



WEEK 1 UPDATE

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8th September 2023

Be the best you can be...

We ended the last school year feeling very proud of our pupils. In every class, children at Fir Ends demonstrably strove to be the best they can be, and we trust that this will continue as the new year begins.

The autumn term has begun with the summer sun that was absent during August, and it's been great to welcome back our enthusiastic, hardworking and cheerful pupils!

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE – POLICY UPDATED

Due to what is being described as a national crisis in school attendance, all schools have been asked to comply with statutory guidance from September.

Specifically, this includes greater DfE and Local Authority oversight of pupil attendance and prompt action being taken over avoidable absences and late arrivals.

Clarification over when the issuing of fines (£60 per parent) for avoidable absence should be considered has also been given to ensure consistency between local authorities.

Despite the national concerns, last year we were pleased to achieve our school target of at least 95% average attendance.

Pre-pandemic our school average was around 97%, and we will now aim to move back towards that benchmark.

Parents are reminded that, simply, children are expected to be in school, and on time, unless they are too ill to attend. Our latest attendance policy, reflecting the guidance, is available online.

Medication reminder:

Children should never bring **any** form of medication to school in their bags.

All medications should be delivered to the school office by a parent. This includes inhalers and anti-histamines.

BEHAVIOUR – what happens if it's NOT good?

Trackits log pupil *misbehaviour* as well as all the good things. This is how we approach those instances:

Step 1 – a verbal reminder of expected behaviour

Step 2 – Amber Trackit – Formal record of the issue; may include simple sanctions to encourage reflection.

Step 3 – Yellow Trackit – record of repeated misbehaviour and a last chance to improve - or more serious, isolated incidents. Pupil will be sanctioned and parents **may** be contacted.

Step 4 – Red Trackit – records regular or serious misbehaviour. Parents **will** be contacted. Formal behaviour plans may be implemented to avoid a repeat in future, or further action taken - including isolation or exclusion.

BEHAVIOUR & TRACKIT LIGHTS – info for parents

Over the past academic year we took part in the DfE's Behaviour Hubs programme. This informed changes in our management of behaviour, with a focus on positive reinforcement and included the introduction of trackit lights to record and monitor incidents of good and unwanted behaviour. Essentially, **GREEN is GOOD**, whilst **amber**, **yellow** and **red** record varying degrees of not good.

All **good** behaviour that meets the expectations of our code of conduct earns housepoints – and these can be traded for prizes. We were able to award our first 1000 point certificate and a very rare badge to one pupil in July, with a handful of others almost reaching that threshold! All points have now been reset and they start again!

This is supported by a system of escalating sanctions when behaviour doesn't meet our expectations. The aim at all stages is to offer pupils an opportunity to moderate, reflect on and correct misbehaviour. Where regular misbehaviour is noted, parents will be asked to meet with staff to discuss this.

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• respectful • ready • focused • sensible & safe • caring • **BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE**

AUTUMN PE

The recently published national PE Plan calls for at least two hours of physical activity each week in schools. As part of our response to this, GLL coaches will be delivering PE alongside classroom staff on Tuesday and Friday afternoons this year.

These will be complemented up by ad-hoc activities like Daily Miles, aerobics and team games throughout the week – appropriate footwear for such activities is part of the uniform policy (below right).

This term we **also** have trampolining and gymnastics booked at the Sands, alongside ten weeks of year 3&4 swimming sessions! These start from September 21st and some year 5&6 pupils who have not yet attained the national swimming standards will be in the water for catch-up sessions too.

Naturally, this presents some PE kit challenges... We know that 'Friday PE kit' is easy for parents to accommodate, but up to three sessions a week might be trickier, particularly as the weather changes.

To try to simplify things, for PE sessions on days that aren't Fridays, KS1&2 children should simply wear trainers and black joggers/leggings with their normal school uniform polo and jumper uppers. Shorts can also be worn under joggers/over leggings if children wish.

Tuesdays – Trainers* & Joggers day

All KS1&2 children (*or active school shoes)

Thursdays from 21st September*

Year 3&4: swimming kit

Year 5&6 top up group: swimming kit

Before ½ term: KS1 in joggers

After ½ term: Year 5&6 in joggers

Fridays – PE Kit Day as usual

Trainers, black joggers, short or leggings, jade shirt (or just a normal green polo shirt if you can't get the jade version)

*Further information regarding the Thursday sessions at the Sands will follow.

AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS

GLL coaches Katy and Paul will be running AFS clubs every Tuesday and Friday evening.

Across the year these will cover twelve different sports – two in each half term. We'll be starting with badminton (Tuesdays) and Football (Fridays).

As Georgina has moved onto pastures new, our AFS gymnastics club will be taking a break for now – it should be back in the spring term.

OUTDOOR ED SESSIONS

Due to a change in staffing schedules, Outdoor Ed for classes 1,2&3 will be on Wednesday afternoons from mid-November.

Starting next week, individual year groups will have sessions at the Learning Forest, which will be on Wednesday mornings:

13th September - year 2

20th September - year 1

27th September – Class 2 - group A

4th October – Class 2 –b group A

11th October – Class 2 – group B

18th October - Class 2 – group B

1st November - year 5

8th November - year 6

Further information to follow.

UNIFORM REMINDER – BAGS & SHOES

Since 2019, our uniform policy has specified that pupils should use a book bag rather than a rucksack. This is to avoid issues relating to safety when belongings spill out of lockers – particularly in the winter months.

Teachers will have spoken to pupils with the **wrong bags** this week; if any families are struggling to source/provide a suitable bag, please contact the office.

Please also remember that trousers /skirts/ shorts, etc should be **plain black** and **footwear** should be suitable for active sessions – or a pair of trainers should be kept in lockers to change into for active sessions.

The full 2019 uniform specification is available on the website.