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No. 4

School Newsletter

December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a wonderful term we have had - especially the last couple of weeks! Thank you so much for attending the events that we have held, it is always special to be able to share and celebrate your children's learning with you, particularly at this time of year.

Throughout this term, we have sent ongoing communication and updates about the new behaviour policy which we implemented in September. This work has been extremely significant for us and we have seen a great impact in just a few short months. Hopefully you have already taken time to look at this policy and have also heard your children talking about what this looks like in school, as well as some of the 'Brain Fit' sessions which they have been taught as well. Please can I take this opportunity to draw your attention to an online information evening for parents and carers which we will be holding in February. We are so pleased to be able to offer this event and hope that as many of you as possible can make time to attend this.

I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and hope that you have a wonderful break, spending time with friends and family.

Kindest regards
Ryan O'Hearn



Michelle Brightwell - Family Support Worker

There are some great courses you can access online to help all parents navigate life.

OnePlusOne Parent courses: [Parent guide for England \(oneplusone.org.uk\)](http://oneplusone.org.uk)

Access to three evidence-based digital courses (Me, You and Baby Too, Arguing better, and Getting it right for children)

Access to Debt and relationships, a collection of animated clips exploring real-life stories of debt, plus evidence-based articles offering expert advice.

Please see the attached flyer to access our free evidence based resources, to support our parents/carers and families with parental conflict.

Please check out the feedback from our parents/carers who have used the above resources.

co- parenting -"How the negativity toward each parent and point scoring has huge effect on the child's emotions and feeling like they don't know how to react to please both parents."

Intact couple- "That our communication is very limited and that we are always playing the who is worse off game. A lot of what has been mentioned in the videos has resonated with our lives as a couple/family"

Q & A Sessions- no need to book, just click the link!

Best wishes
Michelle Brightwell

Year 3

What a wonderful first term it has been for Year 3 at Freegrounds Junior School! We've have taken part in some exciting new learning and enjoyed diving into fascinating topics and a range of interesting, practical activities.

In History, the children have thoroughly enjoyed exploring the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages. We've been learning about how people lived during these times and have brought the past to life through roleplay and poster-making about ancient homes. We also went outdoors and made spears using wood, wool and flint! The children have also let their artistic talents shine by sketching woolly mammoths and experimenting with charcoal and natural resources, just like early humans might have done.

In Music, we've been working in groups to create songs inspired by the Summer Solstice and Stonehenge. Using drums and keyboards on the Chromebooks, the children composed rhythmic and melodic pieces that beautifully captured the essence of this ancient celebration. It's been wonderful to see their teamwork and creativity flourish.

In PE, we've focused on two very different activities: Yoga and Basketball. Through yoga, the children have learned about mindfulness, balance, and flexibility, while basketball has helped them develop teamwork, coordination, and agility. Both activities have been met with enthusiasm, and it's fantastic to see the children enjoying physical exercise while building important skills.

Outdoor learning has also been a highlight, with the children taking full advantage of the fresh air and the school's new climbing frame. They've loved the chance to explore, climb, and play, developing their confidence and physical strength in the process.



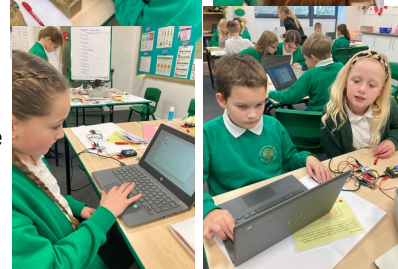
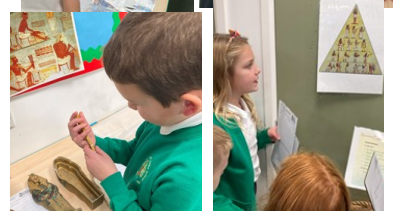
Year 4

Pine and Beech classes have had a very busy December! We have really got into the festive spirit this month, learning songs, lines, actions and staging for our play "No one wraps like an elf!" Thank you to everyone who came to see it and we hope you enjoyed it.

