

Thorncombe, St. Mary's CE Primary Academy



Living, Learning and Growing Together



Spring Term 25-26 Newsletter Issue: 20 Friday 13th February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the halfway point of the academic year, I wanted to share a few highlights and thank you for your continued support.

Our Year 6 hoodies have arrived and it has been lovely to see our oldest pupils wearing them with pride as they move through their final year at St Mary's. They are a great symbol of the responsibility and leadership they show around school. Thank you to everyone who supported the recent Book Fair. Events like this not only encourage a love of reading but also help us to invest back into new books and resources for the children to enjoy.

We have also enjoyed celebrating children's efforts on Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS). It has been fantastic to see such enthusiasm and commitment to practising times tables, and we are proud of the progress being made across the school. A huge well done to all our pupils and families for achieving 100% attendance at the halfway point of the year. This is a brilliant achievement and really reflects the importance we all place on being in school and ready to learn every day. Thank you to our wonderful PFA for organising the pancakes and disco - the children had a great time, and we are very grateful for the continued support and energy you bring to our school community.

Finally, I would like to offer special thanks to Mr Harris, who has now spent 8 years teaching the children at St Mary's, following 3 years supporting the school with ICT and technology. His long-standing commitment to the school and to the children's learning has been appreciated.

I would like to wish all our families a safe, restful and enjoyable half term. We look forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed for the next part of spring.

Thank you for your continued support.
Warm regards, Sal Davies

Our core value this term is:

Service

Our golden apple winners this week are...



The winning house this week:

Silver Birch

W/B 23/02/26:

Monday

Breakfast club
Lego & Games ASC: 3.15-4.30

Tuesday

Breakfast club: 8-8.30
Forest School Sessions
Bikes+Trikes ASC: 3.15-4.30

Wednesday

PFA AGM 2pm
Breakfast club: 8-8.30
PE Lessons
Sports Skills ASC: 3.15-4.30

Thursday

Breakfast club: 8-8.30
Creative ASC: 3.15-4.30

Friday

Breakfast Club: 8-8.30
Chromebooks ASC: 3.15-4.30

Please like, comment and share on our social media posts to spread the word of our wonderful school. Click below to be taken to them.



Quote of the week:

*Take care of yourself
like you take care of
someone you love.*



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Class News from this Week!

Little Acorns - Claire Stockford

We have had an amazing week in Little Acorns, they have made fantastic progress within their learning! We have made some very delicious shortbread biscuits this week using our brand new oven! We would like to thank the amazing PFA for fundraising and making this possible. We very much looking forward to cooking many more exciting things!. Little Acorns really enjoyed Forest school this week, learning all about fire safety and roasting marshmallows and cinnamon apples. The children have really loved marking on the white boards this week, they find it so funny to make marks, rub it out and do it again. In gross motor we explored Yoga, Little Acorns definitely put me to shame! I set them lots of different challenges and seeing if they could hold their poses for 10 seconds, they all did amazing. We then played a fun game of moving around like bugs.

I hope you all have a fantastic half term!

Pippin Class - Mrs Wheaton

Reception's story this week has been Poo in the Zoo. The whole class have absolutely LOVED this story and all the activities that come with it. They have been designing their own zoo, creating animals, labelling each section and writing lots of words linked to the story.

In Art this week, we explored the artist Paul Klee, linked to our work on colour this term. The children created artwork inspired by him. It was great to see the care and enjoyment they took, and the outcomes are brilliant.

In English this week, we explored rhyme poetry. Again, some fantastic work has been created and the children thought of some really hilarious rhymes. Year 1 focused on simple rhyme, Year 2 used adjectives, and Year 3 created their own rhyming couplets using different verbs.

Have a brilliant half term - the children have really worked so hard this term!
Mrs Wheaton

Orchard Class - Miss Taylor

Children have been writing their independent writing assessments this week, they have worked so hard to write from two different viewpoints and include all the important features! I have been so proud of their imagination!

We had our second lesson from Harry this week. He and Eddie from AVRA were very impressed with our trout and how clean the water is! The children have loved watching the fish grow and recording the temperature, our trout will stay with us for a few more weeks and then we will release them!

We have been having fun completing our 3D shape castles in DT, there have been some really interesting structures and designs and the children have really enjoyed making them.

On Wednesday we had the last lesson of handball and showed off all our skills effectively to teammates, the children did so well!

Have a wonderful half term! I hope it is full of fun memories!

Over the next week...

- Hear your child read at least 3 times each week. Please record this in their reading records/BoomReader. Parents - children are never too old to have a story read to them. They gain so much from this special time with you.
- Practise your multiplication and division facts using TTRS or other resources.

Year 1	2s, 5s, 10s
Year 2	2s, 5s, 10s
Year 3	3s, 4s, 8s
Year 4, 5 and 6	all multiplication tables up to 12x12

Children learn
4,000 to 12,000
words per year
through reading.

