

Thorncombe, St. Mary's CE Primary Academy



Living, Learning and Growing Together



Autumn Term 25-26 Newsletter Issue: 6 Friday 17th October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

What another active and inspiring week it's been. The children have continued to show such enthusiasm and energy in all areas of their learning. It's been particularly wonderful to see how well they are engaging with Mr Harris, our specialist computing teacher. From coding challenges to creative digital projects, the children are developing their confidence and skills in technology.

A reminder that the portal for Reception admissions is now open. If you, or anyone you know, has a child due to start school in September and would like to find out more about what makes our school such a special place to learn, please contact the school office to arrange a tour.

Next week will be the final week of this half term. Please note that school closes on Thursday 23rd October. The school will be closed on Friday 24th October for a non-pupil day to allow for staff training. We reopen for Autumn Term Two on Monday 3rd November at 8:30am.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We wish all our families a restful and enjoyable half-term break when it arrives.

Warm Wishes,
Sal Davies
Acting Head of School.

Our core value this term is:

Love and Compassion

Our golden apple winners this week are....



The winning house this week:

English Oak

W/B 20/10/25 At a glance:

ASC = After School Club

Monday

Breakfast club: 8-8.30

PE Lessons

Lego+Board games ASC: 3.15-4.30

KS2 Dance Workshop @ Woodroffe

Tuesday

Breakfast club: 8-8.30

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

INSET DAY

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:

"ALONE, WE
CAN DO SO
LITTLE;
TOGETHER,
WE CAN DO
SO MUCH"



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Class News from this Week!

Little Acorns - Claire Stockford

This week Little Acorns have again loved the mud kitchen! They have spent so much time there, playing alongside friends and roleplaying. I have seen so much of their imagination come to life and it's been amazing to see. We have magically transformed into fairy this week, making some fairy wings, fairy wand and magic fairy dust using pine cones and glitter. We have had so much fun engaging in imaginative play, i have been turned into a frog and been made to freeze. The children found this absolutely hilarious!. We had so much fun! Little Acorns have very much enjoyed playing games like the floor is lava and Lucky Ducky board game. Throughout these activities they have displayed fantastic teamwork, demonstrated amazing turn taking skills and showing increasing growth within their independence. Amazing! The children have enjoyed Forest school over the last few weeks engaging in a variety of outdoor activities and roasting marshmallows on a fire. Have a lovely weekend!

Pippin Class - Miss Chestney

This week has been our assessment week, so children have done some writing and reading assessments. The children do not know that they are being assessed as they take place in the style of normal lessons.

As part of their writing assessment, children in Year 1/2/3 have written their own autumnal stories, choosing their own characters and settings. When they are doing their assessments, we encourage them to do these as independently as possible. I am always so proud when we do these as it shows how much the children have picked up within their lessons. It does also highlight areas of focus going forwards which means our lessons can be personalised to children's individual needs.

The children have completed their reading/phonics assessments this week too. It has been great to see the progress over the term. Please ensure you are reading at home with your children at least 3 times a week and write in their yellow reading records that we provide.

Thank you, Miss Chestney!

Orchard Class - Miss Taylor

Orchard children have all completed their Independent Writing Assessments this week. They have been writing stories with issues and dilemmas, working very hard to include extra descriptive language to capture their readers' attention.

In Science, Years 3 and 4 wrote up their findings from the "eggsperiment". Everyone was fascinated to see the final effects of the different liquids on the eggs and some of the results were very surprising. In addition, Years 5 and 6 explored how smoking, alcohol and drugs affect the circulatory system as part of their topic - Animals Including Humans.

In Geography, we have been learning about the human impact on rainforests, including deforestation. The children have been busy designing persuasive posters to raise awareness of the plight of the rainforests and they have shown great knowledge and real passion for protecting our planet.

Have a lovely weekend!



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.

Forest School Autumn 1 Update



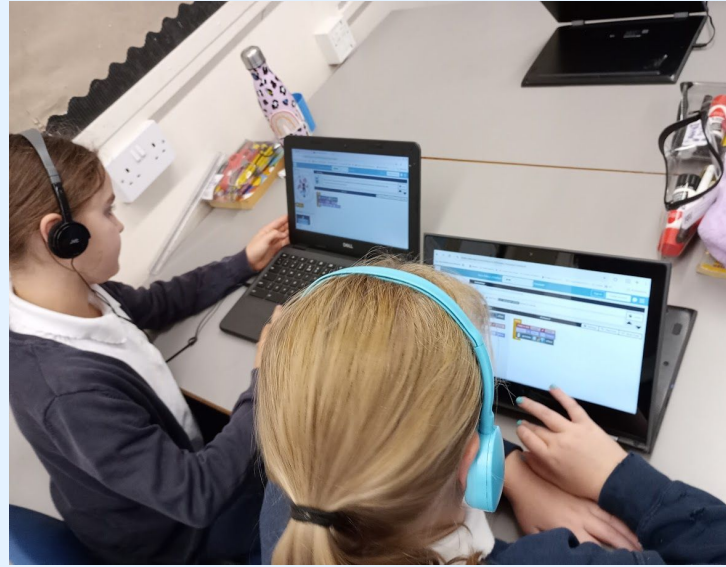
All the children have been fully immersed in Forest School this Autumn Term. We've enjoyed weaving and leaf stitching to create beautiful, colourful mobiles, as well as some amazing cooking in the Mud Kitchen - "Anyone for Kiwi Pie with an Acorn Crust?" We've played lots of games, with a new favourite being "Bat and Moth," offering a window into another world of sound and darkness. The children have built natural dens, explored camouflage, and practised their knots, will they withstand a downpour? Finally, before the holidays, we'll celebrate around the fire pit and toast marshmallows. Have a well-deserved break, everyone, and enjoy time with your family and friends. - Paloma - Forest School Leader



What a lovely week!



