



# Furze Down School News

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to our Spring Term Newsletter.

This half term has certainly been a busy one and began with a visit from Ofsted the first week back after the February half term holiday. I was really pleased to share the report with you and to announce that Furze Down remains an 'Outstanding' school. The inspection was a rigorous process and inspectors spent time talking to staff, governors, external partners and pupils to understand the work we do. I really feel the report captures the 'Essence of Furze Down'

The report is now live on Ofsted's website <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/25/110585>

I am very privileged to work with such a dedicated staff and governor team and I also greatly appreciate the support that parents and carers provide. Working in collaboration supports us to ensure that we continue to develop our provision to support aspirational outcomes for all.

We are now starting to plan for the Summer Term. The Summer Term is always such a busy one as not only are we focusing on what we need to complete by the summer holidays but we are also thinking about transitions and the next academic year.

After Easter the first group we will be supporting is our leavers. Their last day in school will be the 28th June and we want to make sure we have prepared them for life beyond Furze Down School and of course given them an opportunity to say 'Farewell'.

Once these pupils have left we then have the flexibility for existing pupils to meet their new teacher(s) as well as meet new pupils who will be joining in September. Our aim is always to provide each pupil with a personalised transition plan as every child or young person will need different resources in place to support them.

We are now looking forward to some warmer weather and being able to spend more time outside enjoying our outdoor learning spaces. As I write the new pond layout is being completed and a goat enclosure has been finished in readiness for the delivery of Amarlie and Marula two goats from the Bucks Goat Centre. They will be joining the Furze Down Community during term time. Post 16 and KS4 will be taking responsibility for looking after them. Work has also now started on refurbishing our new Well Street site in Buckingham and we look forward to taking pupils for further visits next term

Please enjoy looking through the newsletter and the opportunities pupils have had to engage in enriching and exciting activities.

I look forward to seeing everyone back in school on the Monday 15th April, well rested and ready to make the most of the summer term.

Wishing you a peaceful Easter break.

Best Wishes,  
Alison Rooney



## News from Early Years

Birch class and PfA collaborated to celebrate **Bucks Early Years Communication Week.**



PfA students ventured down to Birch class with a keyboard and their best voices.

Together we sang nursery rhymes and played instruments.



## Special Easter Bunnys visited Primary



## News from the Catering Team

We will be changing from our Winter Menu to the Summer Menu for lunches, on our return from the Easter Break, so you will notice some differences.

We now cook and serve over 100 lunches per day with 91% of our pupils ordering school lunches.

As you may, or may not, be aware there is a cut off point for placing orders.

placed Sunday, 8 days before the meals are served on a following Monday.

The new menu is on Parent pay now and you can book lunches for after half term.

Please look out for additional information regarding school lunches. These will be from [torme@furzedownschool.org.uk](mailto:torme@furzedownschool.org.uk)

Wishing you all a Lovely Easter - Tara & Team



This allows us to

At the latest orders must be

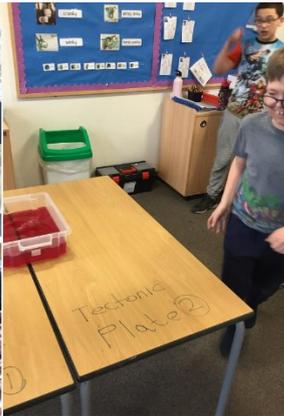


# Volcanoes and Earthquakes in Class JBS

JBS Class have thoroughly enjoyed our geography topics this spring term. These were volcanos and earthquakes!

Pupils worked hard learning key vocabulary relating to volcanos and earthquakes and even made their own volcanos and simulated earthquakes using tubs of jelly!

We rubbed and bumped the tectonic plates (tables) and saw how it made the ground (jelly) shake. Everyone took part in building houses out of spaghetti and marshmallows before testing if they were earthquake proof!



**Our Sponsors  
Colour Run 2024**

 <b>Nick-Nack Physio</b>	 <b>ACH Planning Limited</b>	 <b>Hunt Fitness</b>
 <b>Emma Hopkins Consultancy</b>	 <b>Mud Made Ceramics</b>	 <b>NC and JC Construction</b>
 <b>Ardent</b>	 <b>Avalon Cleaning Services</b>	
 <b>Personalise Em</b>	 <b>Listings Estate Agents Ltd</b>	 <b>D White Building Ltd</b>
 <b>Moreton Bathrooms and Kitchens</b>	 <b>First Coders LTD</b>	

A Huge 'Thank you' to our Colour Run Sponsors.

