

FAIRFIELD OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2026

Hello Ladies

Both the AGM and the Autumn Reunion in 2025 were extremely well attended.

It was so fabulous to see so many, catching up with their school friends.

Thank you everyone for your subscriptions and for the amazing support from you all.

We have finally managed to change our bank, so we do not have to pay extortionate charges.

Please can you all note the changed banking details which can be found at the end of the newsletter



Sadly these are the ladies we have lost since the last newsletter.

Iris Amelia Earl (James)

Anne Larkin wrote to let us know about her Aunties passing.

Iris died, aged 99, on 7th May 2025, 10 days short of her 100th birthday. She attended Fairfield High School, on a scholarship but when war broke out in 1939, she had to leave school to go on a ministry of supply Government training scheme and then worked at Tom Garners on Deansgate, on the assembly of tanks and other transport for the forces.

She went on to marry, have 2 sons, 4 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren, moving from Clarendon Rd, Audenshaw, to Romiley, and then to a care home in Poynton.

Catherine Patricia Roberts 1940-46

Dilys Roberts wrote to tell her of the passing of her sister who was always known as Pat Roberts.

Pat was immensely proud to attend Fairfield High School, first as a pupil and later she was thrilled to be appointed to the staff, where she taught for many years.

She was a keen member of FOGA and always attended meetings when she was able.

Some of her ex pupils (especially mothers and daughters) were still in contact with her.

Pats strong faith sustained her throughout her life and she died peacefully at home aged 96.

Julia Marion Madeline Jackson (Bagnall) 1950-55

Mr Phillip Jackson telephoned to inform us that his wife passed away on the 10th November 2025.

Sadly Julia had been suffering from dementia and was being cared for in a nursing home near their home in Somerset.

Mr Jackson is happy to speak to any one who remembers Julia, his telephone number is : **01935 823514.**

Marjorie Eyre (Wood) 1932-37

Anne Jackson informed us of the passing of Marjorie, in the Facebook Fairfield Memories Group on the 27th February.

For those who did not see the post, Anne wrote

‘Today I attended the thanksgiving service for Marjorie Eyre who attended Fairfield from 1932-37(39). Her maiden name was Wood and she lived at 34 Manchester Road, Mossley. I met Marjorie shortly after moving to Kirkby in Ashfield in 2001. We met through a mutual friend who knew we both attended Fairfield. She had so many tales to tell of her time at Fairfield and had a great sense of humour.

As you can see, she died age 104, still a bright mind and lovely smile. Today would have been her 105th birthday. Her son told me she kept her old school books and text books and was a prolific diarist. She worked as a teacher in Mossley before the family moved to Ravenshead, Nottinghamshire in the 1960's. A wonderful old girl. She will be greatly missed.’

Mollie Brudenell (Rothwell) 1948-56 approx

Ethel Vine messaged me to say it had come to her attention that Mollie had passed away and her funeral would be held on 10th March.

I sent our condolences to her family, via Jeremy her son.

Mollie was one of 3 sisters who all attended Fairfield.

She became a nurse and married John Michael Brudenell in 1958. I wrote a small piece about them in the newsletter a few years ago.

Here is a reminder:

Doctor, John Michael Brudenell who had assisted in the delivery of 2 of The Queen's children. He was also very influential in the research on endometrial pathology and cervical cytology. Dr Brudenell sadly passed away in 2015 a few weeks before his 90th birthday.

I also found out that Mollie too had shared in most of his activities both professional and sporting. She campaigned very hard for Birthright and later Wellbeing of Women and for many years worked actively for the League of Friends at King's College Hospital.

[What a wonderful lady.](#)

On a brighter note we have welcomed in the following new members.

Dorothy Carr	Edwards	1955-60
Susan Roper	Stuckey	1968-75
Sheila Carr		1981-86
Lorraine Piddington	Dowse	1969-74
Clare Hamilton	Coppock	1980-85
Carole Clarke	Williams	1981-86
Heather Shore	Brammall	1970-75
Joanne Fitzsimmons Parish		1980-85
Martina	Noone	1980-85
Rachel Holynska	Caton	1968-75
Linda Manners	Beddington	1968-75
Janine Rohleder	Pugh	1980-85
Wendy Trevor	Lomas/Baker	1968-74
Lisa Walker	Harrison	1980-85
Susan Easton	Cockill	1961-66
Janet Jones	Adshead	1968-75
Jenny Axon		1980-85

Missing Members

In the last newsletter and also the AGM minutes. I mentioned that we had a few members go very quiet on us. I am happy to say one saw the post and has contacted me.

Anne Jones 1952-57

Anne writes

It's Anne Jones - I saw on the last minutes that you had not heard from me for a while. I attended Fairfield High School between 1952-1957 and will be 85 in December so with the passing of time I am not getting around the same.

