



# FEARNHILL SCHOOL



## Fearnfile

Issue 617

15 September 2023

**The autumn term is now well underway and students are making a great start to the new school year.**

I would like to say thank you very much for your attendance at Ready to Learn Day. Over 91% of parents attended. These meetings were extremely useful for the teaching staff in supporting every student to get off to a good start. This helps ensure lesson time is used productively and school expectations are met. I hope that you, likewise, found the meeting helpful for understanding how we are working with students this year. We are really grateful for your support and it does make a big difference to us.

At the moment we have a particular focus on ensuring that every student wears the correct uniform every day. This is because throughout my career I have seen an unmistakable link between the pride students take in their appearance and the pride they take in their work and their achievement.

I have been very impressed by how smart our students look and the good grace they have shown in responding to our high expectations.

We were also pleased to welcome over 500 guests to our Open Evening last Thursday. These events play an important role in student recruitment, which has an impact on our funding, teacher recruitment, improvement of facilities and so on. We were delighted to have the support of so many students who gave up their time to help show the school in its best light and who were a credit to themselves and the school. You can see photographs from the evening on pages 4/5.

Don't worry if you missed this event, there is an opportunity to drop into one of our Open Morning tours this week - Monday to Thursday, 9-10am.

Finally, please do get in contact with me if there is anything more we can do as a school to help your child to thrive at school this year.

***Tim Spencer, Headteacher***



### Inside you'll find ...

- GCSE & A level results coverage
- Open Evening
- Meet the Head interview
- PE clubs timetable
- Library competition deadline
- PRE trip to Cambridge Central Mosque

**Week beginning 18/9 WEEK 1    Week beginning 25/9 WEEK 2**

# GCSE & A Level Results

Students at Fearnhill were apprehensive as they approached the school to collect their long-awaited A level and GCSE results. However, nerves quickly gave way to big smiles as they realised just how well they had done.

For A level students, Covid meant that this year group had a particularly challenging journey. They did their GCSEs during the pandemic and had to develop independence and resilience during their A Level journey. They are a credit to themselves, their families and their communities.

There were many successes and smiles. Daniel is off to Warwick to study biochemistry, Lauren will read psychology at Exeter while Kieron has an engineering apprenticeship at MBDA. Other successes included Samantha studying psychology at UEA, Finley taking ancient history at London's Royal Holloway and Kelis studying midwifery at De Montfort.

Mr Spencer said: "The students knew they had to commit themselves to consistent hard work and this has paid off. The results are a strong basis for all their next steps, whatever they may be. We are excited about the future here at Fearnhill."





# Introducing Mr Spencer

*Many thanks to The Comet for carrying the following interview with Mr Spencer in his first week of being Headteacher of Fearnhill.*

The new headteacher of Letchworth's Fearnhill School says he is looking forward to working closely with parents and staff to achieve the best outcome for all his students.

In his first week at the helm of the secondary school, The Comet spoke to Tim Spencer to learn about him, his hopes for the school and the 600+ students now under his leadership.

A teacher for 17 years, Tim is a family man, married with three children, and a keen football fan. His background as a science teacher has seen him work in Birmingham and Cambridge before settling in Letchworth at Fearnhill.



This is Tim's second spell at the school, having worked there as head of science from 2011 to 2015.

He returned four years ago in the role of deputy head and says he is "greatly honoured to now be headteacher of such a brilliant school".

He said: "I am looking forward to leading Fearnhill in the next exciting stage of its development.

"When I think of Fearnhill, I think of a happy community where students get on well with each other and with the staff."

Having set himself the task of learning the name of every student, Tim enjoys greeting each student he meets in the corridor by name, recognising the importance of making each student feel valued and welcome in school.

"We pride ourselves on being a small, happy community – the Fearnhill Family," he said. "At our school, every student is safe, supported and cared for, and we work tirelessly to ensure everyone who walks through our doors feels like they belong.

"Strong relationships are at the heart of everything we do. By creating a supportive and nurturing environment, we help our students to achieve their full potential."

Securing funding to improve facilities and retaining top-quality teachers is at the root of Tim's vision for the future of Fearnhill.

He said: "We have fantastic staff already, but I want Fearnhill to continue to attract and keep the best teachers, because that's what makes the biggest difference to students. My aim is to maintain and improve our high educational standards."

Increasing student attendance and achievement is another priority. "I would like to see attendance of students improve, so that every student can realise their potential," Tim said.

"Fearnhill is moving forward and improving all the time. This is an exciting time to be headteacher here."



**FEARNHILL  
SCHOOL**

**GROWING EXCELLENCE EVERY DAY**



**OPEN MORNINGS 9-10am**

**Monday -Thursday 18-21September**



# Open Evening

Our Open Evening on Thursday, 14 September, was a huge success with over 500 guests joining us to see what Fearnhill has to offer. Mr Spencer lead the Head's talk in the hall with entertainment by the school choir and additional talks given by head students Chenai and Lewis. Games and activities were on offer throughout all the departments from Philosophy to cookery, puzzles in the Library and hands-on Science experiments. Sports sessions in the Games hall were a big hit, as was the performing arts outside festival with delicious canapes and refreshments served by Hospitality students.





