



Term 2 Partnership Summary Letter – December 2024

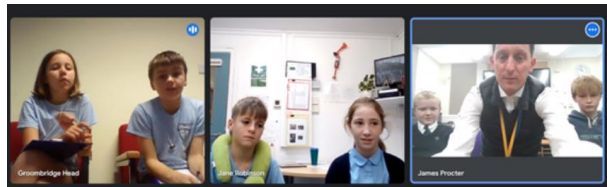
Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very pleased to be able to update you on the partnership between Pioneer Federation, Groombridge St. Thomas CE Primary and Nutley CE Primary. It has been another very busy and productive term with many benefits being seen for both pupils and staff since Groombridge and Nutley joined the partnership in September and we hope you find our regular partnership newsletters a useful source of additional information.

Pioneer schools have had 4 successful inspections in the last 5 months. Park Mead and Chiddingly have both had strong Ofsted inspections this term. The federated/collaborative approaches to curriculum developments came through as a strength. The Ofsted reports can be found on the Pioneer websites. *'Staff have a strong subject knowledge and are confident to teach the curriculum. This has been supported by the work and training across the **federation.**' 'The school and the **federation** it is part of have worked skilfully together to design an ambitious curriculum.'*

Pioneer Pupil Partnership Council and Cohort Google-Meets

James Procter met with the Partnership Pupil Council again to review Term 1 and discuss other potential T2 pupil links.



The Pupil Council felt that the joint T1 Forest School was successful and they enjoyed making friends with the other schools. They thought that it would be great to have Pioneer four square and table tennis tournaments across the schools in summer terms. Classes across the 3 school cluster will be making Christmas cards and sending them to each other and will share carols/Christmas songs on Google-Meets and present their learning/work from the term.

'It was nice to speak to others online. They are all very friendly.' Tallulah

Forest School

The Ashdown cluster of schools have continued developing joint Forest School sessions this term led by the Pioneer Forest School Lead, Abi Sharp. See photos below of this terms 3-4 classes Forest School session from 28th November. In term 3, 1-2 classes will meet up and then term 4, EYFS. More information about these events will follow closer to the time.



'I enjoyed Forest School with the other schools and getting to speak to other children.' **Charlie** 'Although I got wet and soggy, I enjoyed it because everyone was playing well together.' **Lucia** 'I enjoyed doing clay with the other children.' **Hattie**
 'I liked making new friends' **Isaac** 'I liked having help in the river, normally we don't have as many helpers but this time we had lots more!' **Cece** 'I have enjoyed seeing them on the screen in their classroom and finding out that they learn lots of the same things' **Charlie**
Nutley Pupils: "I love forest school because you can explore the woods. I liked making things with clay, making sparks and toasting marshmallows. I like the pond and seeing the beautiful nature!"

Four Square and Tables Tennis

Mrs Vile and Chiddingly pupils visited Nutley and Groombridge this term to introduce the game of four square. There is now a table tennis table in all the schools. Pioneer four square and table tennis tournaments are planned for the summer term.



'Playing four square with Chiddingly made the rules much clearer.' **Breagha** 'It was fun to play with Chiddingly. They helped us to get better at it.' **Harrison and Max** '4 Square is good fun - lovely to see the children engaging with it. Thank you to the children from Chiddingly for teaching them how to play it.' **Russell Wadey** 'I love 4 square because you only use your hands.' 'I love table tennis because you get to try a long time with the ball'. **Nutley Pupils**

Impact on Quality of Education

Below are the following staff collaborative aspects that have happened so far this term:

- Leadership Ofsted training from James Procter's Ofsted inspector colleague (Matthew Batchelor).
- Joint staff meetings and training – focusing on reading and phonics and moderation of writing across all subjects.



- Nutley and Groombridge teachers are now planning termly with Pioneer teachers and have visited Pioneer schools to compare learning environments and pupil books.
- Kayleigh Vile (Head at Chiddingly) is working with leaders across the schools to combine the Pioneer, Groombridge and Nutley curriculums so that teachers can directly benefit from the jointly devised combined curriculum, planning and resources. The plan is for the process to have been completed by Easter.
- Nutley and Groombridge are in the process of re-banding reading books to align with the Pioneer banding system and add additional clarity for reading progression.

