



FREEMAN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

From tiny acorns mighty oaks grow.

Friday 16th January 2026

Diary Dates

January

Monday 19th January
Year 5 Parent Workshop

Tuesday 27th January
Year 3 Parent Workshop

Wednesday 28th January
PINs Workshop 3:30pm -5pm

February

Thursday 12th February
PINs workshop 3:30pm-5pm

Friday 13th February
Last day before half term

Monday 23rd February
Return to school

March

Thursday 5th March
World Book Day

Friday 6th March
Year 6 Parent Workshop

Tuesday 10th March
Reception Parent Workshop

Thursday 12th March
PINs workshop 3:30pm-5pm

Tuesday 17th March
Year 2 Parent Workshop

Opening comment

This week began with the first celebration assembly of the year; my favourite assembly. As always, the stars of the week were presented and the reasons given for their awards which link to our Golden Rules. It is excellent to see and hear how quickly the children are settled back into the routines and expectations of school and hear of their achievements.

We have also had some children competing in a Trust wide chess tournament. It was great to be able to add to the breadth of tournaments the children enter; our children were an excellent representation of school. They were respectful sportsman and played incredibly well. I am very proud of the attitude the children display in events such as this.

Stars of the Week



Attendance Week beginning

9th January 2026

Acorn: 96.3%

Cherry Tree: 96.3%

Maple: 97.7%

Beech: 97.9%

Hazel: 96%

Willow: 96.7%

Oak: 97.2%

Well done **Beech Class** for being this week's winners!

House Points so far...

Brett: 363

Deben: 305

Orwell: 340

Gipping: 330

Lark: 315

Stour: 364

Willow Class

Willow Class loved being back in Forest School and adored the mud! In the log circle the children shared their Forest School names from Year 3 and played a memory game. The Class requested playing 'Sticky Weed' as an old favourite warm up game. The rain certainly added to the fun all afternoon. In a sensory game, the children said it felt refreshing and cold on their faces and the wet added to the knee slide event in the Forest Olympics.

Great teamwork was used in several games of a tug of war and some amazing rope swings were engineered for all to enjoy. The climbing trees were popular, and some children enjoyed relaxing in the branches. Groups improvised tarp shelters and built lean-to dens collecting long sticks and children used problem-solving skills to transfer the rainwater inside the tyres into the mud kitchen area. A wonderful afternoon was enjoyed by all and the children cannot wait for next week!



The Den: our afterschool club

The Den, led by Mrs Kell, Miss Donovan, and Miss Vickers, offers a wide range of fun and creative activities including arts and crafts, LEGO building, colouring, yoga, movie time, support with homework, outdoor play (weather permitting), planting, and so much more!

It's a lively, engaging space where children can unwind, explore, and enjoy themselves after the school day. We also provide healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, bagels or toast to keep them fuelled and happy!

The club runs in two sessions: 3:15–4:15pm and 4:15–5:15pm

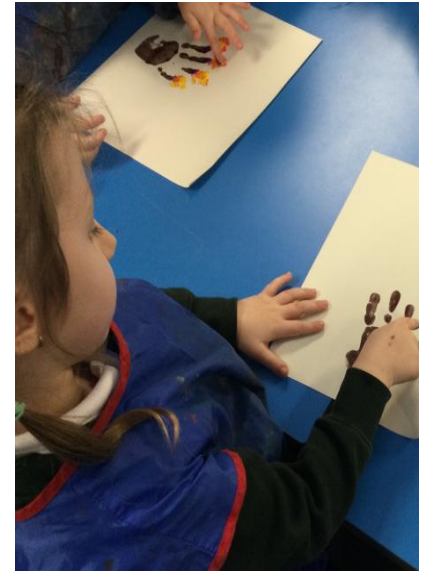
Each session is priced at **£5 per hour**.

If you're using the government's **Tax-Free Childcare scheme**, you'll only need to pay **£4 per hour**, and the government will contribute the remaining amount. This is the same cost as the other clubs we offer!

Additionally, it runs every day that school is open!



- Snacks
- Support with homework
- LEGO
- Yoga and Dance
- Movies
- Painting
- Gardening
- Dodgeball
- Arts and Crafts



PINS Workshop

Suffolk PINS Project
Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

Session 2

Learning and Executive Functioning:

How Parents and School Staff Can Work Together to Support Neurodivergent Children

This workshop for parents, carers and school staff will explore cognitive differences in childhood such as planning, organising and remembering things. The workshop will consider how these differences can impact on day-to-day life and give advice on how schools and parents/carers can support their children and young people with cognitive differences.

