

25 October 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

What an exciting and busy start to the year it has been! We celebrated our Year 10s, Year 11s, and Functional pupils as they proudly received their certificates for the many qualifications they achieved last academic year—a fantastic milestone in their educational journeys. There have been some exciting developments on our Loose site, including a makeover of our MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area), Sensory Garden, and Trim Trail. We also celebrated the completion of our train café, the FAWrient Express, which will be welcoming the public next term and serving as a unique space for pupils and the community alike.

At the beginning of the term, we were thrilled to share that we once again received an Outstanding rating from Ofsted. We could not have achieved this without the collective efforts of everyone involved—pupils, staff, and of course, the invaluable support from you, our parents and carers. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. We hope you enjoy reading about all that has been accomplished!

School Events

A big thank you to all who were able to attend the class coffee mornings earlier this term. These gatherings offer a wonderful opportunity for parents and carers to meet the class team and get a glimpse into their child's classroom experience.

On 20th September, both pupils and staff came together to support Jeans for Genes Day, a special initiative that raises awareness of the challenges faced by people with genetic conditions. This annual campaign not only collects essential funds for projects that provide support, but also empowers the genetic condition community to have their voices heard. We are grateful to our school community for helping us raise awareness for this important cause.

Our Autumn Festival celebrations for primary pupils took place last week with four wonderful performances throughout the day. A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who helped organise the event and to all who joined us in the audience. For many of our pupils, performing on stage was a brand-new experience, and we are sure you will agree they all did an amazing job!

On Wednesday of this week, our secondary structured classes held their annual art gallery showcase. As part of their project-based learning, pupils studied various artists and practised their techniques to

create their own interpretations. Staff, pupils, parents, and carers who came to gallery were amazed by all the fabulous work. Congratulations to Gershwin, Holst, Liszt, Ravel, Rossini, and Verdi classes for their hard work!



Earlier this week, pupils at Oxford Road had the opportunity to participate in mock interviews led by staff from HR, preparing them for future careers. Over two days, 40 pupils attended their scheduled appointments, arriving well-prepared having researched for their interviews, and all looking very smart. I am proud of their professionalism and effort, and grateful to the staff who shared their time and expertise with our pupils.

Yesterday, Several Sixth Form pupils went gliding with Kent Gliding Club in Challock, Ashford. What an amazing experience and well done to all involved!



FAWrient Express

This term, we hosted a special event to express our gratitude to the incredible individuals and companies whose support has made the FAWrient Express possible. This former train buffet carriage has been transformed into a fully operational café, thanks to the dedication of many talented people and generous backing from local, national, and global businesses.

Not only will this space support our older pupils in gaining hospitality experience, but it is also being used by pupils to enrich their learning. These opportunities include accessing the community alongside peers and members of the public, developing life skills such as waiting, purchasing food, and managing money, as well as learning personal development skills needed for the world of work.

The FAWrient Express will officially open to the public next term, and we hope that you will drop by, enjoy a cup of coffee, and experience the unique atmosphere, all while directly supporting our pupils' learning.

Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE)

There has been a lot of progress and exciting developments going on in the OLE. Thanks to the hard work of both our pupils and external builders, phase one of the new path from Apple Tree Yard to the Quad area is now complete, making the space more accessible and visually appealing. Some of our Snodland pupils have also been busy preparing the site for The Willows project; a new building which will provide older pupils with the opportunity to develop skills needed in the workplace. Additionally, our woodland cabin has been developed into a nature-based learning space, where pupils are encouraged to use nature in arts and craft activities.

This academic year, we are also proud to announce the launch of three BTEC groups in the OLE. Two of these groups will focus on animal care, while the third will concentrate on land-based skills. These courses are designed to help pupils earn valuable qualifications and develop practical, transferable skills for their futures.

Healthcare Plans

Please can I remind all parents/carers that in the interest of your child's health and safety, it is your responsibility to ensure all information on Healthcare Plans is kept up to date and you should therefore notify us of any changes as they arise.