I used to attend the meetings with Joyce Brindley and Ann Williams but they too have had their problems so I think we have found that we do not have the transport to attend. We did try the train to Fairfield station but even that meant a bit of walking.

However I enjoyed my years at Fairfield — things were a lot different then when Miss Bradley was at the helm. Rules had to be obeyed and woe betide if you walked down the Avenue without wearing a hat but we had some really lovely times and made many friends.

My daughter was a pupil at Fairfield and also my two granddaughters so we are a family of Fairfield old girls. Sadly I lost my daughter in a car accident in 2002 - she was 31

Her name was Susan Anne Jones

However I do enjoy reading the news letters and hope to still receive them in the future.

Let us hope that the others let us know they are safe too.

I had a letter in April 2025 from

Anne McGarry (Beaty) 1950-55

Anne is the author of the fab book about Fairfield Girls, (THE GIRLS WHO WALKED AWAY).

She writes:

'I was thrilled to read that you thought my book was an "eye opener". That is the best praise you can give to a history book. Thank you.

I've recently been carrying out research for a new book and I have realised more than ever that Fairfield's history as a girls' school in the Greater Manchester area is so important. It was founded eighty years before Manchester High School and sixty years before the illustrious Cheltenham Ladies College and the North London Collegiate School. For many years Droylsden was the only town in the area that had a girls' secondary or high school. That it is still here today educating the girls of Tameside is a tremendous achievement and something that we should always be proud of.'

I am looking forward to the follow up to The Girls who walked away.

I had a lovely letter from **Ann Stuart (Allingham) 1942-48.**

Ann wrote saying that there didn't seem to be much news about Old Girls, but as she agreed maybe its because no one sends me any!

Ann writes

“My Aunt Jenny Rushworth came to Fairfield in the 1920's, her best friend was Leila Wallwork. The Fiddian girls attended in the 1930's, (who were close family friends) and when I attended in the 40's, several of the teachers who had taught Jenny, and the Fiddians also taught me. Miss West (Art), Miss England (History), Miss Wilkins (French) and Miss Stevens (Maths).

My contemporaries were Midge Morton, who we all knew well, Ailsa Lawrence, Eileen (Kennedy) Morley, who are all sadly passed away.

I had a few Fairfield girls on my course at college and also came across Margaret Walker (Head of a Primary School) when I was around the schools.

I played golf at Fairfield Golf Club after retiring and met up with Val Byron (Hibbert 1952-57) and a few from the 1980's. Sarah Keelagher? (Pownall), Sharon Palin and Glynis Bram.

I don't play golf now but Sarah often comes to pick me up for a game of bridge at the club.”

How lovely that the girls stay in touch.

Helen Welsh (Newton) 1970-75

I heard about the marriage of the gorgeous Helen on Facebook, and messaged her to ask if I could announce it to everyone.

“Yes, you can put it in the newsletter, with pleasure because it's thanks to Wendy Trotman that I love the French language. My lovely daughter in law, Fany, put some posters up about my life with Pascal, when we met etc. I'll send it to you but it's in French.

Before I met Pascal I was married and we had two children. Unfortunately my husband died when my children were very young. It was at this point that I decided to do what I wanted to do when I was young, go to university to study French and German. I had au pair girls to help with the children which worked out great. Then the third year, Sylvie, my au pair, decided to play cupid, and sent my photo to Pascal with a letter saying she had found him a wife. I didn't know this until he called me. At the beginning, I just wanted to improve my French and things progressed.”

30 years later they decided to make it official



Janet Bunner



(Hindley)

1977-82

Jan emailed me to let me know that she has moved house, and is now living in Spain.

Lucky thing!

“Hola from sunny Spain 🤪🇪🇸

Mark, my husband, had his 60th celebration earlier this month and we spent a lovely evening at Armomia Restaurante on Los Alcazares marina and an overnight stay in a local tourist apartment with breakfast overlooking the sea.

My 60th is next month, on the 13th, which happens to also be Los Alcazares Day!! The town was granted ‘pueblo’ status on this date, which is a lovely coincidence! I’ll be staying in the best suite at Hotel 525 which is the ‘pueblo Nuevo’, ie the tourist area on the edge of Los Narejos where we live.

Living on the shores of the Mar Menor is great, we have daily walks and over the hot summer we had early dips in the sea. It a perfect holiday destination for anyone in the UK wanting to explore traditional mainland Spain. Cartagena, the nearest ‘ciudad’ (city) is only 30 minutes away from here and has many UNESCO World Heritage Sites including a Roman Amphitheatre.

We also have fabulous neighbours, all Spanish who’ve welcomed us with open arms. Couldn’t be happier.”

Dorothy Lownds (Modern Language Teacher 1948-53)

We received a lovely parcel from Dorothy’s friends, Helen & David Murray. They enclosed some photos and a copy of a reference letter signed by Miss Bradley. They say they found our details on the Fairfield School Website and wanted to send the items for our archives.

