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Acting Headteachers: Mrs Terri Blake, BA (Hons)
Mrs Vicky Davies, BSc (Hons)

No. 4

School Newsletter

December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Wow! What a wonderful term we have had!

We are immensely proud of the way that every child has settled into their new classes and the fantastic work they have been producing across the curriculum. This term, every year group has had at least one trip, at least one visitor and have participated actively in a wide variety of topics. 74 of our Year 6 children attended our residential on the IOW accompanied by 9 of our staff. We have approximately 70 children in pupil voice roles and these pupils are already making such a difference to our school. In addition, over 100 children have represented the school in sporting events, and our school choir have performed in our local community numerous times.

Over the past couple of weeks especially, the children have continued to astound us with their confidence, resilience and determination when performing in their Christmas shows, and we would like to thank everyone who came along and showed them their support.

These are just some of the wonderful achievements from this term– there have been many many more.

We would like to express our thanks to our brand new PTA team for the commitment and enthusiasm they have shown to ensuring that Friends of Freegrounds Junior School continues to raise vital funds for our school. Furthermore, we would like to recognise the hard work and commitment of our wonderful staff team who remain determined to support our children academically, socially and emotionally in any way they are able to.

Finally, we would like to take the opportunity to thank the Freegrounds community for their support during this term as we carried out the role of Co-acting Headteachers. Freegrounds Junior School is incredibly special to both of us and it has been our privilege to lead the school during this interim period. We look forward to welcoming Miss Spark in the new year and supporting her as she leads the school community into the next phase of its journey.

We wish you all a very happy, healthy and safe festive period, and look forward to welcoming you back on Monday 5th January!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Kind regards,
Mrs Blake and Mrs Davies
Acting Headteachers



Family Support worker



As we reflect on the past year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our families for the continued support at our coffee mornings. These truly are the highlight of my week, as I get to spend time connecting with you as parents before being joined by your wonderful children.

The key message we aim to share during these coffee mornings is that of **Connection**. By understanding our *5C Needs*, we hope to empower both you and your children to be the best versions of yourselves. Parenthood is easier when we raise our children within a supportive and caring community, and I am so grateful to everyone who has taken the time to attend.

Looking ahead to next year, I am excited to host more coffee mornings and hopefully meet even more parents. I am also looking forward to continuing **Cooking with Michelle** from home which is always great fun to see our families cooking together and I am going to be offering five new **Parenting Coaching Support groups** – more information below. Each standalone session will offer support around key areas that many parents struggle with and will link in with our Empowerment Models.

In addition, I have added a form to the school website for any parent who may need financial support due to the ongoing cost of living crisis: [Freegrounds Junior School - Family Support Worker](#)

Please remember that I am always here if you need someone to talk to and are struggling with any aspect of family life.

Thank you once again for being such a supportive and valued part of our school community.

Happy Christmas!!





Upcoming Family Support Worker Events		Sign up Here...
Cook with Michelle	Wed 14 th January (6-7pm) Online	https://forms.gle/vJ9Jm7y7LBhm1cvB7
Parenting Coaching Session 1: Managing Children's Worries	Wed 28 th January (9 – 10am) *Come in from drop-off	https://forms.gle/pguYSup36mNFN6Xe7
Coffee Morning: 'Stronger Starts 2026: Coffee, Connection & Empowerment'	Wed 21 st January (Come into the hall from drop-off)	https://forms.gle/qZBdMKEYUoJQPpa1ZA

Coffee Morning – Christmas Crafts

Our final coffee morning of the year was a HUGE success with 51 families coming along to enjoy croissants and a coffee and the chance to make a Christmas decoration with their child. There was a great atmosphere in the hall and the presentation I gave at the start was all around how we can get our **Daily DOSE** of feel-good chemicals when our 5C Needs are being met. Being in the hall together was a fantastic way of ensuring we got our dose of *Dopamine (I'm capable)*, *Oxytocin (I'm connected)*, *Serotonin (I count)* and *Endorphins (I'm on cloud nine)*.



