



# THE FAR ACADEMY

## Term 4 Newsletter

Dear Parents, Carers, Students, and Staff,

As we move through Term 4, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on what has been another busy, productive, and inspiring time here at the FAR.

First, I'd like to warmly welcome Toby Bonner, our new Community Outreach Officer. Toby, who is already making a real difference, supporting everything from rubbish collection and deliveries to building stronger connections within our local community. Toby is also working closely alongside formewr student, Kaiden, our fantastic premises manager. Seeing them both working at the FAR in such meaningful ways is something we are incredibly proud of.

As always, I am hugely proud of our students. This term, that pride feels especially strong. A number of our learners have recently completed their English and Maths exams, and we recognise the effort, resilience, and determination that goes into reaching that point. Sitting those exams is a significant achievement in itself.

Across the FAR, there is so much to celebrate. Our food technology student has been impressing us with their baking skills and detailed sugar work, showing real creativity and care. Our construction students are developing their skills at a steady and impressive pace, supported brilliantly by our teaching assistants. In our creative pathways, our videography, photography, and graphic art students are producing work of a very high standard, guided by our incredibly talented teaching team.

Alongside this, we are so grateful to our volunteers, who give their time to support students in maths, English, and across other academic subjects, helping to keep everyone on track.

We are also continuing to grow what we offer beyond the classroom. Our weekend skateboarding lessons are running and open to all, whether you are just starting out or looking to build confidence and skills. They are a great way to stay active, connect with others, and be part of the FAR community.

In addition, don't forget about our not-for-profit skateboard shop and our ramp design and build services. These are an important part of what we do, helping to support the FAR while also giving something back to the wider community.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. It is the combination of students, staff, families, and volunteers that makes the FAR what it is. I continue to feel incredibly proud to be part of this community and excited for what the rest of the term will bring.

Brent Lewis

Director and CEO

The FAR FOUNDATION, including the FAR Academy and the FAR Skate Shop



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### A Night to Remember on Wheels!

What a truly wonderful evening we had at our recent Roller Skating session! From the moment everyone arrived, the rink was filled with laughter, energy, and an unmistakable sense of excitement. Students and staff alike threw themselves into the fun, skating, cheering each other on, and celebrating every little achievement—whether it was mastering a tricky turn, picking up speed for the first time, or simply enjoying a carefree lap around the rink.

It was heartwarming to see the support and encouragement on display. Students helped one another keep their balance, cheered for friends when someone completed a challenge, and shared plenty of smiles along the way. Staff joined in with gusto too, creating a wonderful sense of connection and camaraderie that made the evening feel truly special.

Events like this remind us of why shared experiences are so important at the FAR. They give us the chance to take a break from the everyday routines of learning, to build friendships, and to strengthen the bonds that make our community so vibrant. The teamwork, joy, and energy we witnessed highlighted just how remarkable our students are. Not just in their skills, but in their kindness, resilience, and the care they show to those around them.

A big thank you goes to our PTA, Carol the SweetCone Queen, and everyone who joined in, whether skating, cheering, or helping behind the scenes and raising funds. Your enthusiasm, encouragement, and willingness to join the fun made the evening truly memorable. It's evenings like this that show what makes the FAR such a unique and welcoming place, a place where everyone can shine, have fun, and feel supported.

As the lights went down and the rink emptied, it was clear that this wasn't just a fun night on skates. It was a celebration of community, friendship, and the joy of being together. We can't wait for the next session, and we hope everyone carries the memories, laughter, and spirit of the evening into the term ahead.





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### FAR Academic Highlights

#### Digital Media

This term, our digital media students have been exploring documentaries and getting creative with the stories they want to tell. Some are focusing on skateboarding, while others are capturing the history of the FAR. They're also getting ready to launch content for the new FAR YouTube channel, including staff interviews and a "Welcome to our College!" tour. It's been fantastic to see students leading their projects and experimenting with ideas that really excite them.

#### Photography

Photography has been full of energy this term! Students are drawing inspiration from early 2000s styles, video games, and even nail art. They've been helping each other out, sharing skills like makeup, costume design, and props to create striking photographs. Everyone pitching in has turned the Photography Room into a buzzing, creative space where ideas can come to life.

#### Art and Graphic Design

In Art and Graphic Design, our students have been embarking on their final projects, responding to design briefs using professional methodology and industry standards, and selecting their chosen mode of craft to create project plans for their showcase art pieces.

#### English

We've had some fantastic achievements in English this term, with several students passing functional skills in reading, speaking, listening, and communication. Others are getting ready for their next assessments. After half term, we'll focus on speaking, listening, and communication, with every student preparing a small presentation to showcase what they've learned.

#### Maths

In Maths, our students have been building their confidence in a range of skills, especially division and percentages. Some are very nearly ready to sit their maths papers, which is a great reflection of the hard work and persistence they've shown this term.

It's been wonderful to see our students taking the lead, helping each other, and enjoying learning in their own way. If you'd like to chat about your child's progress in English or Maths, please email our academic lead, Michelle Brooks at [michelle@farskate.co.uk](mailto:michelle@farskate.co.uk) to arrange a phone or face-to-face appointment.