# Open Evening





# Humanities

On Tuesday 12th September year 10 and 11 PRE students went to visit Cambridge central Mosque.

This trip had been a tricky one to organise and we were very grateful when the Mosque agreed to give the students a guided tour. The Mosque has only been open since 2019 and is Europe's first 'Eco Mosque' which allowed us to find out more about how Muslims view the stewardship of our local area.

The students found out about how the Mosque was designed and built, how each area was used and the significance of the patterns on the walls and floor, each of which have a special meaning to Muslims.

The Mosque had a very calming feel with one student commenting on how he 'had never felt so calm'.

'I found the prayer room interesting as it was very big and had stained glass windows. It was interesting to learn about the different artefacts' Lucy Yr 10

*Ms Moran*







## PE SPORTS CLUBS/PRACTICES Autumn Term 2023



	Netball	Basketball	Rugby	Football	Badminton/ Table Tennis	Lunchtime 1:25-1:55pm
<b>Mon</b>	KS3 SSN/LFD		Year 7 GMD	Year 8&9 SMY	All years MTR	
<b>Tues</b>			Year 8 GMD			KS3 Dance JMN  Year 11 Intervention in B2 SSN
<b>Weds</b>	Year 10-13 SSN	Year 8&9 OSD		Year 7 Boys SMY  Year 7&8 Girls MTR		Student Choice SMY
<b>Thurs</b>		Year 7 OSD		Year 10-13 AWS		Year 11 Practical Intervention OSD
<b>Fri</b>						Year 10-13 Basketball MTR

SSN = Ms Straughn OSD = Mr Shepherd SMY = Mr Manley MTR = Mr Turner JMN = Mrs Martin GMD = Mr McLeod AWS = Mr Williams LFD = Ms Fullard

All Clubs/Practices will take place after school, unless stated otherwise, from 3:00–4:00pm

## WE ARE HIRING

Fearnhill School is looking for a part time cleaner. Monday to Friday  
9.30am - 2.30pm term time only. £10.60 per hour.

For further info please contact Hazel Rainbow,  
[hazel.rainbow10@fearnhill.herts.sch.uk](mailto:hazel.rainbow10@fearnhill.herts.sch.uk)  
or 01462 621200





# Library

A reminder that the crab raffle will be held on 29th September so completed sheets must be handed in before then.

Year 7s who have read Fever Crumb can collect question sheets from the library.

Year 8 & 9 (now) need to bring their book reviews in by the 29th for a chance to win a crab

Miss Jennings (right - wearing her crab as a hat!) won the teacher challenge, she read and reviewed a massive 12 books over the summer, 6 of them from the school library!

**The Library is open before school from 8am and after school until 4pm.**

**You can also visit the library during break and lunch times to read a book, do some homework on the computer or play a card or board game (sorry, no computer games!)**

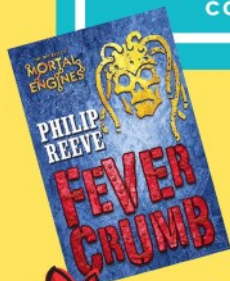
Crochet Club is running out of wool so if you have any you no longer need it would be much appreciated.

*Mrs Thurlby, Library & Literacy Assistant*



## YEAR 6 SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

Over the summer holidays read your copy of Fever Crumb, then in September collect a question sheet from the Library, you could win a prize!



**LIBRARY CHALLENGE**  
For every book that you read over the summer, complete an online review on our library system, each review = a chance to win a prize.





All National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

## Top Tips for SETTING BOUNDARIES AROUND GAMING

If your child loves video games, then you'll probably be aware that how long they spend gaming – and what they're actually playing – can occasionally become a source of concern or conflict. The UK's trade body for interactive entertainment, Ukie, has recently launched a campaign to promote safer and more responsible gaming among young people – with parents and carers helping by setting sensible and fair boundaries. Our guide has tips on key areas where you could agree some healthy ground rules for your child's gaming activity.

### PROMOTE SAFER GAME CHOICES

Deciding which online games are OK – and which should be avoided – is tricky. Some titles allow children to cooperate or compete with strangers, which creates potential risks. Watching your child play online for a while could provide more insight into a particular game, while the parental controls on most consoles allow you to limit who can chat to your child or send them friend requests. Remind your child of the hazards around strangers online when you discuss this boundary with them.

### ENCOURAGE REGULAR BREAKS

Help your child understand the need to take regular breaks, playing in shorter bursts rather than marathon sessions. Bear in mind that some games (such as role-playing games) require time investment from the player, while others (online team games, for example) don't be stopped or paused at a moment's notice. A quick break every hour or so is good practice, and you could suggest some things to do in these breaks, such as having a drink of water or getting some fresh air.

### AGREE SPENDING LIMITS

There's no doubt that gaming can be expensive, and younger players often don't realise how much paying for digital items and subscriptions can add up to. Many young gamers love to buy new skins or upgrades for their character, so you could settle on a fixed amount that your child is allowed to spend on in-game items each week or month. This sort of boundary will not only help your child to manage their expectations but will also make you more aware of the price of these items.

