Featherby Thursday ~~Friday~~ Flyer

TERM 4 | WEEK 4 | FRIDAY 19/03/2026

REMINDER

TOMORROW SCHOOL IS CLOSED FOR A STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY

Firstly I do hope the mums were spoilt and enjoyed their gifts on Sunday - I do wonder how many of you were told about the gift they chose for you on the way home last Friday!
It seems odd to be writing the Flyer so early in the week, but as we have important information and news to share with you we didn't want to miss sending a Flyer this week (even if it is a day early!). Tomorrow is a staff development day and I thought I would share with you what these sort of days involve as often parents don't always understand why schools have them. Staff development days are set for training and tomorrow is a particularly exciting day for the Featherby staff team (and all staff at Maritime schools) as we are holding our own educational and operational conferences, at 4 different venues across the 13 schools in the trust. This will allow nearly a thousand staff (including the 80 Featherby staff) to attend workshops and training to help develop their practice, gain new skills and to share their expertise with each other. Our mission statement as a school includes the wording "..Aspirations are high for all" and for us that's a lived experience, as we benefit from the collaboration of working with experts across Maritime which in turn benefits the children we teach. If we stand still and don't constantly seek to improve, then we go backwards and that's not something we accept at Featherby - because your children are too important. Therefore these days are truly *staff development* days in every sense and I look forward to seeing the benefits of the new ideas from tomorrow that the team will build on, in the coming weeks and months. As ever I wish you a nice (long) weekend and we'll see you on Monday.

E. Page

Pennies for the Playground Challenge

WHOLE SCHOOL

So next Friday, we're setting the challenge of a coin trail, from the KS2 building, down the path and over to the KS1 building - how long can we make the trail of coins?

We want every child to help us build the trail during the day on Friday and to add some coins to it, as it snakes its way across the pathways So we need your help.

We've all got pots of coins sitting on the side somewhere (coppers and maybe even the odd bit of silver - everyone dislikes those little 5p coins!). Those coins just end up gathering dust as we never want to put in our pockets/purses when we go out.

Please send those dusty coins in with your child as a donation (as all funds will be used to contribute towards OPAL playground resources for all children, so it's for a good cause). Coins can be sent in all week (so if you find some more down the side of the sofa, just send them in) and the classes will keep them safe. Then on Friday the classes will go as a class and lay out the coins and we'll see how far we'll get from one building to the other.

You may even want to come and add a few more to the trail on Friday afternoon after school too.

Let the Pennies for the Playground Challenge begin!

WHOLE SCHOOL

Non-Uniform Day
Friday 27th March

As you know we have a foodbank here at Featherby to and every week care packages go home to support families and children here, to make ends meet. We can only do that with donations, for which we are truly grateful. So next Friday, as 'payment' for a non-uniform day we're asking for donations to help restock the foodbank so we can get care packages out again to the dozens of families who will be relying on that little bit of help.

So what to donate? We'd appreciate some:

- Tinned Veg, Baked beans
- Tinned tomatoes
- Soup
- Tinned puddings (custard, fruit etc)
- Breakfast cereal
- longlife milk
- Pasta
- Biscuits

Please ensure items are unopened and are in date.

Or alternatively, if you would prefer, you could send in a donation (perhaps £1) as we will then shop for items to make up the care packs).

As ever, thank you for your support.

WHOLE SCHOOL

YEAR 5

Year 5 - Did you see the letter sent out about next year's Residential? Interested? Any Questions?

We want to secure our places early (and secure them at 2026 prices for you) so do sign up now to express your interest.

Any questions, please do contact the school office.

SEND Spotlight - School Anxiety, Refusal and EBSA

School anxiety is an often temporary feeling of fear or worry about school that can lead to physical symptoms (headaches, stomach aches), poor sleep, and school refusal. It often stems from bullying, academic pressure, social difficulties, or changes to routine. Key support includes open communication with teachers, creating routines, and professional help if necessary.

Signs of School Anxiety

- Physical Symptoms: Complaints of stomach aches, headaches, or feeling sick, often in the morning.
- Avoidance Behaviors: Reluctance to attend, difficulty getting ready, or missing school.
- Emotional Changes: Increased irritability, crying, anxiety, or outbursts.
- Social Withdrawal: Lack of interest in social activities or appearing overwhelmed.

How to Support a Child With School Anxiety

- Communicate With the School: Inform teachers and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) early to develop a supportive plan.
- Establish Routines: Use visual schedules for mornings and establish predictable evening routines, including organising school bags and clothes the night before.
- Validate and Listen: Talk to your child about their worries, offering comfort rather than dismissing their fears.
- Gradual Exposure: For extreme anxiety or refusal, work with the school on a phased return, such as attending for short periods.
- Encourage Coping Skills: Teach calming techniques like breathing exercises or positive self-talk.

School refusal, or emotionally-based school avoidance (EBSA), is when a child feels too anxious or distressed to attend school, often causing panic or physical symptoms rather than mere truancy. It stems from deep-seated anxiety, bullying, academic pressure, or SEN (Special Educational Needs). Early intervention, open communication, and working with schools to create a supportive environment are crucial.