What a lovely week!



The enamel blue whale
In a dark blue sea there was
an enamel blue whale. He asked
if he could help blubber and
ask who will help me get some stars.
Not I said the shark. Not I said
the jellyfish. Not I said the
goldfish. Fine! I will do it
myself said the the enamel
blue whale who will help me
get the stars. Not I said the
jellyfish. Not I said the shark.
Not I said the goldfish. Fine!
I will do it myself said the enamel
blue whale. After he bit the den
he asked who will help me
get the stars as decorations? Not
I said the jellyfish. Not I said the
shark. Not I said the
goldfish. Fine! I will do it myself
said the enamel blue
whale. who will help me



16th October 2025
I I I I
I am hot

Top Tips for SETTING BOUNDARIES AROUND GAMING

If your child loves video games, then you'll probably be aware that how long they spend gaming – and what they're actually playing – can occasionally become a source of concern or conflict. The UK's trade body for interactive entertainment, Ukie, has recently launched a campaign to promote safer and more responsible gaming among young people – with parents and carers helping by setting sensible and fair boundaries. Our guide has tips on key areas where you could agree some healthy ground rules for your child's gaming activity.

PROMOTE SAFER GAME CHOICES

Deciding which online games are OK – and which should be avoided – is tricky. Some titles allow children to cooperate or compete with strangers, which creates potential risks. Watching your child play online for a while could provide more insight into a particular game, while the parental controls on most consoles allow you to limit who can chat to your child or send them friend requests. Remind your child of the hazards around strangers online when you discuss this boundary with them.

ENCOURAGE REGULAR BREAKS

Help your child understand the need to take regular breaks, playing in shorter bursts rather than marathons sessions. Bear in mind that some games (such as role-playing games) require time investment from the player, while others (online team games, for example) can't be stopped or paused at a moment's notice. A quick break every hour or so is good practice, and you could suggest some things to do in these breaks, such as having a drink of water or getting some fresh air.

AGREE SPENDING LIMITS

There's no doubt that gaming can be expensive, and younger players often don't realise how much paying for digital items and subscriptions can add up to. Many young gamers love to buy new skins or upgrades for their character, so you could settle on a fixed amount that your child is allowed to spend on in-game items each week or month. This sort of boundary will not only help your child to manage their expectations but will also make you more aware of the price of these items.

DISCUSS AGE RATINGS

Children often ignore the age ratings on games – or are unaware they even exist. If you're happy with your child playing a particular game even though it's rated above their age, then establish that as a boundary: emphasise that you've made an exception, and talk about what age ratings mean and why they're important. You could add context to this boundary by browsing games' boxes together while shopping, discussing why some games might have earned certain age ratings.



FACTOR IN FRIENDS

If your child is a keen video gamer, the chances are that they'll have other gamers among their social circle, too. When friends visit, do they instantly dash to their console or computer? You could put boundaries in place before their guests arrive by agreeing on a length of gaming time. Bear in mind, though, that they may try to extend this once they're together. Try coming up with activities or challenges for them during screen breaks – if they join in, they earn a little extra time on their game.

ENJOY GAMING TOGETHER

Setting time aside to play video games together can be an enjoyable bonding exercise. Undeniably, some young gamers may be less enthusiastic about a parent or carer joining in, but it can be a productive way of encouraging them to share their hobby with you. Setting goals or tasks might be useful: if they love Minecraft, choose something to build together; if Fortnite's their favourite, ask to try out some of the fun game modes, like Prop Hunt, which don't require high skill levels.

TALK ABOUT EMOTIONS

Help your child to monitor their emotions as they play. Discuss what is (and isn't) an acceptable level of competitiveness to show while gaming. Are they allowed to trash talk other players, for example? Can they notice when they get angry if they lose? Do they think these emotions are healthy? Some games can provoke anger, but others can bring joy, humour and the thrill of overcoming a challenge. Try to steer your child towards games that tend to produce these more positive feelings.

BE PREPARED FOR TROLLS

A frequent problem when gaming online is other players who are deliberately troublesome. Make sure your child knows how to report and block someone who makes their experience a negative one. Between you, decide if or how they should deal with these online trolls. Talk about where your child's boundaries are in terms of what they think is acceptable: what behaviour by other users is merely frustrating, and what crosses the line to become upsetting or abusive.

Mental Health Support Services:

[Dorset Support](#)

[Somerset Support](#)

[Devon Support](#)

Safeguarding Information

Mrs Sal 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](#).