Helen wrote

‘Dorothy is now 98 and has been living in a care home for 2 years. In sorting her affairs out we have discovered a treasure trove of items from throughout her life as a teacher.

When Dorothy worked at Fairfield she lived at home in Plodder Lane, Farnworth, catching the train and bus to work daily. Her diaries from that era reveal a great interest in the cinema. In 1953 she took the opportunity to spend a year in France, which had not been possible during her degree years at Leeds University (1944-47). On her return she took a job at Kings Norton Girls School in Birmingham, where she forged lasting friendships. She returned home to live with her father after her mother's death in 1961 and spent the final 25 years of her career as Head of French and the Head of Spanish at Canon Slade School, Bolton. It was there that she taught my husband David, who then went on to teach alongside Dorothy at Canon Slade from 1979, they worked together taking visits to France and Spain. During her retirement, she continued to travel well into her 80s. Ever the linguist, she also learned Italian, German, and Portuguese. She loved classical music and researching her ancestry. Dorothy never married, but made life long friends during her career and travels, particularly in Le Mans, Boltons Twin Town.'



Dorothy 2nd from right
Trip to France 1951



L IV F 1949
Bayeux May 1951



Fairfield High School for Girls
DROYLSDEN
NEAR MANCHESTER
TELEPHONE DROYLSDEN 1468
12th April, 1954.

Miss Dorothy Lounis was appointed as Assistant French mistress at Fairfield High School in September 1948 and left in July, 1953, in order to spend a year as Assistant at the Lycée de Fontenay Trésigny, France. During those five years at Fairfield, in her first post, Miss Lounis had experience in teaching A, B and C classes of all levels and greatly increased in maturity and powers of judgment. As far as I know, she had no difficulties over discipline which her gentleness and obvious inexperience might have occasioned in her first post. Whenever I visited her classes I noted a happy and responsive atmosphere.

Miss Lounis, I believe, enjoyed her work in each age-group between Entrance and Sixth Form and was responsible for the preparation of pupils first for School Certificate and then Ordinary General Certificate of Education examinations in French, with a share of Upper and Lower Sixth advanced French literature and University Scholarship classes. Her examination results appeared to be quite good and included a 'Distinction' in Principal French, gained by one of the Upper Sixth who was among those awarded more than one University Scholarship. At the General Inspection of this school in 1952, it was considered that Miss Lounis was making a useful contribution to the Modern Languages Department and that she spoke fluent French.

Her attitude to her subject was always conscientious and enthusiastic and she worked most harmoniously with her four colleagues in the Modern Languages Department. The Senior French mistress sought very well of Miss Lounis and her general intelligent interest in language teaching problems, her careful preparation of her lessons and her generous help with the organisation and supervision of large and small school parties visiting France in holiday periods. Both on such occasions and during school-leavers Miss Lounis proved unselfish and conscientious, while developing in powers of observation and general effectiveness and consequently gaining the respect and willing co-operation of her pupils and colleagues. As a Form Mistress of various age-groups Miss Lounis learnt something about the importance of training children to be sensible and orderly, and during a School Certificate examination, as an Upper Fifth Form mistress, she was sympathetic but firmly with control candidates.

As a person Miss Lounis is cheerful, with a keen sense of humour. Lively, fit and vigorous she was rarely absent from school. Outside school hours she found pleasure in various

diversions, including theatres, ballet and the learning of Spanish. In school she shared the responsibility for the collection of National Savings and often gave solo dramatic performances and Parents' at Home and Staff entertainments.

I always found Miss Lounis competent, courteous and loyal and we were all sorry to say 'Good-bye' to her in July 1953, although we appreciated her natural desire to improve her professional technique by residence in France. I shall be glad to answer questions about Miss Lounis at any time.

Yours faithfully,
E. J. Buckley
Headmaster.

Shirley Brown (Hayes) 1968-75

Shirley organised a reunion for her year group last October

With the power of the FOGA Webpage an idea was born...it would be fifty years since the 1968 intake of Droylsden Fairfield High School for Girls had left that establishment to go their separate ways into the world. So what better time to hold a reunion?

And on the 4th October last year we came together. We met for an afternoon buffet at the

Fairfield Arms. With more than 30 ladies meeting up the room was full of chatter and reminiscing. Some ladies had travelled a day earlier to attend the FOGA Autumn Reunion and tour the school, some still lived nearby whilst others travelled from much further afield and some even flew in from abroad. How far we have flown since 1975!

We welcomed Miss Lealman to open our reunion. It's fair to say she was fascinated to hear about the Fairfield we experienced compared to the school of today..

