

# Thorndown Primary School

## Newsletter

Hello,

It has been a sunny and lovely final week of term here at Thorndown.

We have had a number of different exciting things happening with English Challenges, cross-countries, Great Fire of London days and parent sewing afternoons!

We would like to extend a huge thank you to all the parents and carers who supported with these events and other events and others across the term.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a Happy Easter and we look forward to welcoming to the children back on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April

Mr Snape

### Attendance

Our whole school attendance for this year is 95.7% which is above the national average of 94.5%.

Our top attending class so far this year is Meerkat Class!

**MOMENTS  
MATTER,  
ATTENDANCE  
COUNTS.**

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This week, the class winning our attendance trophy for best attendance was Owl with 100%.

### Red Nose Day

A big thank you to you all for helping us to raise over £400 for Comic Relief



### School Dates



- 4<sup>th</sup> April - Last Day of Term
- 22<sup>nd</sup> April - Training Day
- 23<sup>rd</sup> April - First day of term
- 24<sup>th</sup> April - Zoolab visit to Reception
- 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April - Yr4/5 West Stow Trip
- 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> May - KS2 Chef Visits
- 12<sup>th</sup> May - Year 6 SATs week

### Healthy Snacks

Thank you for your support and feedback following the letter about healthy snack choices. Please note the list of suggestions is not exhaustive and children are welcome to bring in other healthy options. We would also like to reassure you that the school will be working alongside you to consider how we are offering healthy options at events, celebrations and as part of our school provision.

# Achievement



## Pre-School

This week, we've had lots of fun with our Easter theme! The children enjoyed a variety of activities, including creating an Easter scene in the tuff tray, practicing their pencil control with Easter-themed colouring and mazes, making Easter bunnies with playdough, and exploring patterns using colourful Easter eggs.

We also had our annual Easter egg hunt in the garden and colouring competition - thanks so much to all the parents who joined in with their little ones! We raised £115 to help buy new resources for the preschool.

Looking ahead, next term we're excited to explore life cycles, and we can't wait to see all the amazing things the children will create during the Easter holidays with the optional activities we've sent home.

The preschool team wishes you all a wonderful holiday!

Kind regards  
Mrs. Smith

## Writers of the Week

Each week, in Celebration Assembly, we congratulate those children that have been working particularly hard with their writing. Children from each class have the opportunity to display their work in the hall and receive a certificate. Well done to the children below for receiving 'Writer of the Week' this week:



Badgers - Ismaeel  
Hedgehog - Freyac  
Otter - Amelie  
Kangaroo - Otis  
Owl - Mollie-Rai  
Elephant - Ogi  
Bat - Annabel  
Puffin - Bonnie  
Giraffe - Zi He  
Meerkat - Benji  
Chameleon - Ellie  
Lion - Megan  
Orca - Archie  
Penguin - Mujtaba  
Toucan - Alfie  
Lemur - Poppy  
Jaguar - Benjamin



## Oracy Assembly

In our KS1 and KS2 Oracy assembly this week we talked about Easter. We learnt that Easter is a long running festival used to celebrate the coming of spring. We learnt that the Easter eggs we give are representative of new life. We talked about our own experiences of Easter and how we celebrate it. We talked about how people may go out for a special meal with family and friends; we give cards and chocolate eggs and go on an Easter egg hunt.



These are the questions we talked about:

- What do you know about Easter?
- Why do we celebrate Easter?
- How do we celebrate Easter?



At home you could talk about your favourite thing about Easter using the [Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasize a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.] instigate and build talk tactics. You could also discuss all the signs of spring that you have noticed over the last few weeks.



I would like to start by  
saying...  
I think...



Building on \_\_\_\_\_ idea,  
I think...

# Well-Being



## Thank you to Frank Newton, Thorndown School Governor for more than 50 years.

Anyone who has attended or worked at Thorndown Primary School during the past 50 years will have benefitted from the knowledge and experience of Frank Newton. Frank's commitment to the school, and to education in general, has been extraordinary, and all of it has been given on a voluntary basis.

