



15th March 2019

Thank you!

As I write the latest news, the children are participating in Red Nose Day 2019. They look fabulous with their red clothing, wild accessories and whacky hair! It seems as if everyone has done something, however small. Thank you for helping your children to take part and for the generous donations you have sent in for the charity.

Thank you all too, for sending in extreme reading photographs – some of them are incredibly inventive! The children have told me they loved doing it. We had a wonderful World Book Day last week and again, we are all so grateful to you for supporting the children with their costumes.

Budget Cuts Information

Some of you have been asking me about the school's budget and if we have been affected by cuts at Forncett. The simple answer is yes.

In financial year 2018-19, we received £3,103.99 per child. This financial year, we have been told we will have £2,747.99 per child, a reduction of £356 per child. Since we had 100 children on roll last October census, this is a reduction of £35,600. However, since this is too great an amount to take from the school in one go, the blow has been softened by a mechanism called the 'Minimum Funding Guarantee'. This ensures the full amount won't be taken in one go but is spread over time. We will therefore have an ongoing reducing budget over the next few years until we have had the full £35,600 taken.

This reduction is mainly due to the introduction of the 'Fair Funding Formula'. My understanding is that apparently, in the past, Forncett received slightly more money per pupil than some schools of similar size nationwide. Others received a lot more. This was obviously unfair and quite understandably needed to be addressed. However, it still means that the school has had to take action to secure its financial future and this has included partnering with another local school to help share costs. Fortunately, partnering brings many other benefits, so we are really pleased to have been able to do this.

Despite partnering up, the latest reduction in our budget share from government will eventually make it impossible for us to continue provision at the level we currently have as we move into the future. Over the last few years we have had a falling budget and many rising costs to meet. We have made many changes to try to adapt, but if it continues, it will inevitably bite into essentials.

Forncett has been a very successful school to date as a result of the staff, governors and our Friends of Forncett group's hard work and dedication. As such, it attracts a lot of families, many with children who have SEN and social, emotional/ mental health issues. We have been able to make great provision for them in the past, but this is now increasingly difficult to maintain. We now only place teaching assistants where the greatest need is, which means that children and their teachers often have no TA support at certain times/days, whereas a few years ago, we could provide support all day every day to all children and their teachers. Moving forward, it may be that we will find ourselves unable to meet present SEN and mental health needs in the way we want to (and know works), which I find frustrating and disheartening. Let's hope this doesn't happen.

Everyone has worked so hard to create a school where the children are cherished and given the best we can provide. It is therefore absolutely heart-breaking to know we

may have to say no to things we know make a real difference, such as our school pastoral worker, who has helped us change many children's lives for the better. It's a real worry and an exhausting balancing act trying to meet needs, maintain standards and deliver the best we can, whilst coping with ever rising costs and a reducing budget. I personally don't know another Head who isn't really concerned and struggling to make it all work.

Please be assured that the governors and I will continue to work hard to ensure that we manage to provide value for money and maintain high standards. I sincerely hope the government will listen to Heads across the country and come up with a helpful solution soon.

Sapphire Class Assembly Presentation

The greatly anticipated Sapphire Class assembly will be held twice to help ensure as many as possible can come along. It will be held on Tuesday 26th March at 2.15pm and again on Wednesday 27th March at 9.30pm, with the opportunity to stay for some refreshments and look at the children's Roman work afterwards. Bring your friends and family along, it will be a real treat!

Parent/Carer Consultations

It was lovely to see so many of you at the recent consultations.

If you weren't able to get a slot to suit you, or you had to cancel, please get in touch so we can talk with you about your child's learning and progress soon.

Sports Club

Tim's after-school Sports Club is now taking bookings on his online system for after Easter at www.timcourridge.co.uk He is also taking bookings for his Easter Holiday all-day Club on Weds 10th April which includes an Easter egg hunt!

Sports & PE Grant - Exciting News!

Finally, at long last, after a few years of saving up a percentage of our ring-fenced Sports and PE Premium Grant each budget, we have been able to put in an order for a brand new, all-weather running track. This will mean that our Daily Mile fresh air and exercise programme will be so much easier to manage and that all the children will be able to run, race (or walk) as fast and as far as they like at play and lunchtimes! Work should start on 1st April, weather permitting. Thank you to Mrs Burrows for all her hard work in gaining quotes and reviewing all plans before the governors decided which to opt for. The Sports and PE Premium Grant cannot be used by the school to meet everyday costs such as salaries, books or utility bills – there are strict rules about how we can spend it.

A Reminder - Parent/Carer Café! 'Take Five'

The new café for our parent/carers and their children will open at St. Mary's church Forncett St Mary (opposite village hall) every Tuesday during term-time from 3pm-4.30pm. The idea is that you can drop in and have a chat to your friends with tea/refreshments etc. until it's time to either pick up from a club after school (tennis) or to go home. Anyone can go and the village hall can be used for parking. If you haven't been, St. Mary's is a fantastic venue and well worth a visit. It's warm and comfy and has loo facilities. Ideal if you have one child at a club and another who doesn't or can't go. It saves waiting in the car!

For more information, phone Lydia on 01953 788227

Lego Tokens Reminder

Please would you help us to collect the Lego Tokens from the EDP news and Evening News? We love Lego and it's so expensive – this will help boost our collection.

DIARY DATES

March

Tues 26th 2.15pm & Weds 27th 9.30am – Sapphire Class Assembly Presentation

April

Tues 2nd – Easter Church Service – 2.15pm

Weds 3rd – KS2 go to Horstead Residential

Fri 5th – Break up for Easter – Easter Egg Hunt organised by FOFS

Tues 23rd – School re-opens for summer term

May

The month of May is KS1 teacher assessment and SATS for Y2

Week of 13th – 17th is KS2 Y6 SATs week

Mon 6th – School Closed for May Bank Holiday

Mon 27th – Fri 31st – School Closed for Half-Term Break – Re-opens on Mon 3rd June

June

Mon 3rd – School re-opens for new half-term

Week beginning Mon 10th is the Y1 Phonic Check Week

Sat 29th – Forncett Village Fete (a major school fundraiser) 1-4pm

July

Weds 3rd – Sports afternoon 1.30pm (reserve is Fri 5th afternoon)

Mon 15th – Moving up classes day

Thurs 18th – Open Evening

Mon 22nd – Disco

Weds 24th – Leavers' Church Service & Leavers' Party