



THINGS – SPRING B

Fir Ends School, Smithfield, Carlisle, Cumbria CA6 6AY
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Feb 21st 2024

Be the best you can be...

The crocuses and snowdrops are up, so it must be the official start of spring by now; although we're not sure the weather gods have been informed that blue skies and pretty sunrises are now expected! Included here are some key points and dates for this half-term, which contains both World Book Day and Easter – and our annual craft-based contests for both. Details below.

COMING SOON: PARENT & TODDLER GROUP

From March we will begin hosting a monthly Parent & Toddler group for under 4's on the middlish (3rd) Friday of each month.

The launch session will be on Friday 22 March from 9am -



DATA SYSTEM TRANSITION – THINGS TO KNOW

Our transition to the Arbor data management system continues this term with the **bookings and payments** system activated.

This has now replaced ParentPay. No more charges will be applied there and outstanding balances from that system will be transferred into Arbor in March.

All parents - mums **and** dads - have accounts within the Arbor system – if you are experiencing difficulty in logging in please contact the office.

Payments now made within Arbor include:

- **Trips and visits** – all of the processes associated with these can now be managed within Arbor, including parental consent and charges of any associated payments.
- **Wraparound Care** – **parents should now pre-book breakfast and after-school club sessions within the Arbor system.** This will only allow a booking if credit is available on the account but charges are only applied after an attendance mark is given by the office. The office will also make any necessary adjustments on the basis of the club registers. *If you want to use tax-free childcare vouchers to pay for wraparound care, please contact the office who will adjust settings to reflect this and advise on how to add voucher credits.*
- **Nursery Charges** – charges for attendance outside funded hours will be applied in Arbor weekly on the basis of attendance as they were in ParentPay and a half-termly invoice sent home to summarise the charges applied.
- **Parent Pay Balances** – all outstanding balances will be added to Arbor by the office as part of the process of shutting down ParentPay. It would help if these were mostly cleared in that system before 4 March. If accounts have credit in ParentPay, this will be applied against outstanding debts before the balance is transferred.

NOTE: ordering and payments for **school meals** remain within Dolce's bespoke **SchoolGrid** system. Parents should ensure there is credit on this account to pay for meals ordered. Where credit is not available, the cost will be recharged to your Arbor account and we may apply an additional processing charge of £3 per meal.

PTFFE COFFEE MORNING

The PTFFE invite you to join them for coffee and cake on the morning of 23rd February between 9 and 10:30

WORLD BOOK DAY

Even the organisers have caught on to the potential of a potato and carrot with our traditional 'create a scene' approach being promoted as a better option than dressing up this year. For World Book Day 2024 we invite children to either:

Dress fruit and veg as favourite book characters

OR

Turn a cereal/shoe box into a book based diorama.

Best efforts in each class will win book vouchers.



**Competition Day:
Thurs 7 March**

EASTER EGGS

In the last week of term we will hold our traditional Easter Egg competition, with chocolatey prizes.

All children have to do is decorate a (boiled or blown) egg, although the entries are rarely that simple...

Entries should be brought to school for the Easter Egg competition on **Tues 26 March**



Headteacher:

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CALENDAR EVENTS

Things to look forward to in Spring include:

FEBRUARY

WEDS 21st– Year 3&4 Bike-A-Bility
Friday 23rd– PTFE Coffee Morning
Friday 23rd– Key Steps Gymnastics (3 teams of 6 pupils each)
Weds 28th– year 5&6 climbing competition @ Eden Rock (12 pupils)

MARCH

Friday 1st– secondary school place offer day

Thursday 7th– World Book Day – bring your vegetable/box entries in

Friday 8th– Air Ambulance

Weds 13th– Author Visit (Stuart Reid)

Fri 22nd– Parent & Toddler session

Sat 23rd – Lanercost Cross Country

Tues 26th – Easter Egg Competition

Weds 27th – Upper KS2 Carlisle Swimming Gala – *entry tbc*

Weds 27th – PTFE Spring Disco with coffee shop for parents (4-5.30)

Thurs 28th – End of Spring Term

(Fri 29th – Bank Holiday)

APRIL

Tues 16th – Back to School – start of Summer Term

UNIFORM REMINDER

When we set the uniform policy (in 2019) we aimed to make it easy to source items from multiple suppliers by choosing commonly available plain colours for uniform items; predominantly plain bottle green & plain black.

Recently a creeping increase in stripes, manufacturer logos and other things that make black items 'not plain black' have been noted by staff.

Please remind children that plain black means items should be ... just **black**.

Black uniform items this includes are:

- Trousers and skirts
- Shorts
- Leggings & Joggers
- Hoodies & Fleeces
- Shoes

If you are struggling to source plain black items, the PTFE uniform shop may have stock available, and places like ASDA are generally quite reliable sources.

AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS – SPRING A

As the nights start to draw out, this term's after-school sports options (3.30-4.30) are:

Monday: Gymnastics

Tuesday: Handball

Friday: Petanque (bowls)

OUTDOOR ED SESSIONS – SPRING B

Outdoor Ed sessions run on Wednesday afternoons. Weather appropriate clothing required for each class this half term as follows:

- Feb 21 - Class 1
- Feb 28 - Class 3
- Mar 6 - Class 2
- Mar 13 - Class 1
- Mar 20 - Class 3
- Mar 27 - Class 2

E-SAFETY – HOME FILTERING

All our pupil chromebooks are now covered by a monitoring system called Senso which will alert staff to usage that is a cause for concern or breaches acceptable use policies, whether at school or at home. This includes attempts to access inappropriate material.

Senso itself does not directly filter/block online material, since this is managed whilst devices are **at school** by the school network. It is important that parents are aware that this could mean that children are able to access inappropriate content whilst using their chromebooks on **home** internet connections – either deliberately or accidentally.

Parents are reminded that our appropriate use policy and agreement specifies that pupils should be supervised when using school devices at home – ideally by being in the same room as an adult who can see their screen.

Parents are also encouraged to explore or review the filtering options available to limit what can be accessed on home networks. These settings will apply to any device being used to access the internet, including tablets, phones and consoles.

All internet providers publish guidance to parents on how to secure their home networks, but a generic guide and a link to a useful [network filtering test](https://www.fir-ends.cumbria.sch.uk/e-safety) tool can be found on our website:

<https://www.fir-ends.cumbria.sch.uk/e-safety>

AIR AMBULANCE COLLECTION –

FRIDAY 8th March

Bags available at the school gate



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