Entries are about to close as we have been overwhelmed with the numbers joining in.

It looks like it will be a great day out.

If you haven't been lucky enough to get a place you are welcome to join us on the day for an ice cream or to enjoy a ride on the teacups!



## Independent Living Skills across the School

Across the school pupils of all ages have worked with a range of tools and ingredients to create salads, mains and puddings. Knife and measuring skills were practiced with varying degrees of success. Results were either enjoyed at school or safely taken home.



Microwave pineapple upside down pudding



**Knife skills** - cutting up peppers with the Year 9, while Year 8's made toast and pasta salads.



Scrambled egg on toast

Transitioning to the Life Skills Room. We followed step by step instructions; measured using the spoon and cup; poured the milk and made a berry smoothie. Well Done!



Using a hand blender and washing up afterwards

**So proud that pupils were able to transition to the life skills room, downstairs**

They could chop the vegetables with care, and then use one of the microwaves to make ratatouille.



**A wonderful afternoon making Ratatouille.**



Using chopsticks –practising the skill for **Chinese New Year Celebrations**

**We have focused on thinking about what we mean by Independent Living Skills. We talked about what we can do ourselves.**



As part of Chinese New Year 9SKe helped to decorate the classroom, made red lanterns for luck and set the table for a Chinese feast. Pupils cooked and compared rice with noodles, tasted sweet chilli sauce, used both chopsticks and forks, before deciding what worked best for them.

## Year 9 Travel training

Over the last term Year 9 have been developing their skills through travel training, including how to keep themselves safe when out and about in the community.

They developed greater confidence crossing roads, using different types of crossings and showed consideration for other pedestrians.

As well as walking around Winslow to discover more about our local community, Class SB have visited other places to use these skills in less familiar surroundings, including exploring Padbury and Stowe.

Most recently both Year 9 classes have been applying their skills in and around Buckingham.

They are starting to identify people who can help us when we are in town and to look out for useful information, including opening times for shops.





Classes VCHF and KHKH from Year 8 had a wonderful day out at Whipsnade Zoo recently.



The visit to the zoo was linked to our Spring Term English work on Balanced Arguments

**“Should animals be kept in zoos?”**

Their day began with a really informative workshop detailing all the conservation work the zoo is involved in and how it has changed over the years.

Then they all explored many of the different areas of the zoo including meeting the adorable 2 week old baby Rhino, the red pandas and penguins.



. It was a fantastic day and helped inform the pupils extended writing in English.



## Visitors to Class in KS3

Class EB have been learning about climate change this half term.

We welcomed a 'woodchopper' into the classroom and the pupils got to see deforestation in action through roll play.



They came up with some fantastic questions to ask the woodchopper and the class really started to gain some understanding of the environmental impact of deforestation.



The 'woodchopper' then planted a tree, with all of the pupils, that we are hoping will grow and we can plant on the school grounds. It was a great afternoon with some fantastic learning taking place.



*The United Nations General Assembly unanimously declared 2 April a World Autism Awareness Day to highlight the need to help improve the quality of life of those with autism so they can lead full and meaningful lives as an integral part of society.*

*Autism is a lifelong neurological condition that manifests during early childhood, irrespective of gender, race or socio-economic status. The term Autism Spectrum refers to a range of characteristics. Appropriate support, accommodation and acceptance of this neurological variation allow those on the Spectrum to enjoy equal opportunity, and full and effective participation in society.*

**Ricky Brown** Student & Family Worker Furze Down School



## News from Key Stage 4

Class CH

This term, Class CH have been studying a mystery story in English called 'Message in a Bottle'.

We were all given clues to solve to find our own messages in a bottle!

We then used the recycled bottles to make Rainbow Rice as part of our Team Project: Offering a Service.

We asked for orders from classes, made the rice and bottled it up, before delivering it to classrooms. We then asked for feedback on our work!



## News from PFA

In catering we have been taking orders for celebration cakes. Recently the students made over 80 cupcakes and 4 tray bakes for an order for a birthday. The students have been working independently following their own recipes and can now make a cake batter independently.



Students have been working hard in their group work experience sessions. At the farm it has been lambing season and the students have been helping to deliver and care for the lambs. At the cafe students have created some lovely Easter displays independently.