In English this month we have been reading the text "Mummies unwrapped" by Tom Froese and using it as inspiration to write an explanation text, "How were Ancient Egyptians mummified?" The children thoroughly enjoyed "mummifying" the teachers! We then researched what they did, found out about the features of an explanation text and practised using time adverbials and conjunctions in sentences. We are now working hard to write our chronological explanation using technical vocabulary and an impersonal voice.

In History, we have been continuing our topic on the Ancient Egyptians. We have learnt about the social structure of this civilisation and how the pharaohs and viziers were at the top, and the farmers and slaves were at the bottom. We have also learnt about how the farmers divided their time around 3 seasons - the flooding season, the growing season, and the harvest season. We made farming calendars to help understand these seasons. The Hampshire History Curriculum Centre loaned us their Ancient Egyptian Artefact Box and we became History detectives for the afternoon as we explored various artefacts and discovered how they were used.

Our DT work this month has been to design and make an artefact alarm for a precious Ancient Egyptian Artefact. We firstly applied our science learning to make a home-made pressure pad switch activated by pressure to provide a simple and effective way of controlling our electrical circuits. We then used a crumble electronics controller that connected to a computer using a USB cable. We attached components like sparkles and buzzers to the Crumble using crocodile leads, and programmed our "alarm" to flash or beep when activated. We needed to use lots of resilience and plenty of critical thinking to problem solve why some of the circuits were not working. But don't worry... our coding club experts were on hand and on call to help! Well done Year 4!



Year 5

Year 5 have been busy in their DT lessons, designing and creating their own bridges. The children have learnt about different types of bridge structures, including how they can be strengthened, and researched some famous bridges and designers from around the world.

We have made links to our Geography and English work, during which we have learnt about famous rivers around the world, and learnt a lot about the Rivers Thames, Itchen and Yangtzy.

To make our final bridge designs, we have been drawing on our knowledge of cutting using a hand saw, measuring accurately and planning ahead to ensure different parts of our designs dry in time and fit together. Our design brief states that our bridge has to be able to hold a 1kg weight – we look forward to testing this out once they are finished!

In Science, we welcomed Geologist, Dr Belamy, into school for a talk about his job and the fossils he finds around the coastline of England – he was even able to show us some examples. He helped us further understand the formation of different fossil types and showed us how palaeontologists use fossils to find out more about the past. In addition to his visit, we completed our fossil themed morning by completing scientific sketches and casting our own fossils from Plaster of Paris.

The children listened beautifully and had some inciteful and interesting questions for Dr Belamy at the end of his visit. Super work Year 5.



Year 6

What a fantastic end to the half term! The children have really enjoyed DT this month. The children worked hard to design a Christmas waistcoat. We were able to cut out the fabric using a pattern, sew the sides together and then use different techniques to decorate them. They looked fantastic and the children were very excited to take them home!

In English, the children have been working towards writing a diary entry from the perspective of Scrooge from a Christmas Carol. The children have been learning how to build suspense and create a sense of mystery when describing the ghost of Marley. We have also enjoyed our Let's Think in English sessions. This time the children were reading a poem called 'Lulu'. This poem prompted a lot of conversation between the children as they analysed the poem and tried to decide what they believed had happened.

In maths, we have continued to look at fractions. The children have learnt how to multiply and divide fractions by whole numbers and other fractions. They have also learnt how to find fractions of amounts and apply this to real life problems. In arithmetic the children have continued to practice the four operations. Trying to become even quicker and more confident when solving questions.

Well done Year 6! You have had a fantastic first term. Happy Christmas and we can't wait to see you again in the new year.



Outdoor Area

We were delighted to invite the Mayor and Mayoress of Eastleigh into school on Wednesday 11th December for an official opening of our new outdoor learning and play space. Some of the children involved in designing the area, as well as some sports leaders and play leaders (who are instrumental in running the areas at break and lunchtimes), gave them a tour of the space. We were blown away by how enthusiastically they spoke about the difference the space is already making to lessons and lunchtimes and how excited they are about further opportunities to bring their learning outside in the future. The whole school joined in with a count down, before the mayor cut the ribbon! Both the Mayor and Mayoress were quite astonished at how spectacular the area is and could not believe how lucky our children are to have such an amazing space to play and learn in.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their generous donations of books, dressing up props, old pots and pans and arts and crafts items. These will really make a difference to lunchtime provision for all of our children.



