

Thorncombe, St. Mary's CE Primary Academy



Living, Learning and Growing Together



Autumn Term 25-26 Newsletter Issue: 14 Friday 19th December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of the Autumn term, I would like to thank you for the very warm welcome I have received in my first term as Acting Head. It has been a pleasure to get to know the children, staff, families, and wider community.

It was fantastic to see so many of you at the Nativity performance and to be able to perform together as a whole school. Thank you to the children and staff for their hard work, and to the PFA for their wonderful hospitality and much-appreciated mince pies.

This term, pupils worked together across the school to create messages of thankfulness for members of our local community who volunteer their time so generously, including reading volunteers, the Village Hall and Swimming Pool Committees, Catherine Davis, and others. This work was led by our Ethos Council and reflected our strong school values.

We have also enjoyed seeing children work across year groups, with older pupils supporting younger ones to create festive Christmas artwork.

Finally, after several years of Forest School sessions taking place on Friday afternoons, there will be a small change to this arrangement from the New Year. Further details will be shared soon.

Thank you for your continued support. I wish you and your families a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

Warm regards, Sal Davies

Our core value this term is:

Thankfulness

Our golden apple winners this week are...



The winning house this week:

Silver Birch

W/B 05/01/26

At a glance:

Monday

INSET DAY

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

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.



Thought of the Week:



My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others.

BOB HOPE



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Class News from this Week!

Little Acorns - Claire Stockford

What an amazing last week of term we have had! Little Acorns have had so much fun engaging in lots of Christmas activities and lots of singing and dancing to Christmas songs! We made some Mince pies for our cooking session this week, I don't think they turned out to be bad... But the children said they all enjoyed eating them! How amazing were our Little Angels in the Nativity play! They all did absolutely amazing and I am so proud of each and every one of them. They coped so well with being in the village hall, doing so well with going up on stage, dancing and of course wonderful singing. Well done Little Acorns, you superstars! I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and I hope you have a fab break making lots of special memories. See you in the new year!

Pippin Class - Mrs Wheaton

Year 3 have been focusing on Anglo Saxons. This week we explored how Anglo Saxons named places and how this is how we have our place names today. We learned that they name places after the land, people and important buildings. Thorncombe was named because it was a valley where thorn bushes grew.

Year 1 & 2 have been focusing on addition strategies this week, adding 2 digit numbers together. We started using base 10 and 1s and then progressed to drawing these. We then learned a second strategy of using a number line. The children identified the strategy that they found easiest at the end.

Have a WONDERFUL Christmas and enjoy the time together as a family! See you in the New Year!

Orchard Class - Miss Taylor

Orchard class have been working hard this week to complete their Christmas Poems. They explored poems with different structures such as Limericks, Riddles, Haiku, Rhyming Poems, Nonsense Poems and Acrostic. They then illustrated them beautifully! We are so proud of their creativity!

Year 5 and 6 have been continuing their written method of multiplication in Maths, they have solved multi step problems and taken time to write their calculations out correctly! Year 3 and 4 have started their learning on Area, they have identified shapes with larger and smaller areas and counted squares.

The highlight of the week was our fabulous nativity! All children were amazing! We are so incredibly proud of their talents and how well they worked together to put on such a wonderful show!

Have a magical Christmas! See you in 2026!

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.

Nativity 2025

'A Very Local Christmas'

This year, we performed a whole-school nativity that was written in-house, following the Nativity story of the birth of Jesus, but with a special focus on our town of Thorncombe. We even had songs written especially about Thorncombe!

The children have worked incredibly hard to learn their lines and songs, and even a Christmas dance as part of their PE lessons.

A huge well done to all of the children for their dedication and hard work. You were all FABULOUS!





Santa came to school to see all of the children and let them know they are on the nice list this year!

He arrived on his motorbike due to the weather conditions, his sleigh would have become stuck in the mud!



Forest School Update

Autumn 2



Hi everyone,

I just wanted to share with you some of the great moments we've had at Forest School with the Little Acorns, Pippin, and Orchard classes. Despite some heavy rain showers, all the children got stuck in - quite literally!

We played many games in the rain and mud, which helped them develop and test their balance and agility, as well as learn teamwork. Many children made clay decorative pieces and practised weaving with willow and wool. They also practised tool skills: whittling with peelers, and Year 6 pupils used knives to create decorative items out of fresh hazel wood.

We had lots of opportunities to build and construct emergency shelters in the rain and to problem-solve how to keep the roofs up and watertight. We also practised fire safety, making our own fires and cooking marshmallows and unleavened bread on an open fire.