## New Arrivals at Furze Down

We will have two new arrivals joining us after the Easter holidays.

Amalie and Merula are three year old Boer goat sisters, who will be coming to live at Furze Down as part of the Bucks Goat Centre's Goats for Schools programme.

They will provide a valuable addition to our wellbeing curriculum, as well as creating the opportunity for vocational sessions focused on animal care.



Amalie and Merula

Our Sixth Form Site Team students have already worked hard to build their new pen. We look forward to welcoming them!

In Site Maintenance pupils have had a focus of DIY, this half term we have been looking at wallpapering a wall.

We have needed to mix the correct consistency of paste, measure the paper and use a spirit level to ensure it is straight. Students have said they are looking forward to trying this at home too.



In February, the Sixth Form had an RE focus day. We specifically looked at Sikhism and visited the Sikh Gurdwara in Milton Keynes. We were given a warm welcome and learnt lots about the work they do within the community. Sikh people give a percentage of their wages to charity and langar (food) is provided for anyone going to the temple on Sundays. A group of women from the temple played music and sang for us.





# Fundraising Update

from Linda Patterson, Business Leader

## Co-op Membership

If you haven't already done so, this is an easy way to support school fundraising. Simply choose **Friends of Furze Down**.



Every time members buy selected Co-op branded products and services, 2p for every pound spent goes to you and they will give the same to support our cause.

## Lions Clubs International



A beautiful spring day for the Lions of Winslow 10K run from the school grounds. Delicious refreshments were prepared and served by our volunteer, staff pupils and parents.

Thank you for your support and to The Lions for their generous donation to our fundraising .

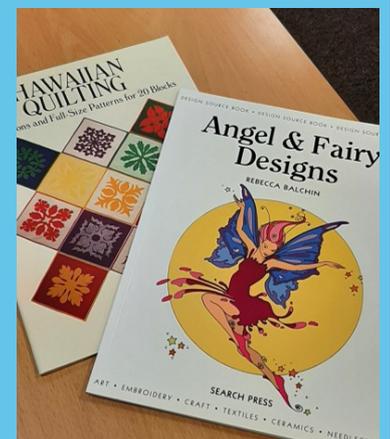


## A Generous Donation to School

With the support of Jane, a friend of Furze Down School, we were recently given some wonderful books, paints and other arts and crafts resources. Pupils across Key Stage 3 have already made use



of some of the colourful card, envelopes, ribbons, glue and stickers to create Easter Cards. There are still resources to explore.



A huge thank you to Gill and family from us x

Holiday



# Club

children play, parents relax

Come along and enjoy...

Tea Coffee Cakes and Childrens Activities

St Laurence Room

Market Square, Winslow

Easter session:

Friday 5th & 12th April 2024

10am-12pm

Free and open to all families

# Easter Holidays at Wycombe Museum

## 7th April, Sunday Pikemen & Musketeers!

10am - 4pm • Adults £8, Children £6

Go back in time to the 1600s! See the campsite of Civil War soldiers as they complete their musket shooting drills and do hand-to-hand combat demonstrations. Try on armour and have a go.



Family fun day For all

## Sunday 17 March - Sunday 14 April Easter Egg Hunt

Available 10am - 4pm • £3 per child

The mischievous Easter Bunny has hidden eggs around the museum garden! Help us find them all and claim your chocolatey prize.



Seasonal fun Best for age 3 - 11

## 9th & 10th April, Tuesday & Wednesday Discover & Make: Make a Miniature Chair

Sessions through the day • £4.50 per child  
Learn all about Wycombe's chair making history and build your own perfect miniature Windsor chair. Discover & Makes combine craft with trails around the museum.



Crafts For children 4-11

## 2nd & 3rd April, Tuesday & Wednesday

### Discover & Make: Easter Baskets

Sessions through the day • £4 per child

Make a decorative woven Easter basket and decorate it with all things Spring! Discover & Makes combine craft with trails around the museum.



Crafts For children 4-11

### The Art of the Chair

Exhibition opens 26th March

This exhibition is all about the art, design and marketing of chairs. From Victorian traveling salesmen's artwork and miniature chairs, to slick 1970s adverts. Discover the designs that made Wycombe chairs known around the world.

Exhibition For all

Children must be accompanied by an adult at all events.

