

Headteachers message to families - Summer 1 / Friday 1st May 2026

Believe, Engage, Enjoy!

School Ethos - How do we 'Believe, Engage and Enjoy'?

At Fountaindale, our school ethos is centred around three key values: Believe, Engage, Enjoy. These principles underpin everything we do and help to shape a positive, supportive and enriching environment for all of our pupils.

This week, SLT have been reflecting on what these values look like in our daily lives at school and how we celebrate and achieve them together. Over the coming weeks, we will continue to explore these themes and begin to think ahead to the 2026/27 academic year, considering how we can further embed them into our practice and getting the thoughts of staff and pupils.

Believe:	Engage:	Enjoy:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising what we can achieve and aiming high • Developing independence and life skills • Building confidence and self-esteem • Showing resilience and perseverance when things feel challenging • Taking pride in personal achievements, big and small • Encouraging pupils to make choices and take ownership of their learning • Supporting each other to succeed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding our own ways to communicate and express ourselves • Participating in all that school has to offer • Trying new activities and experiences • Building positive relationships with peers and staff • Being curious and motivated to learn • Taking an active role in lessons and school life • Developing confidence to share ideas and interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making happy memories in school • Enjoying time spent with staff and other pupils • Feeling safe, valued and part of our school community • Smiling, having fun and being happy in school • Being inquisitive and open to learning new skills and knowledge • Celebrating achievements and special moments together • Expressing creativity and individuality

We look forward to continuing this important work with our pupils and sharing their progress with you. We will be creating something visual as a centre piece to our school that really captures our work and aims with regards to our ethos.

Visit to Portland College:

On Wednesday, I was fortunate to visit Portland College, where I met with their Deputy CEO and members of the education team. During my visit, I was given a tour of their site and had the opportunity to explore the fantastic facilities they have to offer.

We had some really positive discussions about how we can further develop partnership opportunities between our settings. Given our close proximity, the excellent resources available at Portland, and the fact that many of our pupils move on to Portland for their next steps, this is an exciting opportunity to strengthen those links and support smoother transitions for our learners.

We shared a range of ideas about what this collaboration could look like in practice, including shared opportunities, joint activities, and ways to enhance pupil experiences across both settings. The team from Portland will be visiting us in a few weeks for a tour of our school. This will allow us to continue our conversations and begin to shape ideas for moving forward - watch this space!

Portland College also run a wide range of fantastic events and opportunities for young people and their families. If you would like to find out more or get involved, please visit: <https://www.portland.ac.uk/portland-events/>

I also said I would advertise their Spring Fair which you are all invited to attend:

Portland Charity

SPRING FAIR 2026

SUNDAY 17 MAY • 10AM - 4PM

FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY

- Shopping at over 70 craft, gift and food stalls
- Portland Dog Show is back with 6 fun categories
- Inflatable fun & discos for children of all ages
- Have a Go Archery & Den building in the Woodland Adventure Zone

ENTRY: ADULT £2, CHILD £1
UNDER 2'S FREE

Pre-book all of your tickets here: 

WOODLAND ADVENTURE ZONE

Fascia Division

ANIMAL DOCTOR

ARGYLE
events, sweets, inflatables and mascot hire

www.portland.ac.uk

Lunch-time Clubs:

We try to offer a growing range of lunchtime clubs, led by Cheryl, our Intervention Coordinator. These clubs provide valuable opportunities for pupils to explore their interests, develop new skills and enjoy social time with their peers.

Our current offer includes:

- Wednesday: Film Club
- Thursday: Inclusive Choir
- Friday: Supported Dance Club

We are also excited to be launching a Boccia Club on Mondays - something I am particularly looking forward to, as I always enjoy a chance to take part in a bit of sporting activity!



In addition, our Student Council recently requested a Parachute Club. We are working on adding this to our timetable soon and look forward to seeing it in action.

What is a Rights Respecting Schools?

Fountaindale ensures it is a Rights Respecting School by embedding children's rights into all aspects of school life, learning and relationships.