Empowerment Approach: Getting our Daily DOSE

D	O	S	E
Dopamine	Oxytocin	Serotonin	Endorphins
I'M CAPABLE	I'M CONNECTED	I COUNT	I'M ON CLOUD 9!
			
The motivator. Flows when we succeed and keeps us coming back for more. It's the feeling 'Yes! I did it!' or 'I got it!'	The trust drug. Flows when we feel supported and connected to others. It's the calming drug.	The happy hormone. Flows when we feel important and of value – when we feel we matter, are needed and we count.	The high. Flows when we exercise hard or laugh uncontrollably. The pain reliever.

We know that when people feel better, they do better. When our needs are met, the Feel-Good-Chemicals flow around our body, helping us to feel great and to engage positively with life and in connections with others.

In school, we teach children about understanding their brains and when they are at their 'brain best'. There are lots of ways we can encourage children to get their daily DOSE of Feel-Good Chemicals, including exercise, spending time outside and having a laugh with friends and family.

If, however, young people can't get their needs met and feel good in helpful ways, they will be subconsciously driven to find ways to get their daily DOSE of Feel-Good Chemicals in any way they can. Unfortunately, there are plenty of less helpful ways to get the same flood of feelings and we talk to the children about how they can take control of their brains around this.

Link to the school website for more information:

Daily DOSE 5min video: [Freegrounds Junior School - Empowerment Approach Videos](#)
[Freegrounds Junior School - Curious Not Furious](#)

Top Tips for planning a Daily DOSE this holiday:

- Connect and plan fun activities as a family (Oxytocin)
- Take on a responsibility at home (Serotonin)
- Go on a long walk or cycle ride (Endorphins)
- Watch a funny film or have a really good laugh together (Endorphins)

Brand new club providers



ICON
SPORTS COACHING



AFTER-SCHOOL SPORTS CLUBS

Sign up for Spring Term!

Monday-Multi-Sports Years 3-6

11 Weekly Monday sessions, £66 for term
Monday 5th January - Monday 23rd March

Wednesday-Dodgeball Years 3-6

11 Weekly Wednesday sessions, £66 for term
Weds 7th January - Weds 25th March

Thursday-Football Years 5 & 6

11 Weekly Thursday sessions, £66 for term
Thursday 8th January - Thursday 26th March

Friday - Football Years 3 & 4

10 Weekly Friday sessions, £60 for term
Friday 9th January - Friday 27th March

All After-School Club sessions run
3:20pm-4:20pm outside, or classroom
based inside if bad weather.



Email sam@iconsportsc coaching.co.uk

Your Child's Name, Class, Year Group, Any Medical Conditions, a Parent Name & Contact Telephone Number

£10 PER SESSION



BACK TO SCHOOL
STARTING IN
JANUARY

KIDS ART WORKSHOP

PAINTING, CRAFTING & MORE

Book now by emailing craftycrocs2025@gmail.com



Every Wednesday
after school until
4:30pm

Our after-school club offer:

Monday– Theatre Kidz

Monday– ICON Multi-sports

Tuesday—Netball

Tuesday– Funky Play Bricks (Lego)

Wednesday- Crafty Crocs

Wednesday– ICON Dodgeball

Thursday– ICON Y5/6 Football

Friday– Y3/4 Football

Governor Spotlight!

Nat Phelps– Co-opted governor– Vice Chair

My name is Nathaniel, and I've been a governor at Freegrounds Junior School for the past three years. This year, I've taken on the role of Vice Chair and also Chair the Finance, Personnel, and Resources Committee.

Outside of my governor role, I'm a husband and dad to two wonderful children. I work for a large shipping company as the Maritime Training Manager, supporting our seafarers to make sure they're qualified, developed, and trained to the high standards our industry expects. I've also been lucky enough to work at sea myself, having qualified as a navigator some years ago. I love travelling, being outdoors, and spending time with my family.

I believe in setting high aspirations for all children and feel that education is not only about helping them achieve academically but also about giving them the social and emotional skills they'll need for life.



We are still looking for a clerk to the governing body. If this is a role you would be interested in, please contact Ms Matthews in the school office.