RSPB Wild Challenge 'Homes for Birds'

Thorncombe Environment Group and our eldest member of Eco Council hosted super sessions to build nest boxes as a safe place for birds to raise a family and take shelter. Everyone keenly measured, problem solved and used tools safely to assemble 'flat-pack' homes for 8 bird species!



House Sparrows are in decline so we built a box with a hole diameter of 32mm. Similar boxes were made for Blue Tits (25mm hole) and Great Tits (28mm hole).



Nuthatches like the feel of a 'cavity' with a 32-34mm hole to plaster with mud! Tree Creepers prefer a wedge-shaped box to mimic a tree 'crevice' with side entrances.



A larger box with a 45mm entrance was made specially for Starlings as a Red List species of greatest conservation concern.



Open-front boxes hidden in vegetation suit shyer birds like Wrens and Robins.

National Nestbox Week coincides with half term so consider supporting endangered birds by following our lead at home to Build a Starling nest box or Create a sparrow street.

Forest School Update

Spring 1

Welcome back to Forest School at Thorncombe Primary!

This term we were delighted to welcome Little Acorns to our sessions. Our new pupils have been busy exploring the site and, alongside Pippin and Orchard Class, learning about the elements: earth, water, air and fire.

Despite the many windy (and very wet!) days, the children have embraced every challenge. We explored how wind affects fire and discussed how to stay safe when cooking outdoors. Even in the rain, we were able to enjoy simple campfire treats such as marshmallows and baked apples with sugar and cinnamon, a definite highlight!

The children have also developed their practical skills by learning how to put up shelters in strong winds and heavy rain, building resilience and teamwork along the way. Tool skills have been practised safely through whittling, and the children have shown great creativity when making sculptures from clay and mud.

We were also pleased to take part in the RSPB Garden Birdwatch alongside Governor Catherine Davis, giving the children the opportunity to observe and record the wildlife around our school grounds.

Winter sessions can be challenging, but Forest School continues to provide rich opportunities for outdoor learning, problem-solving, friendship and fun. We are incredibly proud of the children's enthusiasm and perseverance.

We wish you all a restful break and look forward to welcoming the spring when we return.

Best wishes,
Paloma GW
Primary Forest Leader

Mental Health Week 2026

Place2Be's

CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
WEEK

9-15
FEB
2026

Our Mental Health Ambassadors did an amazing job leading our worship this morning to celebrate Children's Mental Health week. The theme this year is 'This is My Place' to remind us of the importance of feeling like we belong and how we can help others to feel like they belong too. The Mental Health Ambassadors represented the School brilliantly, giving us all the chance to reflect on how important small, friendly actions are and how they can make big changes.



"Belonging is a place that you feel comfortable just to be yourself."

Place2Be's
CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
WEEK
9-15
FEB
2026

#ChildrensMentalHealthWeek

If each of us does one kind thing our classroom and playground will be a place where everyone feels they belong

- Thorncombe
Mental Health
Ambassador

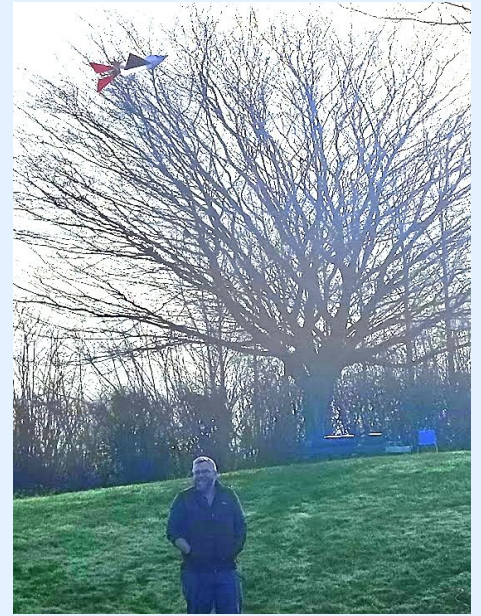
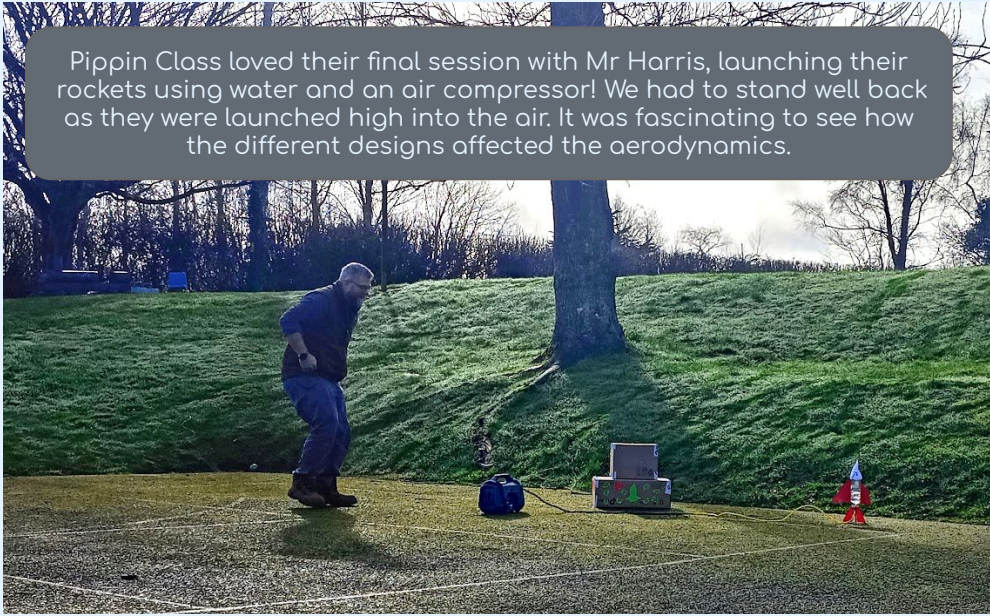
'If you see someone left out then you can ask them to play'