- We are proud to hold the UNICEF Rights Respecting School Silver Award, recognising our commitment to promoting and protecting children's rights
- Pupils are explicitly taught about their rights and responsibilities, helping them understand the difference between rights and wants and how to respect others
- Rights are woven through our curriculum, including being one of our key "Big Ideas", ensuring pupils regularly revisit and apply these concepts in meaningful contexts
- Each class develops charters and agreements, created with pupils, to make the school a respectful and inclusive environment
- We promote pupil voice and participation, for example through pupil parliament and decision-making opportunities, empowering pupils to advocate for themselves and others
- Our approach supports pupils to develop positive relationships, self-esteem and a strong sense of belonging, which are key outcomes of a rights-respecting culture
- The whole school community - staff, pupils and families - works together to model respect, equality and inclusion, ensuring rights are lived out daily, not just taught

Overall, being a Rights Respecting School at Fountaindale means that children's rights are taught, practised and embedded into everyday school life, helping our pupils to feel safe, valued and empowered.

Help shape SEND support in Nottinghamshire:

A new questionnaire has been launched for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND who live in Nottinghamshire.

In February 2026, the Government announced changes to how support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will work across England. As part of this, every local area - including Nottinghamshire - must develop a plan outlining how SEND support will improve over the next three years. This plan must be submitted by June, and your input is vital in helping to shape it.

Your feedback will directly inform Nottinghamshire's SEND Reform Plan, which will set out how services will improve and work more effectively together to support children and young people with SEND. Responses will be reviewed in partnership with the Nottinghamshire Parent Carer Forum (PCF), and feedback will be shared through the PCF network to show how your views have contributed.

All responses will remain confidential and will be considered alongside feedback from children, young people and professionals.

The questionnaire should take approximately 10 minutes to complete and can be accessed here:

[Help shape SEND support in Nottinghamshire – we need your views!](#)

PTA Update:

This week, I met with our PTA to discuss different areas of school life and to begin planning ahead for upcoming events. A key focus was our Summer Fayre, which will be taking place on Saturday 20th June - a date for your diaries!

The PTA work incredibly hard to organise events and opportunities that benefit all of our pupils, and the Summer Fayre is always a fantastic occasion for our school community.



Please do make sure you follow the Fountaindale PTA Facebook page to stay up to date with the latest news, events and ways to get involved. If you are able to offer any support - big or small - it is always greatly appreciated and makes a real difference.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61578355800745>

Colour Tent Intervention Update:

This week, our Intervention Lead, Cheryl, has been working with pupils using a “colour tent” approach. This involves creating a calm, sensory space using different coloured lights to support children’s focus, engagement and wellbeing. Research suggests that colour tents can help children feel more relaxed, more engaged, and in some cases may even reduce seizures. We are really pleased to be exploring this approach and look forward to seeing the positive impact it may have for our pupils.



Reminder: Meet and Greet Event - Monday 11th May:

This is a reminder that you are warmly invited to join us for a coffee morning and meet and greet with me on Monday 11th May from 9:30am to 10:30am. This will be a valuable opportunity to share my vision for the school, outline our next steps, and continue building strong relationships with you all.

During the morning, pupils from the Rights Respecting School Council will also share what they have been working on this year and their plans for the future. Our Rights Respecting lead, Hayley, will also provide further information about the UNICEF Rights of the Child and how these underpin our work across the school.

Reminder: Dawn House School Invitation - Family Fun Day:

All Fountaindale families have been invited to a family fun event at Dawn House School in Rainworth on Saturday 16th May - 11am and 2pm.

There will be activities and games, as well as food and drink stalls. You are welcome to bring a picnic, a blanket, and chairs so you can relax and enjoy the day.

You can turn up on the day (£10 per family) or pre-book tickets by contacting Dawn House School (01623 795361 or enquiries@dawnhouse.org.uk).

We hope this will be a great chance to meet other SEN families in the local community and spend time together.

Enjoy your bank holiday!

B Norman

Headteacher

bnorman@nexusmat.org