We'd collected photos to display and brought along our memorabilia. Our tables were decorated with daffodils, roses, thistles and shamrocks to represent the four houses to which we'd each belonged. We held a 70s inspired quiz and listened to the music from our era and we remembered those who sadly we had lost along the way.

We closed our reunion by singing Brother James' Air - we all remembered the words!

The friendships born of our Fairfield years are clearly still very much in evidence and renewed as a result of our reunion. It's testament to our great school that we were equipped, not only with an outstanding education but also with values such as loyalty, appreciation and respect. They tie us invisibly together forever as 'Fairfield Girls'



Deb Ives (Caldwell) 1970-75

My year group also celebrated 50 years although we celebrated 50 years since leaving 5th year in 1975.

We celebrated with a proper knees up at the Salisbury Club in Droylsden, with entertainment and dancing, ending with a karaoke session, which I will add I am glad I couldn't share that with you on video, but it was a wonderful evening!



We also meet up quite regularly for lunch at local pubs, and in January, 18 of us actually gathered at the Sheldon Arms, Ashton-U-Lyne.

It makes me so happy, when I see so many year groups getting together.

Honoured Old Girls

May 2025

Emma Quinn (Catterall) was joined by her sister Susanne Mills at Buckingham Palace for the garden party. Emma was invited for her outstanding contribution to education. Emma is a teacher at St. Marys Primary School,



Droylsden.



Jackie Moores also attended the Garden Party on the same day.



Also Sharman Birtles (Newth) 1962-68 Vice Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester was a special guest at the British Citizenship Ceremonies, conducted by another Old Girl Susan Curtis (Prince) 1974-79.

Our Super Achievers



Gillian Gustar (Latus) 1970-77

Gill left Fairfield with A Levels in French and English in 1977 and built a career in Human Resources which I loved. In her own words....'I got Chartership but still felt I needed a degree, so later when back and did one in Psychology at the Open University. That led to teaching HR for their Business School, and they had a staff fee waiver scheme which meant you could take courses for free. So, just decided to take an English module, because she had enjoyed it at school. One module led to another until she had

done a degree, then carried on to do the Masters in English Literature, As part of that you do a dissertation on a topic/author of your choice. I did mine on Ford Madox, Ford and his novel about the First World War (Parade's End) and just didn't feel finished with that when the course ended, so applied to do PhD research on it. Initially started at King's College, London, but my supervisor moved to the University of Birmingham, where I finally graduated on the 9th July 2025.”



Gillian says:

“Miss Jopson's teaching has always stayed with me..especially First World War poetry. I can still quote some of the things she said in class! I won the Rothwell Prize for English, which for a girl from the terraced streets of Ashton whose parents finished school at age 15 felt huge ...and left me with the confidence that I was probably not bad at English. More than anything, I think they instilled in me a love of learning for its own sake.”

Congratulations Gill

Just a note, it was actually Molly Brudenell's father Arthur Rothwell who gave the prize for English, which Gill received.



Diane Hudson-Sharpe 1976-81

“Well I just graduated officially from Falmouth University with an MA in Illustration (Distinction!) at the age of 60 - you're never too old for anything - especially when you're an ex-Fairfield girl! I think I can honestly say that my experience at Fairfield High School for Girls set me up for life. I had an amazing time throughout my course and on graduation day I even met Dawn

French, Chancellor of the University, who handed me a hard won 'Dawn Doubloon' (a large Belgian chocolate coin!) That's as well as my certificate of course."

Diane left Fairfield in 1981 at 16. She was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Trust Fund to begin her art education at Tameside College, where she followed the Art Foundation Course rather than the A Level route at 6th form college. She went on to do the Printed Textiles BA at Manchester Poly, but followed up with design studies with the Open University and finished with a BSc Hons in Design and Technology. She worked at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge for many years as their image library manager then onto work on copyright for Cambridge University Press and Assessment.



Diane says
"I have wanted to get back to creating my own art for a long time, and doing the MA has been my rote to making a start."



*own art
my rote to*

Well done Diane

Charities

It was decided at the AGM in April 2025 to continue to support the Guide Dogs charity. We chose 3 gorgeous little ones. Introducing you to Honey, Leo and Piper.



Honey

Breed: Labrador/Golden retriever

Mum: Nyla

Dad: Vincent

Pupdate 1

The journey begins!

Hello, it's Sue here, Honey's Puppy Raiser.

I began volunteering for Guide Dogs after I saw an advertisement in the local newspaper. I was keen to find out how I could get involved with the charity, and after making a phone call, it developed from there. I'd recently taken voluntary redundancy from my full-time job and thought it would be a good time to balance part-time work and puppy raising, so that's what I did, and Honey is now my third.