Signs of School Refusal

- Physical Symptoms: Stomach aches, headaches, or feeling sick, particularly on school mornings.
- Emotional Distress: Extreme anxiety, panic attacks, tears, or tantrums when discussing school
- Behavioral Changes: Regularly arriving late, begging to stay home, or skipping classes.
- Avoidance: Spending time in the first-aid or avoiding specific school areas

SEND CONT'D

Causes and Triggers

- Anxiety and Mental Health: General anxiety disorder, separation anxiety, panic disorders, or depression.
- School Factors: Bullying (including online), academic pressure, fear of failing, or conflict with teachers.
- Transitions: Returning after holidays, moving to a new school, or recovering from illness.
- Home Factors: Family conflict, bereavement, or separation anxiety.
- Special Educational Needs (SEN): Undiagnosed neurodivergence or unmet sensory/learning needs causing high anxiety and "masking" burnout.

Supporting a Child with School Refusal

- Act Early: Address the issue immediately; do not wait for the situation to worsen.
- Communicate with School: Inform staff, discuss triggers, and create a formal support plan.
- Listen Without Judgment: Validate your child's distress rather than forcing them to go, which can increase trauma, suggest YoungMinds and Parentkind.
- Seek Professional Help: Consult a GP, child psychiatrist, or psychologist.
- Maintain Routine: Keep a consistent morning routine and encourage schoolwork at home during absences

Please contact the SEND Team on: inclusion@fpsmat.org if you are concerned about your child.
Have a great weekend.
The SEND Team

We are thrilled to share an exciting update on our progress in the Big Walk and Wheel 2026!

So far this week, our pupils have achieved an incredible 766 walks, wheels, scoots, and bike rides to school—what a fantastic accomplishment! This means that 45% of our school community are now travelling to school without using a car, which is a brilliant achievement.

Active travel has such a positive impact on children's wellbeing. Starting the day with exercise helps pupils arrive at school feeling refreshed, focused, and ready to learn. It also supports their physical health and builds positive daily habits that can last a lifetime.

We are equally proud of the impact this has on our school environment. By choosing active travel, we are helping to reduce traffic and lower emissions around the school, making our community a cleaner, safer place for everyone.

Thanks to this amazing effort, we are delighted to announce that we have already reached our Silver Award target—a fantastic milestone!
We look forward to seeing how much more we can achieve together next week!

Make Fun Foam Mosaic Portraits

with artist Wendy Daws

Sat 21 March
Session 1 - 10am - 12.30pm
Session 2 - 1pm - 3.30pm
Gillingham Library

Free!
All ages welcome
No booking required

Create your own colourful foam mosaic portrait and be inspired by the Circle of Six fabulous portraits celebrating Great Gillingham women.

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phone: 01634 337 799
visit: www.medway.gov.uk/libraries
or speak to a member of staff at any Medway Library

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PE Kits

Children should have their PE kits in school every day, just in case there's an opportunity for additional sports activities or changes to routine. However it is critical their PE kit is on on the days they are scheduled for PE so let's remind you when your child's class PE day is - as there have been some changes this term:

Mondays:	Barn Owl; Finch; Wren; Ostrich; Eagle.
Tuesdays:	Robin; Jay; Flamingo
Wednesdays:	Woodpecker; Kingfisher (1/2 class); Dove; Hawk.
Thursdays:	Tawny Owl; Puffin; Kingfisher (1/2 class); Skylark; Parrot; Falcon.
Fridays:	Snowy Owl; Macaw; Toucan; Emu.

Thank you for your support.

School Events

WHOLE SCHOOL

Events in Red = Events When parents in certain year groups come in to join us (dates for your diary)
Events in Blue = Events happening in school for the children, that doesn't involve parents coming in
As we add new dates each week we'll flag it up to you so you spot any new dates/events