All three of Frank's daughters went to the Thorndown Schools (originally Thorndown Infant and Thorndown Junior Schools). For more than 50 years, Frank served as a member of the School Governing Body. Indeed, for many of these years, Frank held the position of Chair of Governors and was responsible for overseeing the Governing Body's management of the school. He brought with him extensive knowledge of Local Authority finance and also gave his time and experience on School Appeals panels.

Earlier this year, Frank retired from his role as a Governor, and it seems fitting to mark his tremendous contribution to the school. In his selfless style, Frank is keen that this is done in a way which continues to benefit the Thorndown Community. After discussion with Governors, including Staff and Parent representatives, a collection is underway to provide an outdoor clock (with personalisation marking Frank's commitment to Thorndown). If anyone would like to make a contribution to mark Frank's 50+ years of voluntary service to the school (or if parents would simply like to support the purchase of something which will enhance the playground and outside area for the benefit of current and future pupils), donations are gratefully received. These can be made via the school payment system and a payment option has been added for this purpose.

Although Frank's role may not have been visible at times, schools cannot operate without the voluntary time and effort that governors put into managing schools and supporting school leaders. The time, energy and expertise that Frank gave to the school for more than half a century was immense and it is fitting that it should be marked in some way.

Thank you.



# Opportunity



## Y6 English Challenge



Following the success we had at the initial English Challenge Heats a few weeks ago, we were invited back to compete in the English Challenge Finals on Wednesday afternoon against schools across the county of Cambridgeshire. These four children were tasked with 3 challenging rounds which relied on them to use their English knowledge of reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar (especially, books they have read over the years from when they were tiny to Year 6's!) Mr Snape and I would agree that it was a joy to accompany this group of children with their parents on this challenge. They all demonstrated fantastic resilience, determination and team work. Unfortunately, we did not place in the top three but they represented Thorndown wonderfully and we are all very proud of them. Well done Isla, Nina, Quinn and Orlaith.

## Y6 Cross Country

On Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April, 16 children from Thorndown Primary School were chosen to take part in the County Cross Country championships. The 2k run around the park in St Neots was long and tiring. The children who took part were Quinn, Willow, Florence M, Matilda, Giancarlo, Ben, Oliver, Romeo, Charlie H, Noah D, Melville, Ruben, Taniyah, Dua, Izzy M and Ava L. All our teams tried very hard and we look forward to hearing where we placed in among the 50 schools that took part. Huge thanks to Miss Collins, Mrs Burke and the parent helpers. Written by Charlie and Ava





# Opportunity



## Year 2 Great Fire of London Day

This week Bats and Puffins enjoyed a fantastic 'History Off the Page' day to conclude their Great Fire of London topic. Pupils in Year Two came to school kitted out as boys and girls from 1666 and participated in sewing, candle making, writing with a quill, medicine making, clay modelling, salt dough shaping and leather tapping to name just a few of the activities! The children were treated to updates throughout the day which told them what was happening with the Great Fire, how it was spreading and the reasons why it was burning so uncontrollably.

In the afternoon, the children used artefact boxes, diary entries and other clues to guess the occupation of various different tradespeople. Mrs Dunsdon's group followed clues which helped them to guess that their tradesperson was a leathermaker. His place of work was sadly burned in the fire as he lived and worked very close to St Paul's Church (now called St Paul's Cathedral.)

A great day was had by all. We would like to extend a big thank you to those who helped make this possible by volunteering to help on the day.



## Reading Raffle



Frequent reading time at home builds a foundation for lifelong learning and fosters a deep love for books and reading. This term we have continued to use our motivational scheme where the children receive a 'smelly sticker' or a 'bingo square' by showing that they've read and had their reading diary signed five times in one week. If your child received a sticker or square they were entered into the raffle which was drawn on Friday during celebration assembly. Well done to all our reading raffle winners!

