



THE FAR ACADEMY

Term 3 Newsletter

Dear Parents, Carers, Students, and Staff,

As Term 3 comes to a close, I want to take a moment to celebrate some of the fantastic highlights from across the FAR Academy community.

Earlier this term, a group of our students took a big step out of Whitstable and ventured to London to visit the V&A Museum's Design and Disability exhibition. You can explore the exhibition here:

<https://www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/design-and-disability>

For many of our students, navigating the city and experiencing something entirely new was a challenge, yet they approached it with confidence, independence, and resilience. They fully engaged with the exhibition, asked insightful questions, and represented the Academy brilliantly. It was inspiring to see them embrace the experience and step outside their comfort zones.

I also want to take a moment to celebrate the outstanding effort our students have put into Maths and English this term. Well done to everyone, and especially to those who recently passed their exams. Your determination, focus, and hard work have truly paid off, and we are incredibly proud of your achievements.

To our amazing staff, thank you for your unwavering dedication and support. Your hard work, encouragement, and commitment to our students' growth make it possible for them to thrive, explore, and reach their potential every day. The success of this term is a reflection of your care and professionalism.

Finally, thank you to all members of our community who have contributed to another successful term. Your support, whether in school, at the FAR Skate Shop, or behind the scenes, continues to make a real difference. I am excited to see what Term 4 will bring. New achievements, projects, and adventures await!

Take care,

Brent Lewis
Director and CEO
The FAR FOUNDATION, including the FAR Academy and the FAR Skate Shop



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FAR Adventures



Design and Disability Exhibition at the V&A Museum in London

On Monday 2nd February, our students set off from Whitstable for a day of learning and exploration at the V&A Museum in London. From the very start, it was clear how responsible and enthusiastic they were. They navigated the train journey with confidence, supported each other, and arrived in London ready to make the most of the day.

At the Design and Disability Exhibition, the young people explored how design can make life more accessible and inclusive. Working in small groups, they engaged thoughtfully with exhibits, asked insightful questions, and discussed their observations with curiosity and respect. It was inspiring to see how well they managed themselves in a busy city environment while staying focused on learning and exploring.

Beyond the exhibition, the students enjoyed discovering other areas of the museum, demonstrating great teamwork, patience, and independence throughout the day. Their curiosity, engagement, and positive attitude made the trip a real success.

By the time they returned to Whitstable, everyone had collected memories, stories, and new ideas to share. We are incredibly proud of how the young people managed the day and grateful to the PTA for funding the train tickets and to staff for their support in making this experience safe, enjoyable, and inspiring for everyone.

Michelle Brooks
Learning Lead





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FAR Academic Highlights

Digital Media

We have been watching different examples of documentaries and exploring the wide range of topics that can be discussed. The documentaries our digital media students are planning have the FAR at the heart of them; one exploring skateboarding and another about the history of the FAR. Our digital media students will also start creating content for the new FAR YouTube channel which will feature interviews from the FAR staff and 'Welcome to our school' tour!

Photography

Lots of amazing and unique ideas are developing in photography. We're taking inspiration from the early 2000s, video games and nail art! There's been collaborations where students have been using their skills in other areas to help create stunning photos. One student is taking their amazing skills in makeup to create any looks to photograph. It's been very fun when everyone joins in.

With the help from our students, the Photography Room/Classroom 2 has been slowly changing to accommodate for the different areas of digital media as well as provide a calm learning environment.

Art

In art, the students have been experimenting with pouring paints and are creating project plans for their final piece.

In graphic design, the students have been looking at socio-political contexts affecting design and creating their own protest/propaganda posters.

English

We have had a few pupils pass their functional skills in reading and speaking, listening and communication! A fantastic achievement for them. We have been working hard on developing our English skills and now have several pupils who are now ready to sit some of their other English assessments.

After half term we are going to have a heavy focus on the speaking, listening and communication part of the functional skills with the aim of all pupils taking English creating a small presentation for assessment before the Spring break.

Maths

We have been developing a range of skills, with a specific focus on division and percentage skills. We also have a few pupils ready to sit their maths papers over the next few weeks.

If you would like to speak to me about your child's current learning in English or maths, then please do not hesitate to contact me by email (michelle@farskate.co.uk) and we can arrange a telephone or face-to-face appointment .





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Roll on, FAR Students!



We would like to say a huge "Thank You" to our PTA, who have kindly raised funds to allow us to book a session of Roller Skating for Saturday, the 7th of March 2026, from 17h00 - 19h00 at the Herne Bay Arena

Please confirm if your young person would like to attend by emailing hayley@farskate.co.uk. There are only a maximum of 35 people allowed on the skating rink at one time.

Students will need to be collected promptly at 19h00, but there is plenty of seating at the roller skating if parents/carers wish to come along and share for a catch-up and a check-in.

Skates will be available to hire at no cost.



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Save our College



FUND OUR ACADEMY!

The FAR Academy in Whitstable, a specialist college for vulnerable young people aged 16 to 25 with social, emotional, mental health, and physical needs, is at risk of closure due to an unresolved funding dispute with Kent County Council (KCC).

Just before the October half-term, students and families were devastated to learn the college might not reopen. FAR Academy has not received expected funding from KCC for the first two terms, leaving it unable to operate without urgent support.

The college is currently keeping its doors open thanks to a small private fund, but this support is temporary and will soon run out. Without urgent help, vulnerable young people risk losing the safe, supportive environment they depend on. Please act now to protect their education and future by donating and sharing: gofund.me/4cfb940d5



SAVE OUR ACADEMY!

We, the students, parents, carers, and staff of the FAR Academy, are asking Kent County Council (KCC) to continue funding our college, which is a vital place for young people aged 16 to 25 with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

The FAR Academy is more than a just college. It is a supportive and creative community where students with additional needs are understood, encouraged, and given the chance to succeed. Here, we build confidence, learn life skills, and gain independence.

If funding is cut, students will lose the specialist education they rely on, and families and staff will be deeply affected.

Please help us protect the FAR Academy by signing and sharing: c.org/K8pBdYYhH2



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Important Dates

TERM DATES		
TERM 1	15 September 2025	15 October 2025
TERM 2	3 November 2025	10 December 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	24 February 2026	10h30
Tuesday	3 March 2026	10h30
Tuesday	10 March 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



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Things to Remember

Absence Due to Illness

If you or your young person are unwell and will not be in college, please let us know by emailing hayley@farskate.co.uk or calling 01227 779 181 as soon as you can. This helps us keep attendance records accurate and ensures we know everyone is safe.

Drop-off and Pick-up

College starts at 09h45 and finishes at 15h00. Unless there is a prior arrangement, we ask that students leave the premises promptly at the end of the day. After school hours we cannot guarantee that the legally required number of staff will still be on site, and having students remain here unsupervised creates a safeguarding concern.

If you are going to be late collecting your young person, please contact the office as soon as possible so that we can make sure they are safe and supported.

Term-Time Holidays

A quick reminder that, under government legislation, we cannot authorise term time holidays except in truly exceptional circumstances. If you need to request time away from college, please complete a Leave of Absence form at least two weeks before the date requested. These forms are available from the school office. If the absence relates to an appointment, we will need to see evidence.

Vaping and Smoking

Vaping and smoking are not permitted anywhere on college grounds, including entrances, exits, and outdoor spaces. This applies to students, staff, volunteers, and visitors. Students who are found vaping or smoking, or carrying vaping or smoking equipment, will be spoken to and supported, and there may also be consequences in line with our behaviour and safeguarding policies.

If your young person is struggling with vaping, smoking, addiction, or peer pressure around it, please let us know. We are here to help and to support their wellbeing.