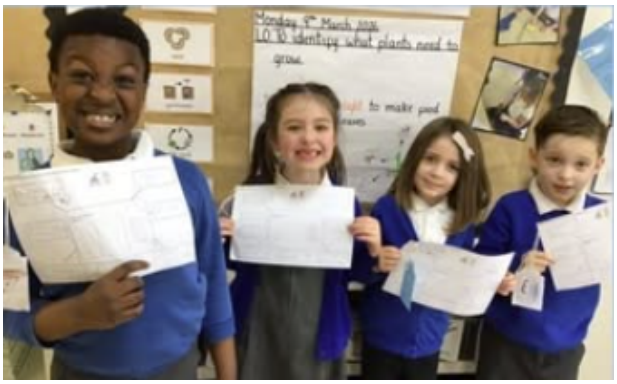
Monday 23rd March	NEW	Pennies for the Playground Challenge starts (see page 1)
Weds 25th March @ 9am		Hatchlings Parent & Child Stay & Play
Weds 25th March		Spring Parents Evening (No.1)
Thurs 26th March @ 10.30am		Flamingo Class assembly (parents invited to join us)
Thurs 26th March		Spring Parents Evening (No.2)
Fri 27th March	NEW	Pennies for the Playground - Challenge Day
Fri 27th March	NEW	Non-Uniform Day (see page 2)
Fri 27th March @ 2.55pm		Year R to Year 2 - Reading with parents session
Weds 1st April @ 10.45am		Nursery Parents Stay & Play sessions
Weds 1st April @ 2.45pm		Nursery Parents Stay & Play sessions
Thurs 2nd April @ 10.30am		Emu Class assembly (parents invited to join us)
Thurs 2nd April		Last day of Term 4 (usual finish time)
Mon 13th - Fri 17th April		Year 6 Easter School - SATs revision sessions
Thurs 16th April		National Offer Day (Nursery parents find out about Reception)
Thurs 16th April		National Offer Day (Yr 2 parents find out about Year 3 place)
Monday 20th April		1st day of Term 5
Fri 24th April @ 2.55pm		Year R to Year 2 - Reading with parents session
Thurs 30th April @ 10.30am		Snowy Owl Class assembly (parents invited to join us)
Thurs 30th April @ 10.30am		Macaw Class assembly (parents invited to join us)
Monday 4th May 2026		Bank Holiday (school closed)
Weds 6th May 2026 @ 4pm		Ready for Reception Roadshow (New Rec parents & children)
Thurs 7th May 2026 @ 10.30am		Puffin Class assembly (parents invited to join us)
Thurs 7th May 2026 @ 10.30am		Jay Class assembly (parents invited to join us)
Fri 8th May @ 3pm		Year 3 to Year 6 - Reading with parents session
Mon 11th to Thurs 14th May		Year 6 National SATs Tests
Mon 11th to Thurs 14th May		Year 6 SATs Breakfast (free) - 8.10am onwards
Mon 18th to Fri 22nd May	NEW	Maths Week - themed events to celebrate Numeracy in school
Tues 19th May		Sports Day (Year 1 to Year 6)
Thurs 21st May		Back up Sports day (Year 1 to Year 6)
Fri 22nd May @ 2.55pm		Year R to Year 2 - Reading with parents session
Friday 22nd May 2026		Last day of Term 5
Monday 1st June 2026		1st day of Term 6
1st - 19th June		National Phonics Screening (Year 1 and Year 2)
Fri 5th June 2026		Class group photos taken in school
Fri 5th June @ 3pm		Year 3 to Year 6 - Reading with parents session
8th - 12th June		Year 4 National Multiplication Tests
Fri 12th June 2026		Father's Day Gift Sale to children (Juniors)
15th - 26th June		Assessment Weeks in school (all pupils)
Tues 16th June 2026 (pm)		EYFS Sports Day
Thurs 18th June 2026 (pm)		Back up EYFS Sports Day
Fri 19th June 2026		Father's Day Gift Sale to children (Infants)
Tues 23rd June @ 5pm		New Reception Parents - Info meeting
Fri 26th June @ 2.55pm		Year R to Year 2 - Reading with parents session

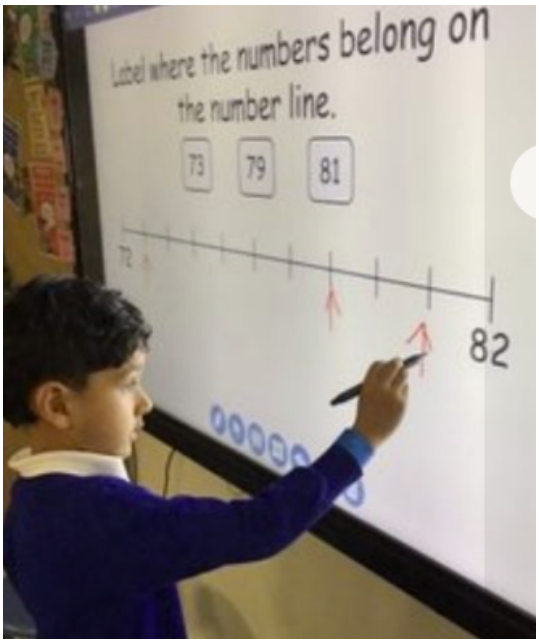
School Events (continued)

WHOLE SCHOOL

Fri 3rd July @ 3pm	Year 3 to Year 6 - Reading with parents session
Mon 13th July	Transition Day (Day 1)
Tuesday 14th July	Transition Day (Day 2)
Weds 15th - Fri 17th July	Year 6 Residential Trip
Fri 17th July @ 2.55pm	Year R to Year 2 - Reading with parents session
Mon 20th July (afternoon)	Year 6 Leavers' Festival
Tuesday 21st July (am)	Year 6 Leavers' Assembly
Tues 21st July 2026	Last day of Term 6 1.30pm finish

More Class Assembly dates to follow soon





WHOLE SCHOOL

Maths Week

Monday 18th to Friday 22nd May

Just like with World Book Day and we felt a day just wasn't enough and we celebrated reading with themed events for a whole week, we're planning a Maths Week in May. We'll share more news with you in the coming weeks, but expect Maths to be part of everything we do as we celebrate and inspire this critical subject through all our learning.

Watch this space!

Special Mentions & Awards

We'll have a double special mention week, next week as Monday we'll celebrate this week's winners and then on Friday we'll celebrate next week's winners.