Arbor

Arbor is our school management information service which allows us to communicate effectively with parents and carers. To find out how to access the portal or app, please see below.

To access the Parent Portal via a PC or MAC:

Visit <https://login.arbor.sc> and click on Forgot your password. Your username is the email address you received the Arbor invitation email on.

To access the Arbor app via mobile phone:

The Arbor app can be downloaded from the Playstore (for android phones) or Apple Store (for iPhones).

If you have any issues accessing the app or portal, please email office@five-acre.kent.sch.uk.

I would like to wish everyone an enjoyable half term break. I look forward to welcoming the children back to school on Monday 4th November.

Kind regards,



Peggy Murphy
Principal

Updates from Hannah, our fundraiser:

Term one seemed a little quiet with fundraising events but there is currently lots of planning underway behind the scenes. Term two will be both busy and exciting – watch out for further updates over the coming weeks.

Donations

A big thank you to a member of staff who hosted a cake sale, raising funds that will go towards purchasing some exciting resources for our new library. We are also delighted to share that Viscofan, who supported us last year, has generously donated football goals, an outdoor shed, and a range of games to our pupils at Snodland. The team from Viscofan recently visited our Snodland site and enjoyed a tour of the school led by our pupils. We are incredibly grateful for their ongoing support.

If you would like to donate to the school, or do a spot of fundraising yourself, please do not hesitate to contact us by sending an email to fundraising@five-acre.kent.sch.uk. We would love to hear from you!

Soft play bus

We are delighted to share that phase one of transforming our double decker bus into an innovative soft play facility is officially underway. Myself and one of our trustees recently visited the workshop where the renovation is taking place and we can already see our vision coming to life. The renovation team have made a start on the electrics, most seats have been removed, and some have already had a makeover. We hope it will not be too long until our bus is back with us, and we are excited to share more updates as progress continues.

Heart of Kent Hospice – Shaun the sheep

On the 1st of September we saw the Shaun the Sheep Heart of Kent Hospice trail come to an end. This exciting trail featured Shaun the Sheep sculptures placed around Maidstone along with many flocks of little Shaun the Sheep sculptures, including our 'baaa-rilliant' Five Acre Woody, who we welcomed home this week.

The Heart of Kent Hospice raised an incredible total of £265,250! This will help the hospice continue to run the vital services they provide. We are so proud to have been a part of this wonderful initiative, and a special thanks goes out to our pupils, families, and staff for your support.

Sensory Garden

This term, we were lucky enough to work with Hands On, a company that designs and builds new facilities for schools and charities across the UK. Through them, we had the opportunity to start the journey of transforming our sensory garden. The Hands On team were also joined by the company Crowe, who commissioned this project and provided 60 volunteers across two days, to help bring our vision to life. We are incredibly grateful for their support and commitment to our school and look forward to sharing the progress, with you over the coming months as our sensory garden journey continues.

Upcoming dates for your diary

We have teamed up with Mucky Munchkins again and are offering Spooktacular messy play sessions in half term, on Monday 28th October. If you would like to join us, there are still some spaces available. To book please visit the following link:

www.bookthatin.com/link/OctHalfTermFAW

Parents/carers will soon be able to purchase tickets for our 'Winter Wonderland' which will take place on Saturday 7th December. Tickets will go on sale on 8th November so be sure to set a reminder.

We hope our pupils enjoyed our spooky clothes day today and we are looking forward to seeing more spooky costumes at our 'Spooky Disco' which is taking place this evening at our Loose site.