Careers afternoon

Last week, on Friday the 12th December, Year 6 had a careers afternoon at school. Parents of different students around the school were invited to come in to inform the Year 6 students about the interesting jobs they do. As they each came up to the front of the classroom, the students asked their own questions and were given insightful and interesting answers.

There was a great range of different jobs: we had two nurses and a HSBC bank worker, an aerospace engineer and air traffic control worker, as well as a plumber, a soldier and a gentleman in advertising. Some of the pupils were interested in Drew the soldier as they all liked the idea of being an armyman. Many of the pupils were very inspired by Drew who is in the army, we had lots of questions for him! One of the Year 6 teachers, Miss Timms, actually taught Drew when he was in Year 6 at Freegrounds Junior School!

We asked many questions like 'how hard is your job?', 'what's the most challenging part of your role?' and 'what learning did you need for this job?' as the parents cycled through the Year 6 classrooms sharing their wisdom about the work-life.

This amazing experience can now help the Year 6 students find out more about what they would like to do later in life. It was inspiring and we're grateful for the visitors who came in to speak to us!

Article by Charlie W (Year 6)

Music at Freegrounds

Over the last few weeks, we have been treated to a musical feast of concerts and performances at Freegrounds. Last week our 'Rock to the Beat' bands enjoyed singing and playing in front of two packed crowds. It was lovely to hear our musicians perform with such confidence and enthusiasm, demonstrating their hard work in their lessons this term. Year 4 parents were also treated to a 'Listen2Me' concert in the first week of December. This, alongside their performances as cast members and singers in Bah Humbug, and Year 5 and 6's Christmas singing performance, has meant that every pupil at Freegrounds Junior School has performed at least once in front of an audience this term-what a fantastic achievement!



Choir

Freegrounds school choir have had an extremely busy festive season! As well as performing as part of the Y5 and Y6 concerts last week, they have also been invited to entertain residents at The Grange Nursing Home and at The Underhill Centre by St. John's Church. Finally, this week they visited Laburnum House! Throughout all these performances the children have represented the school brilliantly, working as a team to produce tuneful harmonies to wow their audiences. A particular mention must go to Amelia, who showed amazing courage and resilience to perform her solo six times!



It doesn't stop here, the Young Voices choir is currently practising hard for their upcoming performance at the O2 arena in London, we can't wait to see how they get on!

Charity appeals

Thank you for helping us to support the following charities this term. We are pleased to have been able to donate the following amounts:

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal- £115.59

Cash for Kids Christmas appeal- £374.42



Year 3

December has been a busy and exciting month in Year 3, full of learning, creativity, and festive fun. The children have worked hard and shown real enthusiasm in everything they do, and it has been a joy to see their progress and confidence grow.

A huge well done to everyone for their amazing performance as the choir in *Bah Humbug!* The children put so much effort into rehearsals and sang with energy and confidence. It was wonderful to see their passion for performing and how much they enjoyed taking part. Christmas Jumper Day was another highlight of the month. The children looked fantastic in their festive jumpers and really enjoyed our Christmas lunch together. It was a lovely way to celebrate as a class.

In RE, we explored the idea of 'waiting' during Advent. The children created their own Advent wreaths and used watercolours to paint a moment in their own lives when they had to wait for something important, linking their experiences to the meaning of the season. This thoughtful reflection helped them understand the Christian tradition and the significance of waiting.



Our learning in Art and History linked together beautifully this month. In Art, the children sketched Woolly Mammoths, practising shading and gradients to create texture and depth. In History, they created imaginative leaflets for a three-day time-travel trip to the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age, thinking about where travellers would stay, what to pack, what to wear, and what to eat. Both subjects encouraged creativity and attention to detail, and the children produced some fantastic work. We also braved the freezing cold on our trip to Butser Farm. The children became archaeologists for the day, investigating clues from the past and learning how people lived in different periods of history.



In Music, the children composed their own "Mystic Moments," using instruments to represent a Stone Age sunrise. They experimented with different sounds, explored note reading, and focused on creating atmosphere through music.



PE this term focused on yoga, helping the children develop balance, mindfulness, and calmness, while Brain Fit explored the 5C Needs. The children reflected on why these needs are important and how meeting them can help them be successful and confident learners.