The Empowerment Approach – Online Parent Information Evening

Following the launch of our new behaviour approach and our new pro-social and pro-learning policy sent out in September, we would like to invite you to join a zoom presentation to introduce parents/carers to this approach and to understand how it works.

The Empowerment Approach is very different to our previous Behaviour Policy and one that we feel will better equip our children for their future. We want to empower our children to move from responses driven by emotion towards positive self-control and solution-focused thinking.

Coaching for Change



“Only by making people feel better can they do better”

The presentation, led by one of the Changing Chances Team, will aim to answer some key questions: What does the Empowerment Approach mean? Why do we not use traditional sanction systems at Freegrounds Junior School? What does this mean for my child?

The Empowerment Approach Parent/Carer online session:

Time: Feb. 3rd 2025 19:30 – 20:30

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86218339946?)

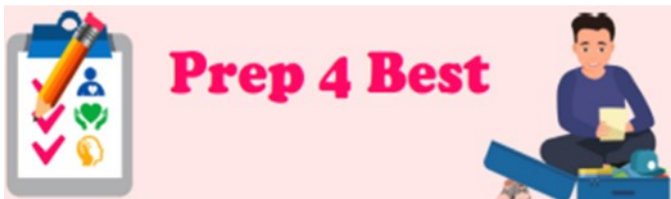
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Meeting ID: 862 1833 9946

Passcode: 396086SS



Prep 4 Best

Adults will plan activities that make good use of our strengths. They will help us to discover ways to manage the things we find hard.

These things will help us to feel capable.

Please register your interest in attending the online session by completing this form:

<https://forms.gle/FBYCpNwqAqhDvuU8>



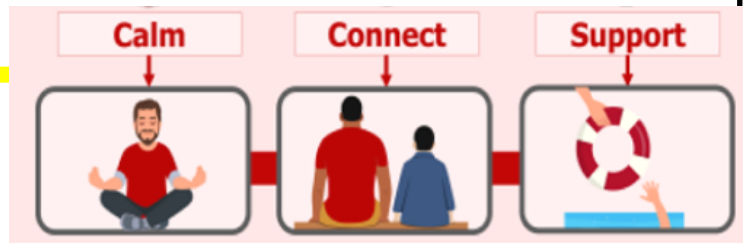
Meeting Our 5C Needs

The Empowerment Approach – Parent/carer sessions led by our Family Support Worker

Whilst we are keen for as many people as possible to attend our online session, we have been holding and will continue to put on coffee morning events which look at particular aspects of the policy or themes that we have been teaching the children through Brain Fit sessions too. These events will run throughout the year but please have a look at the three upcoming sessions which we have in place.

Wellbeing Coffee Morning

Thursday 9th January
9am-10am



Please join our family support worker coffee morning with a focus on wellbeing. Michelle will lead a short session around Brain Fit and 5C Needs and will share a mindfulness activity you can do with your child to support the 5C need of Connection. Your child can join part of the session to sit with you and do some mindfulness colouring. Breakfast and notebook included.

Developing Resilience and Independence Skills Coffee Morning

Thursday 23rd January
9-10am

Building Skills



Please join our family support worker coffee morning with a focus on developing independence around key routines such as getting ready in the mornings, bedtime routines, expectations round mealtimes, helping with chores etc. Your child can join part of the session for a drink and biscuit and to look at some examples of visual checklists and timetables if they wish to. Breakfast and resources provided.

Getting Brain Fit



Parent/Child Evening of Cooking

Thursday 13th February
6-7pm

This is an opportunity to connect with your child and cook together. We will be making a hidden tomato base sauce recipe that be used in pizza's, pasta or even a curry. Ingredients provided. Children will feel more confident in the kitchen, capable of making something yummy and connecting with a parent/carer or grandparent. This forms part of our Brain fit understanding around 5C needs.