Settling in

Honey is simply a delight! She is an incredibly confident, charismatic and cheeky girl who took no time at all to settle in. She is very sociable and cannot wait to 'say hello' to everyone, but she is already learning to wait for the 'okay' cue before doing so. At home, I also have Kerra, my first guide dog pup who was taken out of training. In Kerra, Honey has found her very best pal, and she idolises her 'big sister'. Honey is learning lots from Kerra and can often be found curled up in her bed!



In a short amount of time, Honey has managed to accumulate an extremely large collection of toys! Her favourite is her soft purple octopus, and she also loves her snuggle blanket that she sleeps with every night. Honey especially loves playing lots of different hidden food puzzle games. These are perfect for satisfying her active mind (and her big appetite!) I hide bits of kibble in them, and she has to work out the best way to get it, which isn't always easy, but she seems to do it pretty quickly!

Learning

Honey is exceptionally bright, and it amazes me how quickly she picks things up. She is already very good with the cues 'sit' and 'down', and she's doing really well with her recall too. She is eager to learn and relishes a challenge – the more difficult the better!

Recently, Honey started puppy classes, and I wondered how it would go given her friendly nature and the many other excitable pups in the room. However, Honey was brilliant; the trainer described her as a 'star', and she concentrated on everything she was asked to do without getting distracted.

Honey is so good that it is easy to forget how young she is. One thing that reminds me is when I am in the kitchen preparing food at the counter, I will see a little head pop up and two small paws perch on the counter. This has earned her the nickname of 'the meerkat' as she seems to appear from nowhere very suddenly! I am working on finding the best ways to discourage her from doing this, and we are getting there slowly but surely.

Next steps

I feel so lucky to be Honey's puppy raiser.

Her exuberance, confidence and zest for life are a joy to watch. Our next adventures will involve learning all about using public transport, as well as visiting new places and, excitingly, a trip to the seaside, which will be Honey's first time at the beach and seeing the ocean!



Pupdate 2

Honey is a little bundle of energy and joy! She's an incredibly lively and enthusiastic pup – always curious about new things and never fazed by any of the places we explore together. Since your last Pupdate, I've been taking her on plenty of outings to give her a variety of experiences. I recently took Honey on a tram for the first time, and she took to it like a pro, so we're hoping to try a train next. We've been to a train station already, so she could get used to being on the platform with trains coming and going. She was really happy with that, so next time we'll get on board!

New friends

Honey is such a loving pup and gets excited to meet people and dogs alike. There's a little girl who lives next door to us who's very scared of dogs and initially she was frightened of Honey too. But now, after meeting her properly, she's always asking if she can come over and sit with her. Her parents can't believe it! I think Honey is very good at reading people, and she's such a sweet-natured puppy, so it's hard not to fall for her.

It's not just people either; we recently went away to Norfolk with Honey and our pet cavapoo Bob, and the pair had a wonderful time! It was Honey's first experience of the ocean, and I've never seen a happier puppy. She was in heaven! She hadn't seen waves before and initially ran away

when they rolled onto the shore, but it took less than five minutes before she was



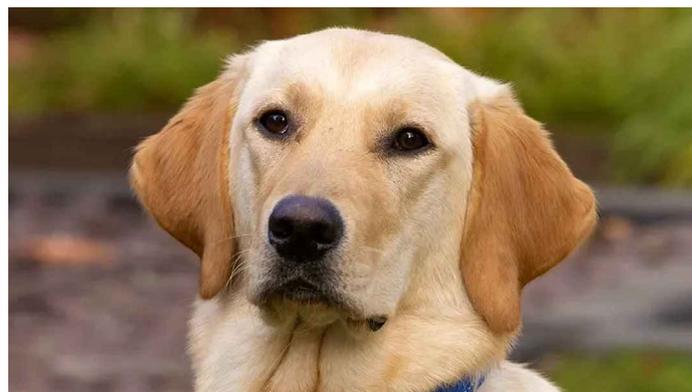
playing in the shallows – and running up and down the dunes like a wild thing! It was so funny to watch.

Puppy classes

Honey has recently hit her ‘teenage’ phase – it happened with the other three puppies I’ve raised too. Just like humans, they fill up with hormones and start testing the boundaries! Because of this, she’s become even more excitable and her recall, which used to be near-perfect, has suffered a little. I’m not too worried though, as it’s really common for dogs at this age, and she’s still a superstar during puppy classes. It’s almost like she flicks a switch and behaves herself, so no one believes me that she can be a bit cheeky sometimes!



In classes, I’ve been teaching Honey to wait at doors until I open them and give her the cue ‘okay’ to go through. We’ve also been working on ‘place’, so I can put a mat down wherever we are and give her the cue ‘place’, and she knows that’s her spot to go to and settle. She’s picking this up really well and we’re slowly building the amount of time that she’s happy to stay there. For such an excitable dog, she does settle quickly. We went out for dinner last week and she just went under the table and chilled out; she didn’t even need a toy.



