



Diocese of Norwich
Education and
Academies Trust

The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Anne Neary

Web: www.narvalleyfederation.co.uk

Friday 9th January 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

Happy New Year and I hope that everyone was able to enjoy some time together as families over Christmas. A huge thank you for the cards and gifts that we received as staff; your words really do mean a great deal to us. We offer a very warm welcome to our families and children who have just started with us at Nar Valley. We are also delighted to welcome new staff this term across the Federation; Mrs Angela Symonds starts with us at lunchtimes at Castle Acre and also at Castle Acre is Mrs Victoria Girdler, who joins us as a Teaching Assistant supporting at lunchtimes with Maple group and with Oak class during the day. This means we can welcome back Miss Sandford at Narborough, who had kindly supported Oak class at Castle Acre before Christmas. At Sporle we welcome Miss Josephine Gibbs as a Higher-Level Teaching Assistant working across school on three days a week.

We continue to be proud of our children's progress and learning, as well as their excellent behaviour, commented on numerous times last term by visitors or new families, or when we visited other places. Our assessments at the end of term demonstrated that all our children from their own starting points are progressing very well and we are proud of them. Please remember that you can support their learning by doing their homework with them each night - we ask you to spend a few minutes reading with your child, or talking about the book and asking them questions once they are fluent readers, help them access either their phonics learning if they are in KS1 (via the Read, Write, Inc videos/resources that your child's teacher will have posted for you on Class Dojo) or their Spelling Frame via the log in. Finally, we ask that you support your children to practise either their number bonds to 20 (all the ways you can make 20) in Reception-Year2, and their Tackling Tables in Key Stage 2 via their Tackling Tables log in. The expectation is that they should have instant recall of all tables by the end of the Spring term of Year 4 and have passed 'red' level.

Just a little on online safety - this term we have an online safety day in school, and a workshop for families - details to follow. A huge thank you for supporting our Smartphone-free school - we know that there is a growing understanding that smartphones can be very detrimental for children and so we have joined the growing number of schools who support the idea that children in primary school have a smartphone-free childhood. We have based the parent workshop on the feedback we got from our online safety Parents/Carers' survey but if there are any new areas of online safety that you would welcome support with, please do let me know.

Coming up this term, we have amongst other things, our Candlemas Service, a Federation day, our Easter Church service, Red Nose day, Science Week and Online Safety Week, as well as many trips and visits. Lots to pack in!

A big thank you to the vast majority of all our NVF families who are ensuring that your children have strong attendance. We are as usual generally above the national average and have only a tiny number of families who do not ensure their children are in for 96%+ of the time. Just a reminder that term-time absence really has a detrimental effect for children and so please do talk to us before anything is booked. We really dislike having to fine families, it causes unnecessary work and upset but we have to follow the policy. If you talk to us before anything is booked, then arrangements can be made to minimise the absence and potentially avoid fines.

Finally, we do still have two Parent Governor vacancies, one at Sporle and one at Narborough. It is so important that the local communities are represented on our NVF Governing Body, so if you are interested, please get in touch. It isn't too much, is interesting and there is very little paperwork. It can also be a great stepping stone if you are interested in education as a career and doesn't necessarily always require time in school. I wrote this paragraph this time last year so am really hoping that two lovely people will come forward to offer support this year. Thank you in hopeful anticipation!

We also want to thank our Friends/PTFA groups across the Federation, who continue to be fantastic in raising money to ensure our children still get to go on a huge number of exciting trips and visits, and still have the chance to choose equipment etc. Please do continue to support them. Equally, whilst school budgets are still so tight, please do ensure that you do not have any outstanding monies owed to school, thank you. We really do need every penny to do what we do for the children.

Best wishes and please do contact your Head of School or myself if you have any queries. We look forward to working together again this term and some great fun and learning.



Executive Headteacher
Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies
Castle Acre, Narborough and Sporle C of E Primary Academy



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