## School Attendance Information for Parents/Carers



**MISS SCHOOL – MISS OUT**  
Don't let your child be the one to miss out!



[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

### What can you do to help?

- Establish good bedtime and morning routines.
- Ensure your child arrives at school on time. This encourages habits of punctuality and lessens any possible classroom disruption. If your child arrives after the attendance register has closed without a good reason, this will be recorded as an 'unauthorised' absence for that session.
- All absences must be reported to the school office for each day of absence (your child's school will have an Attendance Policy explaining the school's expectations and procedures).
- If you know or think that your child is having difficulties attending school, you should contact the school. It is better to speak to them sooner rather than later, as most problems can be dealt with very quickly.
- *Always ask for help from the school to support you and your child's attendance.*

### Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Schools can only authorise absences for a limited range of exceptional circumstances. These are typically absences that are completely unavoidable. Absences that will not be agreed might include:

- Arrival after registers have closed.
- Absences that are not properly explained by parents or child.
- Day trips and Term Time Leave
- Leaving the school without school's authorisation.

### Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether to keep your child off school if when they are unwell.

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

### Term Time Leave

The Government has removed the discretion for head teachers to agree term time leave requests. Due to the disruptive effect on a child's education, you are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term-time.

Exceptional circumstances have not been dictated by the Government. Individual head teachers will make the final decision to authorise the leave

### The Law

By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16 yrs.) must receive a suitable, full-time education suitable for the age and ability of the young person.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child receives an education suitable to his/her age, ability and aptitude and any special needs. Most parents fulfill this obligation by registering their child in a school.

### Compulsory school age:

From: 1 September, 1 January, 1 April following the child's fifth birthday  
To: the last Friday in June in the school year in which the child is sixteen (1 September to 31 August)

Receiving a good **full-time education** will give your child the best possible start in life and best possible outcomes.

Attending school regularly and punctually is essential if children are to make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Government research suggests that 17 missed school days a year = 1 GCSE grade DROP in achievement.

### Attendance during one school year

Attendance during one school year	Equivalent number of missed:		
	Days	Weeks	Average lessons
95%	9	2	54
90%	19	4	114
85%	29	6	174
80%	38	8	228
75%	48	10	288
70%	57	11.5	342
65%	67	13.5	402

of absence based on information provided and the absence cannot be authorised retrospectively. The need or desire for recreation downtime is not considered exceptional.

Unauthorised leave of absence could result in a Penalty Notice fine being issued.

### Local Authority Education Attendance Service

It is the responsibility of the school to have their own arrangements in place to manage poor attendance by offering appropriate support to parents and children.

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure regular school attendance.

If your child's attendance is unsatisfactory and failing to improve despite support from the school, the school will make a referral to the Local Authority.

Should it be considered that as a parent you are unwilling to ensure your child attends school regularly without good reason, you could be:

- parents may be subject to a Penalty fine of £160 (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days). Non-payment of this fine will result in case being listed for prosecution in the Magistrate Court, without further warning being issued.
- prosecuted in a Magistrates Court and fined up to £2,500 and/or imprisoned for up to 3 months in accordance with the Education Act 1996 Section 444.
- made the subject of a Parenting Order.
- your child may be made the subject of an Education Supervision Order in the Family Court.

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For further information about school attendance, please see our website.

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/education-your-rights-and-responsibilities/school-attendance](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/education-your-rights-and-responsibilities/school-attendance)

[Non-attendance at school and the law - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

[SEND Information Hub \(Local Offer\) \(cambridgeshire.gov.uk\)](#)

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/parenting-and-family-support/accessing-support-for-your-family](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/parenting-and-family-support/accessing-support-for-your-family)

<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2022/12/aaa-guide-for-parents-on-school-attendance.pdf>