

Who May Be Eligible?

Families receiving one or more of the following may qualify:

- Universal Credit
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Certain families with no recourse to public funds.

We encourage all eligible families to check their entitlement, as it can make a significant difference both to your child and to the support we can provide as a school.

To check your eligibility and apply please using this link Apply for free school meals - Eligibility Check.

Please remember that applications should be renewed annually.

💚 **THANK YOU**

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Working together helps us create the very best opportunities for every child at Fairfields School. We are looking forward to an exciting and successful term. If you have any questions, concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Mrs Lesley Elder
Headteacher
01604 714777
head@fairfields.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Key Dates for Your Diary

Below are the scheduled dates for the year. They will all be confirmed nearer the time.
Please keep an eye on the Parent App for updates.

School Celebrations—Parents Invited

- Thursday 15th October Harvest Assembly & Stay and Play Riverbank & Woodland
- Friday 16th October Harvest Assembly & Stay and Play Meadow & Treetops
- Monday 14th and Tuesday 15th December - Riverbank and Meadow Christmas Production
- Tuesday 8th, Wednesday 9th and Thursday 10th December - Woodland and Treetops Christmas Production
- Thursday 28th January Riverbank & Woodland Stay & Play
- Friday 29th January Meadow & treetops Stay & Play
- Wednesday 24th March Riverbank & Woodland Easter Stay & Play
- Thursday 25th March Meadow & Treetops Easter Stay & Play
- 24th – 28th May Sports Day Week
- Thursday 15th July - Yr 6 Late Night
- Friday 16th July - Riverbank Celebration Assembly
- Monday 19th July - Meadow Celebration Assembly
- Tuesday 20th July – Woodland Celebration Assembly
- Wednesday 21st July – Treetops Celebration Assembly

Parents Evenings

- Wednesday 21st October - Parents Evening
- Wednesday 10th March - Parents Evening
- Wednesday 7th July - Celebration Evening and Meet the Teacher

School Events

- Wednesday 4th November - School Photos
- Thursday 5th November - Colour & Light Day
- Friday 20th November - Children In Need
- Thursday 3rd December - Purple Sock Day (International Day of People with Disabilities)
- Friday 11th Dec - Christmas Dinner & Jumper Day
- Friday 5th February - Time to Talk Day
- Thursday 4th March - World Book Day
- Friday 21st May - Outside Learning Day
- Thursday 24th June - Maths Day