Leo

Breed: Labrador

Mum: Jessie
Dad: Riva

Pupdate 1 **Tiny paws, big journey!**

Hello, it's Gerard here,
I'm raising Leo with my wife Helen.
We've known about Guide Dogs for a long time
and always had interest in volunteering. After
retiring, puppy raising seemed a natural fit for our
lifestyle. Our love of dogs, combined with more
free time, makes puppy raising a truly fulfilling
experience for us.



Getting to know Leo

Leo is our second pup; we previously raised Clive, a golden retriever cross. We'd also fostered two dogs before Clive, so Leo came into a well-practised household!

He settled in straight away. He's confident, laid-back, and gets on beautifully with our daughter's pets, yellow Labrador Sadie and Italian greyhound Cleo, who often visit. Their bond has really helped his socialisation, and Jan, our Puppy Development Advisor, confirmed it's a big plus having calmer adult dogs around.

Leo's a gentle soul – very soft-mouthed when taking treats like apple slices, and he eats from his bowl at a lovely pace, which says a lot about his temperament. He enjoys playtime, particularly with his favourite toys – the squeaky chips, and the elephant and octopus soft toys being his top picks.

He has a habit of emptying his toy box to find the one which inspires him most! It's a joy to watch. Leo also enjoys puzzle toys and enrichment activities. One of his favourites is a clock-face style feeder with hidden kibble compartments. He's so smart and curious. He loves a cuddle, but he's also perfectly happy chilling out on his own. He's got a beautiful balance between being affectionate and independent.

Brand new experiences

Helen and I have been working steadily on teaching Leo the basic cues: 'sit', 'down' and 'wait'. His food manners are impeccable – he'll sit and wait calmly until I give him the go ahead with his whistle before approaching his bowl. He settles wonderfully on his mat, and his recall during free runs is coming along well too. As he's still young, he needs a bit of support with jumping into the boot of the car – he manages to jump out easily, but getting in requires some lifting. We've lined the boot with a soft bed, and it's become his personal safe travel space.

The funny thing is that he enjoys travelling in the car so much, once he's in, sometimes he doesn't want to jump out after a car ride! It's clearly one of his favourite places. We went to a Guide Dogs event recently and loved meeting other puppies and volunteers, and Leo enjoyed the atmosphere. So far, we've taken Leo to friends' houses and garden barbecues, and he's taken each new environment in his stride.

Next plans

Puppy classes are on our radar next. As Leo continues to grow, we're looking forward to introducing him to more places with new sounds and smells – shopping centres, libraries, busier streets, and even train stations. We're teaching him to master the stairs at home, and with treats and praise, we'll encourage him to feel confident with steps in public spaces too. Raising Leo is such a wonderful part of our retirement – full of joy, new friendships, and the sense of giving back.



Pupdate 2

Leo is thriving! When he first arrived, he could be a little nervous or reluctant to try new things, but now he's the most confident chap. I think he's reached his full size now too – he might put on a little more muscle, but he seems to have stopped growing in stature, so we're just tweaking his food to make sure that he maintains a healthy weight.

Now that Leo has gained some more confidence, he's started to show his cheeky side. This behaviour is normal with pups his age as they enter their 'teenage phase' and try to see how far they can push the boundaries – much like humans. When I have an early start, I tend to set out all my clothes the night before so that I don't disturb my wife too much when I get up. Recently, I went to get dressed and realised that



my socks had gone missing! It turns out that Leo thought they'd make a fun toy, so he'd taken them off to have a chew. I rescued them – thankfully no holes – and now I keep them out of his reach, and I'm encouraging him to keep the munching to his food and toys.

The big wide world

Recently, I've been focusing on exposing Leo to a variety of new environments so that he builds a positive association with novel experiences and feels comfortable in new places he visits with his future owner. We've been to shops, restaurants, and busy town centres, and he's taken it all in his stride. One of my sisters is a Carmelite nun, so I took Leo to visit the convent too, as this is a very different environment from what he's used to. He didn't bat an Eye and stayed perfectly calm in the quieter space. I was really proud of him!

I've also been working with Leo on getting used to lifts. Initially, he found them a little unsettling, so it took a bit of time for him to get used to them. It's understandable – it's a big box that moves about! I used positive reinforcement, rewarding Leo with kibble whenever we were inside a lift, and now he's much happier with them, although still a little uneasy in glass ones. It's a work in progress, but we're moving in the right direction.

Travel and transport

Leo and I have been on all sorts of public transport now, from buses to trains! He took to both really quickly; we just had to be a bit mindful of the gap as it's quite large at our local station. He's also been in my car without any issues, although he was a little less certain about jumping into my friend's when we went to visit him. His car is much smaller and maybe just not what Leo is used to. Because of this, I'm planning to work with Puppy Development Advisor, Jan, to familiarise Leo with the training van so that we know he's comfortable with this before he moves to training school.



