

**Farthinghoe Primary School**  
**Head Teacher Report for the Parish Council**  
**April 2024**

*Farthinghoe School where all children are valued and given the opportunity to shine  
Be kind, Be resilient, Be brave, Be you!*

It has been yet another busy year at Farthinghoe Primary School, with our children continuing to thrive and enjoying all of their learning opportunities.

The 2022-2023 academic year began on Monday 5th September, with a positive intake of 6 new foundation stage children. Our staffing remained unchanged and everyone was ready to embrace the year ahead.

We are part of the Chenderit School primary schools' sports cluster, which entails a number of activities, held at Chenderit, with other local schools, throughout the academic year. The activities vary from cross country, tag rugby and multi skills. Our children always love the opportunity to take part and competing against their peers is always approached with positivity and enthusiasm!

Our Harvest Celebrations took place in October and began with an informative assembly from Brackley Food Bank. The children had many questions and were keen to understand how the food bank worked and who could benefit from it. This has now become an annual event, with Brackley Food Bank visiting once again in October 2023 and our family food donations are delivered to this very worthy cause.

As part of our ongoing support for our children and their mental wellbeing, we commenced a new project in the October called 'Nurture Sessions' with small groups of children visiting Limes Farm for blocks of 6 sessions. As a group of young people they were given the opportunity of enjoying a forest school environment where they experienced cooking and forest crafts with a qualified Forest School leader. These sessions helped to promote and support the children's social and emotional development. They were hugely successful and we were able to provide this opportunity to a large number of our children, across the year.

Our first school trip of the year was for our year 3 and 4 children who embarked on a day out to Edgehill Battle Field with their class teacher, Mrs Fisher and their teaching assistant, Mrs Lear. The trip included a visit to the Saint Peter's Church where the children were able to explore the Battle of Edgehill Radley Exhibition, before visiting the battlefield itself, where they re-enacted the event, along with an orienteering activity. This immersive day trip was hugely beneficial to the children's learning and they were all incredibly animated when they returned to school in the afternoon.

In order to ensure our pupil numbers remain strong, we held two open mornings in November, for families looking for Foundation Stage places in September 2023. We were overwhelmed by the amount of interest we received and at one point there was potentially more visitors in the school than children! The aim of the open mornings is to provide a snap shot of our school, our staff, our children and our values. Our year 5 and 6 children show our visitors around and then myself and staff and available to answer any questions afterwards. As well as these two annual events, we offer ad-hoc tours for prospective families.

Our School Council are a group of children, voted for by their peers to represent and take responsibility for certain activities throughout the year. The Council consists of 2 children from each year group and they meet on a weekly basis, with a staff member, to discuss any changes or ideas for our school. The School Council are also responsible for organising our charity events throughout the year. Children in Need, Cake Sale for CRY, Santa Fun Run for

Helen & Douglas House and Christmas Jumper Day – are just some of the fundraising events they arranged for these very worthy causes.

In February we introduced our new breakfast club provision. The offering is available each morning from 8.00am and the children are offered a healthy breakfast consisting of cereal, fruit, toast and yogurts. We currently charge £4.50 per day and the uptake has been incredibly positive. We are pleased to be able to provide this additional support to our families, especially those that are working and need to be elsewhere, before 8.45am when the school day starts.

Following the success of the breakfast club, we conducted a parent questionnaire to understand the demand for an after school club. Although several of our parents would have benefitted from this service, unfortunately it was not financially viable and therefore we did not proceed. However, we continue to hold teacher-led clubs, every other half term. These clubs run for an hour after school and our fantastic staff have held clubs including Pop Art!, Watercolours, Sewing, Table Tennis and Debating Club – to name but a few.

In March our younger children enjoyed a brilliant day trip to Cadbury's World in Bourneville. As part of their rainforest learning, the children enjoyed a guided tour of the museum, followed by a learning workshop titled 'From Bean to Bar' exploring the journey of cocoa beans to the chocolate bars the children recognise from the supermarket shelves. The cost of this trip was subsidised by our Parent 'School Ties' committee, who covered the transport fees.

As in previous years, we resumed our monthly forest school for our Key stage 1 class, in the summer term. These whole day sessions are held at Evenley Wood Garden and are run by the experienced 'Muddy Feet' forest school leaders. The days are always action packed and the children absolutely love getting dirty, learning new skills and enjoying the outdoor space.

We marked the King's Coronation with a fabulous tea party on the playground. The event coincided with the end of year 6 SATS and everyone was in high spirits. Our families were invited to join us and the sun luckily shone on us for the celebrations.

In June our year 6 children participated in the national Bikeability, cycling proficiency training. This 2-day course ensures children are not only competent on a bike, but also safe and confident. The first day is primarily conducted on the playground but by the second day they venture out on to the local roads with the trained instructors. The group did fantastically well and showed real maturity – they all received their course certificate and badge at the end.

For the first time in several years, we welcomed two work experience students to our school, during the summer term. Both students attended Chenderit and were in year 10 and 12. They were a huge help around the school, offering support in all classes. The children absolutely loved having these 'big kids' around and we hope that their experience with us will have helped with career paths choices in the future.

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June was our annual Sports' Day. The children compete in their Houses and enjoy a variety of races and challenges during the morning. The event is held on our school field and our families are invited to join us and cheer on the children.

This day also coincided with the end of PRIDE month and in celebration, we held our Colour Run. This is the second year we have taken part in this – with the children running around the field whilst being doused in various coloured powders! It is such a fun event and an absolute favourite of the children and staff.

At the start of July our Key stage 2 girls were privileged to be invited to a 'Girls on Track' day at Silverstone. The event is organised by Motorsport UK with the aim to encourage more girls into a career in the Motor Sport sector. The girls (along with Mrs Fisher and Mrs Lear) had an action packed day with a full tour of the Silverstone Museum, experienced life in a racing pit

lane and performing a pit stop challenge, along with lots of other fun activities. This event has not been run since COVID, but we are certainly hoping to be invited again, in the coming years.

The final weeks of the year were rounded off with our usual celebrations and farewells. A year 6 pupil was crowned 'Head Teacher for the Day' and we all enjoyed our leavers service and whole school production of 'Wizard of Oz' in the Village Hall. Our year 6 leavers were a fantastic group of 6 who transferred on to Chenderit, Magdalen College and Sibford School.

Following another successful DfE funding application, our windows and door were replaced during the first few weeks of the summer holidays. These works have been hugely beneficial to us, not only with energy efficiency but also the aesthetics of the school.

We would like to thank you for your continued support and we enjoy being part of such a wonderful village.

If you ever have any questions, concerns or suggestions for us as a school, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sharon Turner  
Head of School