

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm writing to share some personal news about a difficult decision I've recently made. While this will be shared in a whole school communication, I wanted to send this to the parents I have worked more closely with so that you have further clarity around this.

Over time, I've found travelling long distances—especially during the darker months—more challenging due to some ongoing issues with my peripheral vision. As many of you know, I live on Hayling Island, which makes for quite a commute to Fernhurst each day. After much reflection, I've come to realise that I can no longer continue with what I've jokingly come to call my "death drive" through winter mornings and evenings.

Adding to this moment of reflection is the recent arrival of my second beautiful granddaughter, Florence, who joined us this half term. Time with her and my older granddaughter, Lily, has reminded me just how precious time is, and how I want to use it wisely—whether that's through shared cuddles, giggles, or stories.

I originally joined Fernhurst to work alongside Mrs Thornton, someone I've had the privilege of working with in the past. I will always be grateful for her care and trust. It has been especially meaningful to have taught her daughter at the very beginning of her school journey, and now to witness her final days in primary—truly a full-circle moment I'll never forget. Her support and encouragement have meant a great deal, and have opened the door to a new opportunity for me—one that's much closer to home.

To all of you: thank you. It has been such a joy and privilege to work with your children and with you. The relationships I've built here will stay with me, and deciding to leave has been incredibly hard. I hope I leave Fernhurst in a stronger place and, in the meantime, if there is anything I can do before the end of term, please don't hesitate to ask.

Your children's names and smiles are etched in my heart, and I will think of them—and of you—with fondness and pride.

With warm wishes,  
Nikki Ludlam

Headteacher: Mrs Jennifer Thornton

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