### DISCUSS AGE RATINGS

Children often ignore the age ratings on games – or are unaware they even exist. If you're happy with your child playing a particular game even though it's rated above their age, then establish that as a boundary: emphasise that you've made an exception, and talk about what age ratings mean and why they're important. You could add context to this boundary by browsing games' boxes together while shopping, discussing why some games might have earned certain age ratings.

**18**  
CONSENSO

### FACTOR IN FRIENDS

If your child is a keen video gamer, the chances are that they'll have other gamers among their social circle, too. When friends visit, do they instantly dash to their console or computer? You could put boundaries in place before their guests arrive, try agreeing on a length of gaming time. Be it in bed, though, that they may try to extend this once they're together. Try coming up with activities or challenges for them during screen breaks – if they join in, they earn a little extra time on their game.

### ENJOY GAMING TOGETHER

Setting time aside to play video games together can be an enjoyable bonding exercise. Undoubtedly, some young gamers may be less enthusiastic about a parent or carer joining in, but it can be a productive way of encouraging them to share their hobby with you. Setting goals or tasks might be useful: if they love Minecraft, choose something to build together; if Fortnite's their favourite, ask to try out some of the fun game modes, like Prop Hunt, which don't require high skill levels.

### TALK ABOUT EMOTIONS

Help your child to monitor their emotions as they play. Discuss what is (and isn't) an acceptable level of competitiveness to show while gaming. Are they allowed to trash talk other players, for example? Can they notice when they get angry if they lose? Do they think these emotions are healthy? Some games can provoke anger, but others can bring joy, humour and the thrill of overcoming a challenge. Try to steer your child towards games that tend to produce these more positive feelings.

### BE PREPARED FOR TROLLS

A frequent problem when gaming online is other players who are deliberately troublesome. Make sure your child knows how to report and block someone who makes their experience a negative one. Between you, decide if or how they should deal with these online trolls. Talk about where your child's boundaries are in terms of what they think is acceptable, what behaviour by other users is merely frustrating, and what crosses the line to become upsetting or abusive.

### Meet Our Expert

Daniel Speckard is a writer specialising in technology, video gaming, internet safety and more. He has also written 15 guidelines for children, covering games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Minecraft, Roblox and Minecraft. His work published by the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Rock Paper Shotgun and VG247. He has reviewed more than 50 games and products over the past year.



**NOS**  
National Online Safety  
#WakeUpWednesday

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# Student Support



We are proud to offer the National School Breakfast Programme - offering all students a free, healthy breakfast.

Breakfast Club is in the Canteen every morning from 8am or you can collect your free bagel from the SSC

## Homework Club



Years 7-11

Monday-Friday

In Inclusion

With Mrs

Cottenden

# DIVERSITY GROUP

WEEK 1  
WEDNESDAY  
LUNCHTIME  
II

Let's help the school feel more welcome and diverse! We talk about:

- Class
- Religion
- Race
- Gender identity
- Sexuality
- Mental and physical ability
- And much more!





# Letchworth Area Forum

Share your ideas and views  
with local Councillors

- Grant presentations
- Town Centre Strategy – talk and Q&A
- Transport – talk and Q&A



For up-to-date information, please visit  
[www.north-herts.gov.uk/area-forums](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/area-forums)  
[community@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:community@north-herts.gov.uk)

**Wednesday 20 September 7.30pm**

Howard Garden Social Centre,  
Norton Way South,  
Letchworth Garden City,  
SG6 1SU



My Voice

# CODE CLUB

Practice and learn Javascript, HTML & CSS!

Ages 13-18

Every Monday  
from 11 September - October 2nd  
4:00 - 5:00pm

Letchworth Library

Book your **free** place at Letchworth Library

# junior parkrun

**Norton Common junior parkrun**

A free weekly timed 2km timed run for 4-14 year olds

9.00am every Sunday

Norton Common, Letchworth – meet on the tarmac path in  
the middle of the park towards Icknield Way

w3w ///toys.sudden.dwell

Register and more info at  
[www.parkrun.org.uk/nortoncommon-juniors](http://www.parkrun.org.uk/nortoncommon-juniors)





# Calendar

## Autumn Term 2023

### Open Morning school tours

**Monday-Thursday, 18-21 September 9am-10am**

Half Term

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Return to school

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Inset Day (disaggregated)  
Occasional Day

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023

End of Term (early closure)

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## Spring Term 2024

Inset day for staff

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Spring Term begins for staff and students

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Half Term

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> – Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024

Return to school

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024

End of Term (early closure)

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Good Friday

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Easter Monday

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024

## Summer Term 2024

Summer term begins for students

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024

May Bank Holiday

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Half Term

Monday 27<sup>th</sup> – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024

Return to school

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024

Inset Day

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024

End of Term for students

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024

# Contact Us

01462 621200

[admin@fearnhill.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@fearnhill.herts.sch.uk)

Fearnhill School

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**Please ensure that we have your current address, mobile phone number and email address.**

**Any updates can be sent to the Main Office.**

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