



# NEWSLETTER

**Welcome Back!**

**Farrah Returns!**

A welcome break in the weather has meant Farrah Fortnam has been able to return to school to begin the second of her Southfest pieces, this time in the Merrywood Preschool and Reception playground. If you have been anywhere near by you will not have been able to miss this stunning unicorn taking shape and Farrah will be returning next week to complete it.



## **Southfest Badges**

We have Southfest badges left over following the open day at the end of last term. If you, family or friends would like one, or if children including siblings didn't get one in the last week of term, there will be some out on the front desk on each site from Monday for you to help yourself to.

## **Doug Allan Visiting**

Next week we are looking forward to welcoming Wildlife photographer Doug Allan in to school to run workshops for the children about his work, adventures and knowledge of wildlife.

Doug has been a principal cameraman on many BBC wildlife programmes including Life in the Freezer, The Blue Planet, Planet Earth and Frozen Planet, has won eight Emmys for his work and, in the words of none other than Sir David Attenborough, "Wildlife photographers don't come much more special than Doug"!

He will be at Myrtle on Monday and Merrywood on Tuesday and we are really grateful to him for offering to come in to share his knowledge and experience with us.

You can find out more about Doug's work here: <https://dougallan.com>

## **End of Term Error**

My holiday was overshadowed somewhat by the fact than when I re-read the newsletter dated 28.3.24 (unfortunately after publishing it) I noticed I had used the word 'sewn' when I had meant 'sown'. I am extremely sorry for this sloppiness and hope that you're holiday wasn't ruined two.

I'll hand you over to Mr Potter now for an OPAL update. Have a lovely weekend, Andy Bowman

## **OPAL play**

We continue to develop play across the sites providing all children with enriched opportunities and activities. It is a really exciting time as we move in to Spring and Summer hopefully saying 'cheerio' to the wind and the rain.



Across both sites we still have lots of ideas to implement and we would love your donations to continue to make playtimes exciting and engaging for all.

### **Donations**

If you have any of the below items we would love to take them off your hands.

Quality 'strong' pallets for both sites (preferably the red or blue ones): The children use the pallets to build and construct their own dens as well as the site team starting to build the small world 'play-pods'.

Drain pipes: The children love to send cars and balls firing down these. During the Summer the challenge will be linked to water which I know they'll love.

Tarpaulin: These get used as rain covers, seas, waves, blankets and numerous other exciting lunchtime games.

Cardboard (Large boxes): Always used for general building and fun!

Small World toys (Duplo, toy cars, Playmobil, Lego): The children are loving taking the small world toys and playing imaginatively within a small space.

Disco balls: We have our dancing spaces across both sites. If you have any mirror/disco balls hanging around your house and you want to pass them to a worthy 'lunchtime disco' rave then we'd be pleased to take them off your hands.

Chalk: The children loved to draw and create during lunchtime. We would love regular donations of chalk as we zoom through boxes of it across the sites.

### **Diary date...stay after school and play like lunch time!**

We will be opening up the Merrywood play space on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May** from **15.30 – 16.30** as an opportunity for families to come together and share in our play environment. Let the littles and the big ones play together

### **Future developments**

#### MUGA at Myrtle

We continue to investigate ways to split the space up so more sports can happen within the space.

We are currently looking at this product and the cost implications for the school.

<https://smooga.co.uk/>



#### Orchard at Myrtle

We have seeds that have been planted and are Green housing in our Myrtle site windows. We look forward to planting these in the ground soon.

#### Welly boot storage at Myrtle

Ready for Autumn next year we are now looking at a shared Welly boot storage area at Myrtle. We will be looking to fix the racks to the fences in the back playground for the children to openly access.



If you have any large dowel lengths loitering under your stairs then I'll happily use them to go with my skip-'borrowed' timber.

### Rocky area at Merrywood

We are investigating costs to lay artificial grass on the rockery area.



This is being supported by a family within our school community (thank you!).

### Pallet pods

We have constructed our first one of hopefully many to be dotted around the play spaces across both sites. If you have any old L-shaped brackets hanging around in your tool sheds and you'd like to see them re-purposed then please let Mr Potter know.

Thank you in advance.

### Mud kitchen construction at Myrtle

We would like to construct a pallet mud kitchen for the Myrtle site.



This will be located behind the library space with access to loads of mud!!!

Lots to look forward to - watch this space for updates!

Mr Potter