Term Dates with Diary Dates 2024/25

Date	Time	Event
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Term 2

Monday 4 th November 2024	N/A	First day of term 2
Friday 15 th November 2024	All day	Children in Need
Saturday 23 rd November	Various	Five Acre Wood Magical Grotto
Saturday 30 th November	Various	Five Acre Wood Magical Grotto
Monday 2 nd December 2024	TBC	Winter performance
Tuesday 3 rd December 2024	TBC	Winter performance
Friday 6 th December 2024	All day	Christmas jumper day
Saturday 7 th December 2024	TBC	Winter Wonderland
Tuesday 10 th December 2024	10.00-11.00am	Winter Fair – Session 1
	1.30-2.30pm	Winter Fair – Session 2
Friday 13 th December 2024	TBC	Snodland Winter Fair
Wednesday 18 th December 2024	Lunchtime	Christmas dinner
Thursday 19 th December 2024	Various	Class Christmas parties and Christmas clothes day
Friday 20 th December 2024	N/A	Last day of term

Term 3

Monday 6 th January 2025	N/A	First day of term 3
Friday 14 th February 2025	N/A	Last day of term Own clothes day

Term 4

Monday 24 th February 2025	N/A	First day of term 4
Thursday 6 th March 2025	All day	World Book Day
Friday 7 th March 2025	EYFS & KS1 – 5.30-6.30PM KS2 & KS3 – 7.00-8.15PM	School disco (at Loose site)
Monday 10 th March 2025	N/A	Staff training day (pupils not in school)
Tuesday 11 th March 2025	N/A	Staff training day (pupils not in school)
Friday 14 th March 2025 (TBC)	All day	Comic Relief Day
Friday 21 st March 2025	All day	Socks for World Down Syndrome Day
Saturday 29 th March 2025	TBC	Spring family fun day
Wednesday 2 nd April 2025	10.00-11.00am	Spring Fair – Session 1
	1.30-2.30pm	Spring Fair – Session 2
Friday 4 th April 2025	N/A	Last day of term

Term 5

Tuesday 22 nd April 2025	N/A	First day of term 5
Monday 5 th May 2025	N/A	Bank holiday (pupils and staff not in school)
Friday 16 th May 2025	TBC	FAW charity football match
Friday 23 rd May 2025	N/A	Last day of term

Term 6

Monday 2 nd June 2025	N/A	First day of term 6
June 2025	TBC	Sports day
June 2025	TBC	Sports day – FAW Snodland
Friday 4 th July 2025	All day	Transition day
Friday 4 th July 2025	EYFS & KS1 – 5.30-6.30PM KS2 & KS3 – 7.00-8.15PM	Summer disco (at Loose site)
Monday 7 th July 2025	3.45-6.45pm	'Meet the new teacher' parents evening
TBC	TBC	Secondary summer performance
TBC	TBC	Secondary prize giving
Tuesday 22 nd July 2025	N/A	Last day of term

NOTE TO PARENTS/CARERS REGARDING MEDICATION

To ensure that your child is given the most current prescribed medication of the correct dose and at the right time, please read these guidelines:

1. Please ensure that all medicines sent into school are in the ORIGINAL pharmacy containers/packaging clearly labelled with:

- Your child's name
- Name of prescribed medication
- The dosage and frequency of administration
- How medicine should be given, e.g. by mouth, via feeding tube
- Date medicine was dispensed
- Expiry Date

Any nurse will have the right to refuse the administration of medication to your child if this information is not clearly shown on the label.

2. Please inform the school nurse of any change to your child's regular medication, including alterations to dose, frequency or medication being stopped as advised by a doctor. These alterations need to be confirmed in writing by the prescriber. **We cannot accept verbal alterations and will be unable to give an amended dose unless we have the medication in its original contained with the correct information printed on the label or receive the changes in writing from the prescriber.**

3. If your child is prescribed emergency medication (Diazepam/Midazolam for epilepsy or Anapen/Epipen for allergy) please inform the school nurse immediately. Further information from your child's doctor will be needed regarding when the emergency medication should be given and this will be kept in school so all staff are aware of what care your child needs in an emergency.

4. Please ensure there is a sufficient supply of all the medicines your child needs whilst in school. We will contact you to advise when we are running low.

5. When sending in medication, it must not be put in your child's bag. Instead, it should be handed directly to a member of the class staff. If your child comes into school by taxi, the medication should be given to the escort who will then hand it to a member of the class staff when they arrive at school.