We hope everyone has a peaceful and enjoyable Christmas break and we look forward to seeing all the children back in the New Year.

Year 4

Firstly, Merry Christmas to all our families in Year 4! It has been an incredibly busy term as always, with the added fun of putting together our Christmas play 'Bah Humbug!'. Thank you for your help and support learning the lines with your children and providing costumes and props. We can't wait to perform it to you in the final few days of this term.

We are coming to the end of learning the keyboard in our 'Listen to me' lessons. We did a fantastic performance to our friends and family and we are now learning some Christmas songs! We very much look forward to learning the ukulele next term.



This month we have started our Games sessions with our new coach Mr Cull. We played some fun games and learnt key invasion skills.



In Computing this term, we are learning how to edit photographs with our final outcome being to transform a photograph of ourselves into Tutankhamun! We are building up computing skills each lesson by learning how to do: cloning, cropping and recolouring.



Year 5

Year 5 have been busy continuing their geography work on rivers and link topics such as the formation of fossils in science and bridge design in DT.

We were lucky enough to welcome back Geologist, Dr Belamy, into school for the second year in a row for a talk about his job and the fossils he finds around the coastline of England. We even got to handle some of the examples he brought into show. 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. The children listened beautifully and had some inciteful and interesting questions for Dr Belamy. In addition to his visit, we completed our fossil themed afternoon by casting our own fossils from Plaster of Paris. We are looking forward to excavating them next week!



We have also been busy getting into the Christmas spirit ...

Over the last few weeks, Year 5 have worked extremely hard to learn the lyrics to all their festive songs, ready to perform on the stage. It has been amazing to see them show such resilience to sing and smile, understanding the importance of entertaining their audiences! In English we have also written poetry inspired by 'Dear March', written by Emily Dickinson, a few of which you will hear as part of our performance. The children used the original poem as an example as they looked at welcome and unwelcome associations with the month of December. This allowed us to reflect on how the festive season can sometimes not be full of joy for everyone. In RE, the children have been exploring the concept of 'warning' within the story of Jesus' birth. They discovered the significance of the gifts given to Jesus by the Magi and considered the warnings they might have given. We have particularly enjoyed getting into the festive spirit by reading 'The Great Reindeer Rescue' by Stephen Mangan as our class book. This has been a fun way to end each day!

Smart-Phone free school

As per our previous correspondence, we would like to remind everyone that we are a smart-phone free school (Years 3-5). This does also include smart watches and any other similar devices. This pledge has been taken alongside all of the other primary schools in our cluster to help promote a positive childhood and support parents with the pressures surrounding smart phones and other similar devices. From September 2026, we will be smart-phone free for all year groups in line with the rest of the cluster schools as there will have been sufficient time for this message to feed through the relevant cohorts.



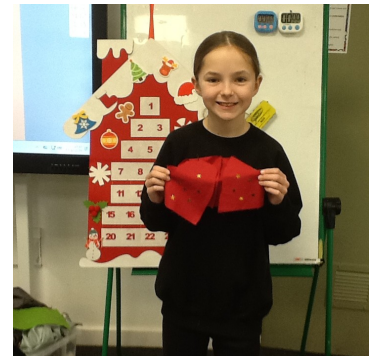
Year 6

What a busy and exciting few weeks it has been for Year 6 as we come to the end of the term! The children have continued to work hard across the curriculum and should be very proud of all they have achieved.

In English, we have been focusing on poetry. The children explored how poets create vivid and powerful images using language and techniques such as personification, similes, and metaphors. They experimented with these features in their own poems, carefully choosing words to create mood and meaning. A real highlight was when some of the children confidently read their poems aloud during the Christmas carol performance—they did a fantastic job and spoke with great expression.

In PSHE, we have been learning all about jobs and responsibilities. The children explored the wide range of careers available and discussed the different pathways people can take to achieve their dreams. This unit was brought to life when Year 6 were lucky enough to welcome volunteers into school to talk about their own jobs and experiences. The children listened attentively and asked thoughtful, insightful questions, showing genuine curiosity and ambition.