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### Dragon Boating in Germany



Our very own Whitstable Warriors are heading to Borken in Germany

Exciting news! Our newly named team, the Whitstable Warriors, are preparing for their trip to Germany to take part in the Dragon Races. For those who haven't seen one before, a Dragon Race is a fun and fast-paced boat race where teams work together to paddle a long, dragon-shaped boat to the finish line. It's all about teamwork, coordination, and lots of energy!

We are hugely grateful to our sponsors, AAK, ClearaGem, and the Canterbury & Whitstable Lions, for supporting the team and helping make this adventure possible.

If you would like to support our students further, we are still accepting donations to help with travel, equipment, and other trip costs. Every contribution makes a real difference and helps our young people make the most of this incredible experience.

For donation details, please get in touch by email [mel@farskate.co.uk](mailto:mel@farskate.co.uk). Keep an eye out on our socials where we will keep you up to date with our progress.

Thank you to the Whitstable, Herne Bay, and Canterbury Lions, ClearaGem and AAK for their generous sponsorships.





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### Sweet Skills and Kitchen Creativity

It's been a really lovely term in Food Tech, with lots of care, creativity, and patience on show. Our very talented Food Tech student has been trying out sugar modelling, carefully shaping tulips and roses out of icing. It's taken time and a steady hand, but the results have been genuinely impressive and look very professional.

They've also been building confidence with piping, creating cupcakes, inspired by Willow, our much-loved college therapy dog, which was a highlight for everyone. On top of that, they designed and made a brilliant chocolate birthday cake, putting their own ideas into it and taking real pride in the finished result.

It's been great to see their skills grow week by week, along with their confidence and enjoyment in the kitchen.





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### The Engine Room (Powered by Volunteers)

Behind the scenes of the FAR, is a group of people who quietly keep everything moving. Our volunteers give their time, energy, patience, and care day in and day out, supporting students with Maths and English, helping them stay on track, and offering encouragement when it's needed most. They also lend their skills in practical areas like woodwork and sewing, working alongside students as they learn, create, and build confidence in new ways.

They bring a calm, steady presence that really matters. For many of our young people, having someone sit alongside them, take the time to explain something in a different way, or simply check in and listen can shift the whole direction of their day. Those small, consistent moments build confidence, trust, and a sense that someone is truly in their corner.

What makes our volunteers so special is the way they show up. They step in wherever they are needed, often without fuss and rarely seeking recognition. Whether it's helping a student tackle a piece of work they've been avoiding, guiding them through a practical task, celebrating a small win, or just being a reassuring presence in the room, they help create an environment where students feel supported, capable, and seen.

They are very much a part of the rhythm of the FAR and critical to the running of our college, and essential to our sense of community. Quite simply, we could not do what we do without them.

We are deeply grateful for their time, their generosity, and the care they show our students, our staff, and the wider community every single day.

If you would like to volunteer, please email Hayley at [hayley@farskate.co.uk](mailto:hayley@farskate.co.uk) for more details on how to get started.

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### Meet Toby, our Community Outreach Officer & All-Round Fixer!

We are thrilled to have Toby as part of the FAR team. As our Community Outreach Officer, Toby is already making a real difference, helping to connect the college with the wider community and supporting our students in practical ways.

Toby is also here to help with a wide range of jobs around your home or garden. Whether it's moving furniture, taking rubbish to the tip, painting, decorating, assembling furniture, tidying outdoor spaces, or tackling those little jobs that never seem to get done, he's happy to lend a hand. No task is too small, and he brings care, reliability, and good humour to everything he does.

Using Toby's support is a great way to get jobs done while also supporting the FAR. We offer very competitive rates, and all profits go straight back into helping our students and the work we do here at the college. Every task completed makes a difference to the young people who rely on our programs and volunteers every day.

If you think Toby might be able to help, or if you have a job in mind that isn't listed here, please get in touch. We'd be happy to chat through what's needed and find a way to help.





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### Learning Beyond the Classroom

Recently, Hayley, our Family Liaison Officer, took a small group of students to the Dogs' Trust. One of our students is thinking about a future working with animals, and this visit gave them a real chance to see what a career in animal behaviour could look like. The students were able to meet staff, see the animals being cared for, and ask questions about the different roles and responsibilities involved.

At the FAR, we believe that learning works best when it follows the students' interests. We do not force subjects or lessons on them. Instead, we notice what excites them, support their curiosity, and give them opportunities to explore those interests in meaningful ways. Trips like this help students connect classroom learning to the real world, build confidence, and see the value of their passions. Learning becomes more engaging, enjoyable, and truly their own.