Piper

Breed: Labrador/Golden retriever cross

Mum: Rebecca

Dad: Danny

Pupdate 1

An exciting journey begins!

Hello, it's David here, Piper's Puppy Raiser.

I have a family of five, and Piper is our first puppy! My wife and I have always worked full time, and we didn't feel we had the right flexibility for a pet before. Now that our three children are young adults and I'm having a career break, committing to raising a guide dog puppy felt like the right thing for us. It's such a



rewarding challenge, as what we're doing now could have a life-changing impact for someone with sight loss in the future.

Welcoming little Piper

From day one, Piper has been bouncing and wagging her tiny tail while exploring our home. She settled in straight away; we bought her a soft toy that has an electronic pulse inside it which mimics a heartbeat. It helps young puppies feel safe and secure once they've moved away from their mum, and Piper was really comforted by it. We also took turns sleeping downstairs close to her bed, to make sure she was happy from the very beginning.

Piper is very playful and has a special love for her green broccoli toy and squeaky bunny. Her curiosity and confidence really amaze me: she's not bothered in the slightest by the bin lorry passing by, or the vacuum cleaner, which on the contrary she finds exciting! She loves playing in the garden and checking what we're doing when we pot new plants.

Learning cues

Puppy classes have started for Piper and they're proving incredibly useful. She's picked up cues like 'sit' and 'touch' (where I hold my closed fist and ask her to touch it with her nose). Piper's food manners are impeccable. I can drop a treat on the floor and she'll just sit and wait for the cue 'okay' to get close and eat it. She's very food-motivated, which makes teaching cues with positive reinforcement easy and fun. Her recall is good as well; we had a moment in the woods where she came right back after spotting a group of kids playing football, completely unbothered by the moving ball. I'm so proud of her!

Meeting paw-pals

Piper is not only sociable with her fellow puppy class pals, but with older dogs too. One of her best friends is a German shepherd called Herbert, a former Guide Dogs dog she likes to have free runs with in the afternoons. When I take Piper on loose lead walks, we often meet our neighbour's yellow Labrador, Max, and she likes to say hello to him too.

Next plans

The next few weeks are all about building on the great foundation we've started, guided by brilliant advice from Jo, our Puppy Development Advisor. We'll be enjoying more experiences out and about, such as settling in cafés, going to supermarkets, visiting train stations, and spending more time in busy public places. Piper's already fine with getting in and out of the car, and I'll see how she does with longer trips.

It's such a joy to see Piper adapting this brilliantly to the puppy raising routine. My family and I are honoured to be part of her journey to become a guide dog.



Pupdate 2

I'm delighted to say that Piper continues to make great progress; she's picking things up quickly and is a keen learner. She's growing and changing all the time, but her personality remains an absolute joy. Piper's thirst for life is incredible to see; she's a happy, confident pup who is eager to please. As I mentioned in Piper's previous Pupdate, this is my first puppy and training her continues to be a rewarding experience.

Progress and personality

As Piper continues to grow, it's been important for us to explore new experiences. This has been slightly challenging at times as Piper has had occasional car sickness, which has prevented us from going to puppy classes as of late. Thankfully, this has been improving, so I'm gradually extending the length of our car journeys together. In the meantime, we're still practising all the cues from home with the support of our Puppy Development Advisor, Joanne.

Just recently, we went to Stratford on the train with Joanne, so that Piper could experience it; she was brilliant! She's also been on the bus and wasn't bothered by the movement. Piper seems to know that when her puppy jacket is on, it's work mode! Her focus and concentration transforms, particularly in towns, and she walks confidently without being distracted by the hustle and bustle

around us. I've also introduced Piper to cafés, and she'll happily walk by my side, up and down aisles at the supermarket whilst I browse the shelves.

Being outdoors is where Piper is at her happiest. She absolutely loves her free runs and will get the excitable 'zoomies' when we arrive at our local field. Despite all the excitement, her recall is brilliant, and she'll return to me happily. Now that she's a little older, she has a lot more energy, and enjoys playing so much that some of her toys have had to have stitches here and there after losing a few limbs!



Overcoming challenges

Piper is beginning to enter her 'teenage phase'; she is starting to test the boundaries a little. Recently, she went through a stage of wanting to sit down when on walks, particularly when she was in a cheekier mood. Luckily, this phase has now passed, but I will continue to reward her focus when she walks nicely by my side.



