



# Fosse News

Issue Number 7

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## Thank-you, Fosse!!!

Dear Parents and Carers,

**I am so proud of our school community for raising so much money for 'Children in Need' this year.**

I know that many families are still struggling and that life is not always easy but we still managed to raise more money ever have done. I'd like to give a special thank-you to the Year 2 staff thank-you to everyone who baked cakes, played games or made a Most of all though I'd like to thank the children at Fosse who showed compassion – we have so many children at Fosse who want to make a positive difference which is wonderful to see.

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who led the effort but themselves to be caring and however small. than we

Best Wishes  
Richard Stone

## Time off from school and penalty notices

As a headteacher, I frequently find myself having to make difficult decisions but the most difficult are when I have to do something for the good of the school that I don't personally agree with. I find that this is now the case with issuing penalty notices (fines) for families taking children out of school during term time.

In 2013 – 14 our attendance was above 95% for the first time (95% is the government expectation) but last year it fell again to 94.4%. The school is due an Ofsted Inspection at some point in 2016 and because our attendance is below 95% it could have an impact on whether the school receives a 'Good' rating from Ofsted. Results in 2015 were the best the school has seen – for example, **97% of pupils reached Level 4 in Reading and Maths in Year 6, well above national figures.** Children, families and staff are working so hard to provide a high quality education that it would be foolish to put this in jeopardy by not doing everything possible to show how good we are. As a headteacher, I cannot authorise any holidays during term time; I have talked with the **Educational Welfare Service who have advised that fines should be issued unless there are truly exceptional circumstances.** As a result, parents can expect to receive a penalty notices for any unauthorised time off school. We have issued penalty notices over the last four years or so but parents can now expect that this will be the most common response to any unauthorised time off school. In the future, **we will require evidence that there is an emergency situation that cannot be avoided for parents to avoid a fine.**

## Why do we need a 'Good' Ofsted grade?

When I started at Fosse we were in 'Special Measures' because, quite simply, the school was not good enough. Since then we have worked continuously to keep improving and although progress has not always been as quick as we would like, each inspection has shown that we have been getting better and better. However, because (until this year) results have not reached national averages, we have been graded overall as 'Requires Improvement' at our last two inspections – this is like the old 'Satisfactory' grade which is now not considered good enough. I agree with this – we want to keep on getting better and because we already do so much good (and often outstanding) work, staff and families deserve for this to be recognised. Unfortunately, if we receive a third Requires Improvement grade we are likely to find that the Department of Education will force the school to become an academy, with a 'sponsor' of their choice. This is unlikely to benefit the school – **should we choose to become an academy in the future, which is quite possible due to current government policy, then we will want to do it on our terms, choosing for ourselves who we want to work with.** If you want to discuss any of this further please do not hesitate to arrange an appointment