Finally, many children created imaginative recipes in the mud kitchen and experimented with seasonal ingredients: pine needle soup and kiwi pie! Yes, we have kiwis growing in the Forest School!

Well done to all the children for demonstrating great resilience, creativity, and curiosity, vital skills for life.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year. See you in 2026.

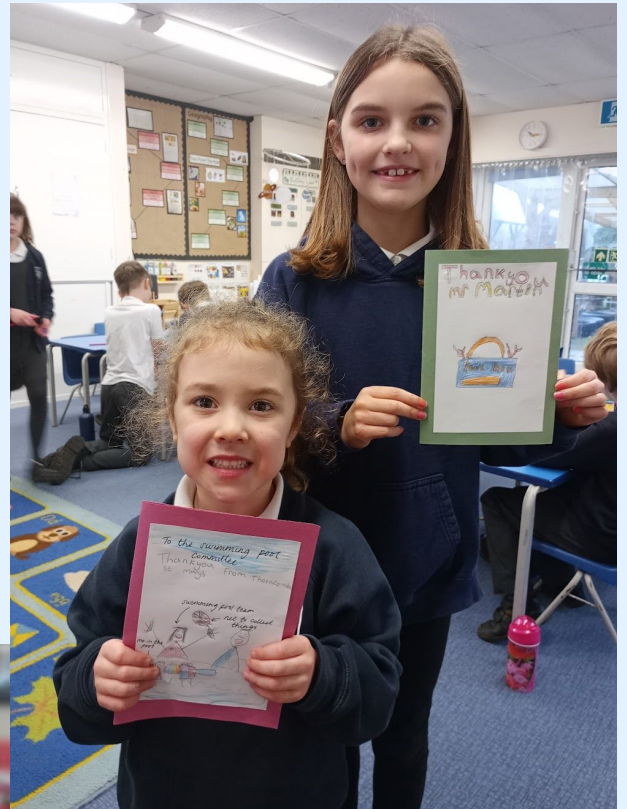
Best wishes,
Paloma

Christmas Lunch 2025!



Spreading Festive Cheer

Members of the School Ethos Council delivered thankfulness cards from the children to our local community groups including the village shop, swimming pool committee, and village hall committee and reading volunteers and so many more. The village shop were happy to support the distribution of the cards across the community.