01494 957210

info@wycombemuseum.org

www.wycombemuseum.org.uk

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For adults

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CONTACT US

stemsales@fds.org.uk



1voice organises social events for AAC users and their families, bringing them together for fun and shared experiences

Hi! We are Hannah and Jason. We are both trustees for 1voice and are keen to grow the AAC community in Beds and Bucks (and the surrounding areas). We both live and work locally. We would love to meet you whatever stage of your communication journey you're on.



Are you an AAC user?  
a parent / carer of an AAC user?  
a professional working with AAC users?



If so we'd love to hear from you!

Let us know what sort of events you'd like to attend (coffee mornings, bowling, meals out), or how you'd like to be involved in our branch

Join our new Facebook private group  
1voice Beds and Bucks

We currently have two save the dates:  
Saturday 4th May  
Saturday 5th October



Become a member, for free, to keep up to date!

For more information:

events@1voice.info

1voicemovies

1voice.info

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## Reminder of arrangements for the mornings and at the end of the day



To continue to encourage a low arousal start to the day, to keep everybody safe and the traffic flowing, we would ask that parents/carers keep to the arrangements you had regarding dropping off or picking up from school:- **Primary drop off 9.10am / pick up at 3pm. Rest of school 9am drop off / pick up at 3.35pm.**

The turning circle is reserved for the Local Authority provided transport before 9am each school day, and from 3.15pm –3.35pm in the afternoon but you are welcome to park there at other times. If you are a Parent/Carer dropping off and arrive whilst the taxis are still in the turning circle, please park in the laybys outside the school gates.

If in doubt, or you have any queries regarding days or dropping off, please email [office@furzedownschool.org.uk](mailto:office@furzedownschool.org.uk)



**For all enquiries regarding transport please contact:**

Passenger Transport Section, County Hall, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1YZ

Telephone Number **01296 387439**

**Or follow the link to their website:**

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-transport/>

## Advert from one of our Enterprise Groups

**Furze Down Cycles are an Enterprise Class comprised of KS5 pupils and staff.**

**Our aim** is to learn how to repair and maintain cycles for our own use.

We are learning how to do this through the repair and restoration of donated cycles.

**We also** clean, check and repair bicycles at a cost of £5 (plus the cost of parts if necessary).

**We would be happy to** either service and return your bikes **or** take any bikes no longer used with a view to repairing and selling them on or using them for parts (before selling the frames for scrap).

**If you have any bikes** lurking unused and unloved in sheds and garages please consider donating them to us. They could be given a new lease of life and help continue to support our learning. No bike will be refused. Contact the school office with Furze Down Cycles as the subject heading, if interested.

**Repaired, restored and upgraded cycles** are sold on.

We sell **adult bikes for £20 - £30.**

**Children's bikes** are cleaned/ repaired and sold for **£10 -£15.**

**The monies raised** are used to buy tools to supplement those we have and a range of nuts, bolts and hardware often needed to fix bikes.



*Why not take a look at our Facebook page or Twitter account*

<https://www.facebook.com/furzedownschool>

*We share lots of useful information on here as well as on our website*

<https://www.fds.org.uk/>



## Autism Acceptance Week

Next week is Autism Acceptance Week (2<sup>nd</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> April) and April is Autism acceptance month! As a therapy team we are striving to be more Neurodiversity affirming and would love to share some resource we have found helpful.

Neurodivergent is a broad term used to describe individuals whose mental or neurological functions differ from the majority. This includes people with any condition affecting the mind or brain, such as:

- PTSD
- ADHD
- Autism
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Epilepsy
- Brain injuries
- Learning Disabilities
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Generalised Anxiety Disorder

Neurodiversity affirming practice is the idea that we all have differences in our abilities and how we interact with the world around us – differences which are not considered to be deficits that need to be “fixed”. This means that rather than viewing neurodivergent conditions as deficits or disorders, they are taken as differences that are part of the natural variation of human neurology.

Below are some resources that further explain Neurodiversity affirming practice and how we can make changes to our own practice to accommodate the new research:

Videos:

<https://uniquelyhuman.com/2022/01/07/autism-level-up/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhhhyV-q9KQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WVoBM2424vc>

Autistic Self-advocacy websites:

<https://autisticadvocacy.org/book/welcome-to-the-autistic-community/>

<https://ndsa.uk/content/>