- Alice Briley (Head at East Hoathly) is working alongside the Groombridge Maths Leaders to review maths provision and share maths application strategies. She will be doing the same at Nutley in January.
- Heidi West (Head at Park Mead and Pioneer MHWB Lead) will be the interim Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead at Nutley from January 2025.
- SENCOs from all 3 schools are linking up regularly to share best practice and resources. All schools will be involved in the 'Partnership in Inclusion in Neurodiversity in Schools' with a focus next term on 'understanding dyslexia and supporting children with learning needs within an adaptive curriculum'.
- Abi Sharp, the Pioneer Forest School Lead, will be starting weekly Forest School sessions at Groombridge from January.
- Emma Waterman (Chiddingly TA and artist) will be designing class name signs for corridor displays at Nutley (mirroring Pioneer schools) and will be visiting Groombridge and Nutley to paint the key vocabulary for the different zone areas in the new regulation rooms.
- At Nutley, Emma Robinson (Head at Nutley) made the decision to utilise Pioneer policy versions for Book and Marking, Learning Environment, Teaching and Learning and Behaviour. The Nutley library is in the process of moving downstairs so pupils can access books with ease. There was a Nutley Community Groundforce on Saturday 8th November to help develop outside premises areas/playground. The Nutley vision and values are in the process of being reviewed to ensure they are clear to all stakeholders. Nutley are currently trialling an English electronic comprehension system called Lexia (used across Pioneer schools) and an online home reading system called Boomreaders (also used across Pioneer schools).
- Nutley pupils have started to attend some Pioneer sporting events e.g. Dodgeball Tournament.
- Park Mead caretaker (Steve Rodrigues) has decorated the new Zones Area at Groombridge and Nutley.

'It has been great to share good practice across the schools, particularly in terms of getting more ideas, for example ideas to further challenge pupils in maths.' **Mrs Denton** *'Being part of a federation has enabled the staff at Groombridge to reflect on their practice and gain reassurance that their teaching and learning aligns with other good schools.'* **Miss Powell** *'As we reflect on the strides made over the last couple of terms, it's clear that progress has been immense in terms of premises development at Nutley. The children working together with all the other pupils in the Federation thus developing their social skills by forming new friendships, and last but not least, staff and leadership working with staff at the other schools thus paving the way for a bright future for our Nutley CE School.'* **Mrs Smith (Nutley Chair of Governors)**



As the partnership develops, more initiatives are planned for next term. These include:

- Joint staff music, DT and adaptive curriculum INSET training on the 6th January led by Headteachers.
- Developing a joint Teaching and Learning Policy reflecting the adaptive curriculum strategies utilised across all schools.
- Headteachers will be visiting each other's schools as part of a Pioneer peer to peer leadership initiative.

- Developing the outdoor Early Years area at Nutley alongside Russell Wadey - utilising the Early Years skills from across Pioneer.
- A review of websites and updating to ensure they are all the best they can be - ensuring clarity for any stakeholders viewing the sites – utilising the skills from Andrew Huggett (Pioneer IT Technician and website designer).
- Subject leaders at each of the schools to link up and start to share best practice in their subject areas. To consider how joint shared subject leaders across the cluster of local schools could be developed in the future.
- Developing pupil sporting event initiatives with our PE/Sport Leads.
- Combining of curriculums via a collaborative steering group and continue to develop the meaningful links between the school curriculums.
- Looking at further ways to share resources across the schools.

There will continue to be Partnership Executive Committee (PEC) Meetings termly to review the impact and effectiveness of the partnership against agreed milestones. The chairs of Governors, other senior Governors and representatives from the Diocese and Local Authority will also attend these meetings.

The partnership impact is a standing item in all full school Governor Meetings across the schools and the plan is to make a decision in April 2025 about whether the partnership will develop into a formal school partnership from September 2025. There will be full stakeholder consultation as part of this process. We value your opinions and feedback about the partnership through parent forums and questionnaire consultations throughout the year, and you can contact us anytime if you have any questions.

We believe that by working in partnership as a group of small schools, we can improve the quality of education for all and our second term of working together has demonstrated the impact that the partnership has had already.

We will continue to keep you updated with partnership developments through these termly newsletters and updates in our school newsletters and school websites.

James Procter ran the 10 mile Mince Pie Race on Sunday 8th December with Pioneer staff and friends. We now have a **Pioneer Running Club** <https://pioneerfederation.co.uk/pioneer-running-club/> to encourage our communities to keep fit and stay healthy. We plan to run several half marathons a year and also raise funds for the school improvement initiatives at the same time. Russell Wadey (SENCO Nutley) and Helen Denton (Deputy Head at Groombridge) have already shown interest in future races!



Many thanks for your support. **Merry Christmas!**

Yours sincerely,

James Procter
Executive Headteacher
Pioneer Federation

Emma Robinson
Headteacher
Nutley CE Primary School

Caroline Powell
Headteacher
Groombridge St.Thomas CE Primary

Alan Brundle
Chair of Governors Pioneer Federation

Birgit Smith
Chair of the Governors- Nutley

Karen Bye & Sue Diggory
Co-Chairs of the Shadow Governing Board -
Groombridge St.Thomas