# I'M SKYDIVING TO SAVE FAR ACADEMY SEN COLLEGE 2026 HEADCORN



*Sunday  
12th  
July*

**FAR**  
ACADEMY

gofundme™

Help me raise fund's for this brilliant  
SEN College in Whitstable

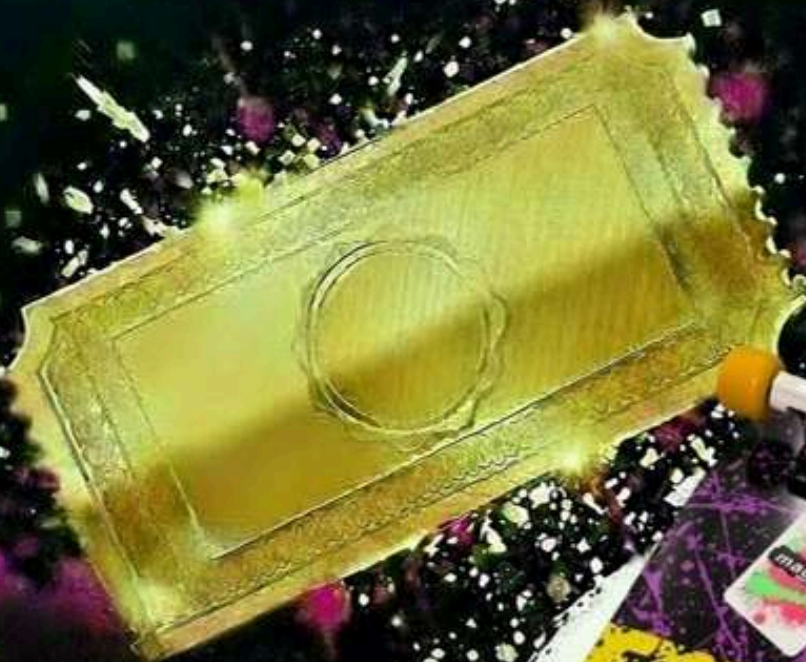




**FAR**  
SKATESHOP

**ENTER TO WIN**

Receive a free Golden Ticket when  
you spend £50 in-store.



**WIN THIS  
SKATEBOARD**

Enter our Prize Draw for the chance to  
win this limited, Special Edition Back to  
the Future Skateboard worth £600

Unit 77 - 80, John Wilson Business Park, Whitstable, CT5 3QT

The FAR Skateshop is a non-profit skateboard shop. Every penny we make is reinvested into helping young people access education and mental health support. For more information and to see what else we have on sale, please visit: [www.farskateshop.co.uk](http://www.farskateshop.co.uk) or better still, come visit us on the John Wilson Estate, behind the big Sainsbury's in Whitstable.



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### Important Dates

TERM DATES		
TERM 1	15 September 2025	15 October 2025
TERM 2	3 November 2025	10 Decembe 2025
TERM 3	12 January 2026	11 February 2026
TERM 4	23 February 2026	1 April 2026
TERM 5	20 April 2026	20 May 2026
TERM 6	1 June 2026	15 July 2026

OPEN DAYS FOR NEW SEPTEMBER 2026 STUDENTS		
Tuesday	28 April 2026	10h30
Tuesday	12 May 2026	10h30
Tuesday	19 May 2026	10h30

If you know of any young people who may be interested in attending the FAR Academy, and who would like to join us on one of our Open Days, please email [hayley@farskate.co.uk](mailto:hayley@farskate.co.uk)



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### Important Reminders

#### **Absence and Attendance**

We've noticed a drop in attendance for some young people this term. We understand that things can feel difficult, and we are here to support you. At the same time, being present and engaged is essential for progress.

We are required to share attendance and engagement with the local authority. If attendance remains low, the local authority may review the placement. In some cases, this can lead to funding being reduced or withdrawn, which may affect your young person's place at FAR. We want to work with you to avoid this wherever possible.

If your young person is unable to attend for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible so we can record this appropriately and offer support where needed.

If attendance is affected by anxiety or other challenges, please contact Michelle at [michelle@farskate.co.uk](mailto:michelle@farskate.co.uk). Let's work together to get you the support you need and provide coursework that can be completed at home.

If you or your young person is unwell, or has a medical appointment, or is experiencing transport issues, please email Hayley at [hayley@farskate.co.uk](mailto:hayley@farskate.co.uk) or call the office on 01227 779 181.

#### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up**

College hours are 09h45 to 15h00. Students should arrive on time and leave promptly unless attending a supervised activity or by prior arrangement.

Students should not remain on site outside these hours for informal get-togethers, as we cannot guarantee appropriate staff supervision.

If you are running late for collection, or you need to leave early, or are leaving the college site for any reason, please let the office know.

#### **Term-Time Holidays**

Term-time holidays cannot be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. A Leave of Absence form must be completed at least two weeks in advance. Evidence is required for appointments.

#### **Vaping, Smoking, Alcohol and Substances**

Vaping, smoking, alcohol and illegal substances are not permitted anywhere on college grounds. This applies to everyone on site and is in place to keep our environment safe and focused on learning.

If a student is found using, in possession of, or under the influence of these substances, parents or carers will be contacted and the student will be asked to leave site. Follow up actions will be taken in line with college policies.

We will always take a supportive approach and work with young people and families where these issues arise.

If your young person needs support in this area, please get in touch. We are here to help however we can.