These sessions may contain some recorded content which has been developed by the Psychology in Schools Team, Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, and will be facilitated by the Suffolk Neurodiversity Inclusion Facilitators, part of Early Intervention Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

When & Where?

Wednesday 28th January 3.30-5.00pm

How do I book my place?

Please email the school office if you will be attending and if you require a free childcare place in 'The Den'.
admin@freemacpschool.co.uk

We would like to extend our thanks to all the parents and carers who attended our first PINS workshop. It was wonderful to see so many of you there. The session provided a valuable opportunity for parents and staff to come together, share perspectives, and gain a deeper understanding of both the challenges and the positives experienced on each side.

We would like to invite you to join us for our second PINS workshop on Wednesday, 28th January. You do not need to have attended the first workshop to take part, as each session is designed to stand alone. To support parents, we are pleased to offer a free childcare place in *The Den* for the duration of the workshop.

Please get in touch with the office to book your space!

Get Ready for the Winter Mini Challenge!

An exciting online reading challenge is coming your way from **1 December 2025 to 20 February 2026**. Are you ready to take it on? Click the link below to sign up and start your reading adventure: [Summer Reading Challenge](#)



Staffing Update

We are delighted to welcome several new members of staff to our Freeman Family. Please find below the updated class information showing where each adult is based:

Acorn Class: Miss Gooderham, Mrs Kell and Mrs Underwood

Cherry-Tree Class: Mrs Pavey, Miss Watson, Miss Elmer, Miss Laughlan and Mrs Underwood.

Maple Class: Mrs Durler, Mrs Oxley, Mrs Oxborrow, Mrs Larke, Miss Elmer

Beech Class: Mrs Briggs, Mrs Burson, Mrs Oxford

Hazel Class: Mrs Cockle and Miss Donovan

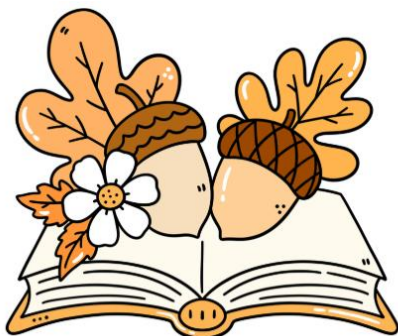
Willow Class: Mrs Kydd, Mrs Hearn and Mrs Wescombe

Oak Class: Mrs Clarke and Mrs Booth

My Clothing Discount

My clothing are once again offering their discount on school uniform. **Code: MYCQ110**

Expires: 31st March 2026



Accelerated Reader

Children in Years 3–6 complete a quiz on each book they read before choosing a new one.

Some parents have requested the link again so that children can quiz at home.

Your child's login details can be found in their planner.

Here is the link for Accelerated Reader:

<https://login.renaissance.com/12d2c6cb-548c-47de-ac28-193e7d39d69f?state=15f6d0e7-366a-4416-a995-04a039026d35>

Kitchen News

Today we received an unexpected visit from Environmental Health to perform an unplanned inspection on our school kitchen. We are very pleased to confirm that we have retained our 5 star "very good" food hygiene rating with the Food Standards Agency. Our thanks go to Nicky and Ria in the Kitchen for maintaining such good standards while keeping our community nourished.



Nativity Costume Donations

If you have any nativity costumes that you will no longer need and would like to donate them to the school, we will gratefully accept them. We are hoping to build up a bank of costumes that we can offer to families in the future to borrow.

Thank you very much in advance!



CET Chess Tournament

Last Friday, four Year 6 children took part in the CET chess tournament at Combs Primary School. They competed against pupils from across our school trust and represented Freeman brilliantly. The children demonstrated excellent strategic thinking and competitive play throughout. They also adapted quickly to using chess timers - something they had never experienced before. A huge thank you to Mrs Larke for accompanying the children and supporting them during the event.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SLEEP DISRUPTION

Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.

ONLINE PEER PRESSURE

Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.

CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE

Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.

REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.

EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

Fast-paced digital content can overstimulate young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.

PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS

Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

Advice for Parents & Educators

SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Trying a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.

MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 10 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College