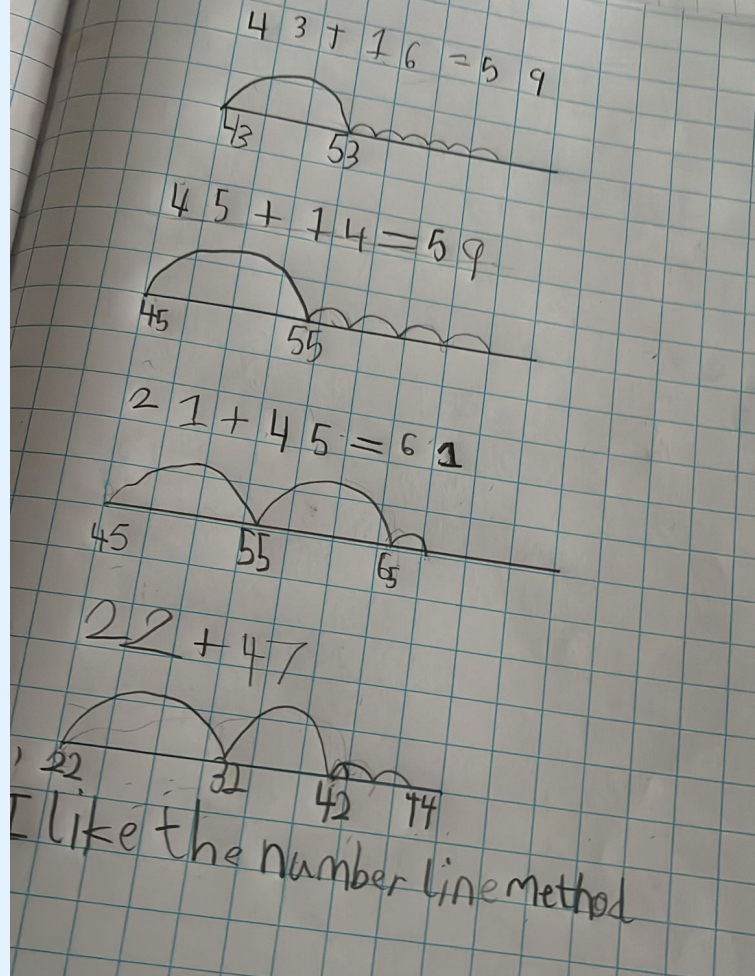
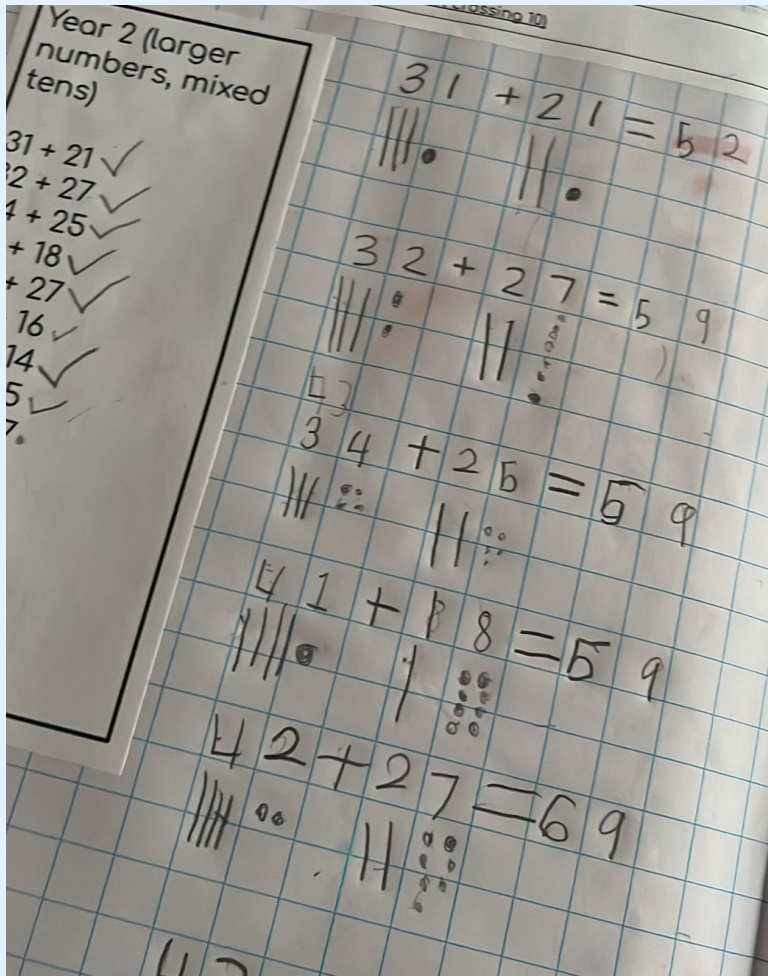


What a lovely week!



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Year 2 Maths




What a lovely week!

Support for Families Over the Christmas Holidays

As we approach the Christmas holidays, we are mindful that this time of year can bring a mixture of joy and challenge for families. We would like to highlight some **local and national support services** available to families and children living on the Somerset/Dorset border, should you need advice, reassurance, or practical help over the festive period. Please remember: **you are not alone**, and support is available.

Support for Parents & Carers


Family Lives - Confidential advice and support on parenting, relationships, and family life.


 **0808 800 2222**

 www.familylives.org.uk

Citizens Advice

Advice on finances, benefits, housing, and practical concerns.


 www.citizensadvice.org.uk

 **Food & Practical Support** - If you are worried about food or essentials during the holidays:

Local Food Banks - Food banks operate across West Dorset and South Somerset. You can self-refer or be referred by a professional.


 www.trusselltrust.org (search by postcode)

Local Community Support


Many local churches and community groups offer seasonal support, Christmas meals, or hampers. 

Urgent Help & Safeguarding - If you are worried about a child's safety or wellbeing:

Somerset Children's Social Care

 **0300 123 2224** Out of hours: **0300 123 2327**

Dorset Children's Advice & Duty Service (CHAD)

 **01305 228866** Out of hours: **01202 228866**

In an emergency, always call **999**.

We hope the Christmas holidays bring moments of rest and happiness for you and your family. Please do reach out if you need support—help is available, and asking for it is a strength.

Mental Health Support Services:

[Dorset Support](#)

[Somerset Support](#)

[Devon Support](#)

Safeguarding Information

Mrs Sol Davies
Acting Head of School
Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Miss Merryn Chestney
EYFS Lead and Pippin
Teacher
Deputy DSL



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