Place2Be's
CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
WEEK
9-15
FEB
2026

#ChildrensMentalHealthWeek

What a lovely week!

Pippin Class loved their final session with Mr Harris, launching their rockets using water and an air compressor! We had to stand well back as they were launched high into the air. It was fascinating to see how the different designs affected the aerodynamics.



What a lovely week!





PLACES WHERE KIDS EAT FREE (OR FOR £1) FEBRUARY HALF TERM 2026

moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free



<p>ANGUS STEAKHOUSE Kids under 8 eat FREE daily, 12pm to 5pm</p> <p>ASDA Kids eat for £1 daily, with no adult spend</p> <p>ASK ITALIAN Kids under 10 eat for £1 during school holidays</p> <p>BELLA ITALIA Children eat free Sunday - Thursday</p> <p>BEEFEATER & BREWERS FAYRE 2 Kids Eat Free Breakfast with one paying adult</p> <p>BILLS Kids eat free Monday 17th - Friday 28th Feb</p> <p>BREWDOG Kids eat free this Feb Half Term</p> <p>BEEFEATER & BREWERS FAYRE 2 under 16s get free breakfast daily with 1 adult!</p> <p>COCONUT TREE Kids eat FREE from 10th to the 16th of Feb 2026.</p> <p>CAFE ROUGE Kids Eat FREE 12-4pm every day of the week</p> <p>DOBBIES GARDEN CENTRES Kids eat for £1 with an adult breakfast or lunch</p> <p>FRANKIE & BENNY'S Kids eat FREE during all school holidays</p> <p>FUTURE INNS Under 5s eat for free with any adult meal</p> <p>GORDON RAMSEY RESTAURANTS Kids under 10 eat FREE all day, every day</p> <p>IKEA Kids get a meal from 95p daily from 11am</p> <p>LAS IGUANAS Kids under 12 eat FREE with 'My Las Iguanas' App</p> <p>MARCO PIERRE WHITE Kids under 12 Eat FREE daily with an adult spend</p>	<p>MORRISONS Kids Eat FREE all day, every day with a £5 spend</p> <p>PAUSA CAFE @ DUNELM Kids eat FREE with every £4 spend all day</p> <p>PREMIER INN 2 kids eat for free with 1 adult breakfast</p> <p>PRETO Kids up to age 10 eat free with 1 paying adult</p> <p>PREZZO Kids eat for £1 from 6th Jan to 11th February 2026.</p> <p>PUREZZA Kids under 10 get free pizza with every adult meal</p> <p>PIZZA HUT Kids Eat Free Every Day after 3pm</p> <p>SA BRAINS PUBS Kids eat for £1 on Wednesdays</p> <p>SIZZLING PUBS Kids eat for £1. Every Monday to Friday, 3 - 7pm</p> <p>TABLE TABLE 2 Kids Eat free breakfast daily with 1 paying adult</p> <p>TGI FRIDAYS Kids Eat Free with any adult meal (Via App)</p> <p>THE REAL GREEK Kids under 12 eat FREE Sundays with £10 spend</p> <p>TRAVELODGE 2 kids eat for free with 1 adult breakfast</p> <p>TURTLE BAY Kids eat free with every £15 adult spend</p> <p>WHITBREAD INNS 2 kids eat for FREE with 1 adult breakfast</p> <p>YO! SUSHI Kids eat free all day (weekdays) in school holidays</p> <p>ZIZZI Kids eat free all day Feb 16th - 20th 2026</p>
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[Mental Health Support Services:](#)
[Dorset Support](#) [Somerset Support](#) [Devon Support](#)

Safeguarding Information

Mrs Sol Davies
Acting Head of School
Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mrs Merryn Wheaton
EYFS Lead and Pippin
Teacher
Deputy DSL



Our child protection policy can be found [here](#).