In DT, the children have been designing and creating a waistcoat for a teddy bear. This project required careful measuring, pattern-making, sewing, and decorating. The children showed great resilience and perseverance, particularly when learning new sewing skills, and the final results were fantastic. All of the teddies looked incredibly smart in their brand-new outfits!



The half term concluded with an exciting week of Bikeability. During these sessions, the children learned how to ride safely on the roads, developing important life skills such as safely passing stationary vehicles, performing U-turns, and turning in and out of junctions. The children showed excellent focus and responsibility throughout and thoroughly enjoyed spending time learning outdoors in the fresh air.

Well done, Year 6, for another brilliant half term full of learning, creativity, and determination. Have a wonderful Christmas holiday—you've earned it!

Lost Property

We have a number of lost property items on a table outside reception under the canopy. Unfortunately, due to the weather, we have been unable to get this out near the main gates.

Due to space restrictions in school, any unnamed lost-property that is left after the end of the school day on Friday 19th December will be disposed of/ donated ahead of the Christmas break. We will endeavour to return named items to children before home time on this day.

There are a number of jumpers, coats, jackets from the school disco, water bottles and lunch boxes.

Please can we remind parents/carers to clearly label their child's belongings and check that names have not washed out of clothing or faded over time before the return to school in January.



Family Festive Bingo!

Thank you to everyone who attended our family festive bingo evening! We had a great turn out, lots of fun and lots of festive prizes were won!



Diary Dates

Friday 19th December– Festive PJ day (children invited to wear festive PJ's to school)

Monday 22nd December—Friday 2nd January– **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS**

Monday 5th January– **SPRING TERM BEGINS**

Monday 12th January– Year 4 Survival Day

Year 5 Little Canada launch meeting in school hall @ 3:25pm

Tuesday 20th January– Young Voices choir performing at the O2

Friday 23rd January– Year 5 Mexicolore workshop in school all day

Tuesday 10th February– Pupil Voice trip to Houses of Parliament

Wednesday 11th February– Year 6 height and weight check

Friday 13th February– **INSET DAY**

Monday 16th February—Friday 20th February– **SPRING HALF TERM**

Monday 23rd February– **RETURN TO SCHOOL**

Friday 20th March– Year 5 Portsmouth Cathedral trip

Tuesday 24th March– Year 4 trip to Winchester (one class)

Wednesday 25th March– Rock 2 the beat concerts

Thursday 26th March– Year 4 trip to Winchester (two classes)

Monday 30th March—Friday 10th April– **EASTER HOLIDAYS**

Trauma

Understanding the impact of trauma on a young person's brain, body and behaviour and how we can guide them from surviving to thriving

4 June Basingstoke
7 October Havant

Anxiety

Understanding & strategies to support young people

28 January Basingstoke
11 November Havant

CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION & ADVICE SESSIONS



The first Wednesday of every month

10am - 2pm

The Arc, Jewry Street,
Winchester, SO23 8SB



You can book an appointment on our website



Or just drop in and see us



Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

PARENTS, CARERS AND PROFESSIONALS EVENTS

2026



BOOK YOUR SESSION SPACES AT:

hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/events



Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

UNDERSTANDING ADHD



Tickets £20
Tea and coffee included

A day that focuses on skills and strategies, for parents, carers and professionals supporting a child with ADHD. Hampshire CAMHS Colleagues will be hosting this day alongside parents / carers with lived experience.



Understanding your child with ADHD, support, strategies and tips. Led by the Hampshire CAMHS ADHD team.

Support for SEN in education & what to do if it's not working. Led by Gayle Moir, SENDIASS Services Manager.

ADHD nervous system differences, sensory systems, emotional regulation, stress response, attention regulation, and executive functioning. Led by Courtney Freedman-Thompson-coach and wellbeing facilitator and lived experience.

5 March 2026

Junction Church,
2 Romsey Road,
Eastleigh SO50 9FE

16 Sept 2026

The Pallant Centre,
Havant, PO9 1BE

3 November 2026

Andover Baptist Church,
Charlton Road, Andover
SP10 3JH

For more information scan the QR code or visit:

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/events/>