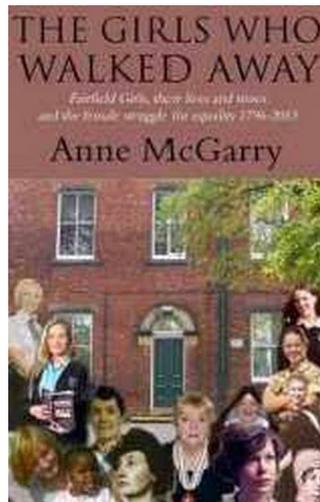
Upcoming plans

While Piper has been doing incredibly well, we're continuing to improve her behaviours in the coming months. I'll continue to build up our car journeys together, with hopes of visiting the Peak District soon. We'll also be working on improving how long she can settle in cafés without a treat or toy to entertain her. Similarly, in public places or on transport, I'll be teaching Piper to lie under my legs instead of sitting next to me when it's busy around us. With her energy and eagerness to learn, I've no doubt that she'll pick up these behaviours quickly. Being her puppy raiser continues to be such a privilege, and I look forward to her becoming a life changer.

We also agreed to continue to give a donation to school, so they may buy extras, which are not always accounted for within their budget.

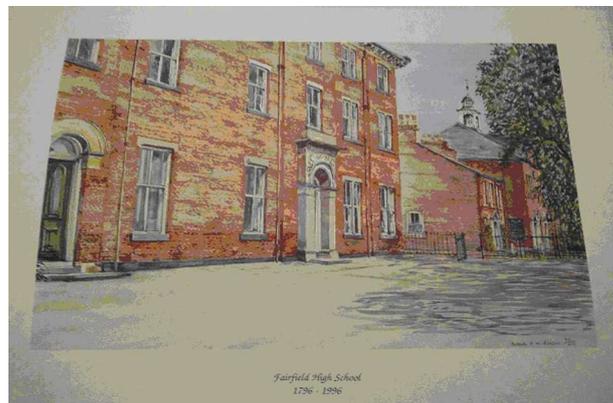
We still have copies of Anne McGarry's book for anyone who wishes to buy one. It really is an eye opener!
These books are now exclusive to us, and all profits go back into FOGA. Thanks to the generosity of Anne McGarry.

The cost is £10.00 each plus P&P.
UK delivery with packing is approx £4.00 per book.



Also

Copies of the painting by Brenda Wilkinson are still available.
They are £10 each, plus relevant postage and package charges



Displays



Our displays are kept updated by our fab team of volunteers, We usually change them twice a year and they are always refreshed before a meeting/reunion.

Committee Members

Helen Weston, Deb Ives, Pru Slater, Beverley Moores, Joyce Eves, Julia Eves, Denise Fitzmaurice, Margaret Wilson, Diane Bottoms and Danielle Ives.

Nominees for the committee are always welcome.

Facebook

Our Facebook Group is still growing, and even more old girls are using it to make contact with us and their school friends.

We now have excess of 2,500 worldwide members, who have shared hundreds of photographs and memories.

Please note that this group is not officially FOGA.

(Fairfield Old Girls Association)

It is open to all Old Girls and members of staff past and present.

We have a small group of admins/moderators running it and have very strict policies, taking no arguments.

If the rules are not respected then out and blocked!

We try to keep it a safe and happy place for everyone.

If you do not have access to Facebook but maybe a son or daughter does, then they are welcome to join on your behalf. Please remember to tell them to let us know that they are joining on your behalf.

Here is the link to the Fairfield Memories group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/981264985322246>

**The school also now has it own Official Facebook
group/page**

<https://www.facebook.com/FFHSFG>

**Also School have just launched their new website, its
very modern and looks fabulous.**

[https://www. Fairfieldhighschool.co.uk](https://www.Fairfieldhighschool.co.uk)

The Facebook group is updated regularly and its really lovely seeing what the girls are doing.

You may have noticed that there have been a few emails regarding working with and alongside the school. I am glad to say that this is working extremely well, and a few who have taken up the opportunity, have loved every minute.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please note that we have changed our Bank, to Nat West. The new account number is below.

Subs remain at £5.00 a year.

We are also aware a lot of our members do send in donations too, for which we are extremely grateful.

It would be really helpful if all members could pay their subs by Bank Transfer or Direct Debit before the end of December of each year in order for the financial statement to be ready for the AGM.

New Bank Details are as follows:

Bank:	Nat West
Account Name:	FOGA, Fairfield Old Girls
Branch Sort Code:	01-01-75
Account number:	19342284

Cheques are also acceptable and should be made payable to:

FOGA. Fairfield Old Girls

Sent to:

Mrs P. Slater, 25 Penshurst Road, Brinnington, Stockport, SK5 8HL

or

Mrs D. Ives, 13 Sutton Drive, Droylsden, Manchester, M43 7RX

Thank you

AGM / Reunion

Our AGM will be held in school

Saturday 25th April 2026
2.00pm

Please let me know if you will be attending as soon as you can, as we need numbers for catering purposes.

Also the last few meetings have been so well attended we may need to request further seating.

Contact Details

Mrs D. Ives,

Telephone or text:

07913 945602

Message me on Facebook messenger

or
email

fairfieldoga@gmail.com