

# Thorncombe, St. Mary's CE Primary Academy



Living, Learning and Growing Together



Autumn Term 25-26 Newsletter Issue: 1 Friday 12th September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

A very warm welcome back to the new school year. It has been wonderful to see the children quickly settle back into routines, and I have enjoyed popping in and out of classrooms to see how confidently they've started the term. Our new children have also made a fantastic start, and we are so pleased with how well they have settled into our school family.

If you would like to see what your child will be learning this half term, our curriculum maps can be found [here](#) as well as on our school website. These provide an overview of the exciting learning planned across the different year groups.

This half term, our core value is love and compassion. Alongside this, our relational focus will be on being ready to learn – not only in school, but also in life. This week, the children enjoyed the story 'The Problem with Problems', which helped them think about the importance of sharing worries and how much lighter we can feel when we do.

We were delighted to welcome Mrs Balcer to school this Wednesday for her first day teaching in Orchard Class. It has also been lovely to see Mrs Davies in school, who will be Acting Head during my maternity leave. My final working day will be Friday 22nd September, but I look forward to still being part of special moments during the year ahead such as the Nativity and our end-of-year play.

Jessica Evans  
Head of School

Our core value this term is:

*Love and Compassion*

Our golden apple winner  
this week is...



The winning house this week:

*English Oak*

**W/B 15/09/25 At a glance:**

ASC = After School Club

**Monday**

Breakfast club: 8-8.30

**PE Lessons**

Lego+Board games ASC: 3.15-4.30

**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 (forest clothes in bag)**

Breakfast club: 8-8.30

**Forest school sessions**

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:

LEAVE  
FOOTPRINTS  
OF LOVE AND  
KINDNESS  
EVERYWHERE  
YOU GO



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# Class News from this Week!

## Little Acorns - Claire Stockford

It has been such a wonderful first week welcoming back Little Acorns. It's like they never left! We have welcomed some new faces to the our Little Acorns family, who have settled in so well. It has been fabulous to see how well they have adapted to a new routine, joined in with activities and already began forming those important friendships with other children.

Little Acorns have been super busy with lots of crafts this week. They have loved gluing and sticking activities using tissue paper and sequins to create artwork. They have also enjoyed roleplaying, making me some delicious recipes from our home corner food as well as dressing up. Little Acorns had lots of fun joining in with Forest School this week where they were building dens and playing games.

## Pippin Class - Miss Chestney

What a FANTASTIC start to the academic year! The children have all settled in beautifully. Year 3 have adapted well to their new routine of joining Orchard Class for a range of subjects. It honestly felt like I was dropping my own children off on their first day when they went in for their first maths lesson without me!

Reception have been enjoying learning about our classroom and discovering where to find the toys. They have also been completing some of the start of year assessments to help us plan activities that will support their learning this term.

We have made a wonderful start with phonics. The children are so eager to learn and write their phonics letters and words. Reception are focusing on letter formation, while Year 1/2 are working on writing words with their sounds in.

I am really excited for the year ahead. We have such a lovely class in Pippin and I already know that they are going to shine.

Miss Chestney

## Orchard Class - Miss Taylor

Orchard have had a fabulous start to the new year! The children have all been happy and enthusiastic and a pleasure to teach!

In Maths, all year groups have been exploring place value. Year 3 and 4 have been amazing at remembering their columns and also how to partition numbers in their thousands! Year 5 and 6 have been ordering and recognising numbers up to 10 million!

In Geography, we have started our learning on Rainforests. The children have drawn, painted and used mixed media to create a wonderful display themed around the rainforest layers and the wildlife found there.

The children have been creative with emotive language in English this week. They have written descriptive settings based around our class novel: 'The Explorer' by Katherine Rundell. I have been so impressed with their imagination!

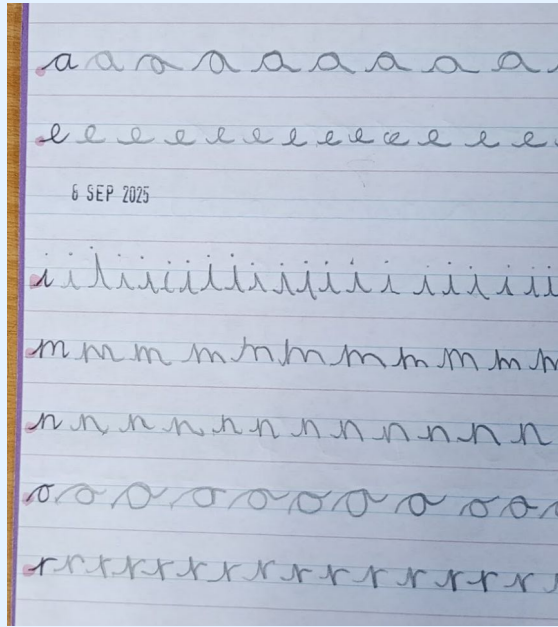
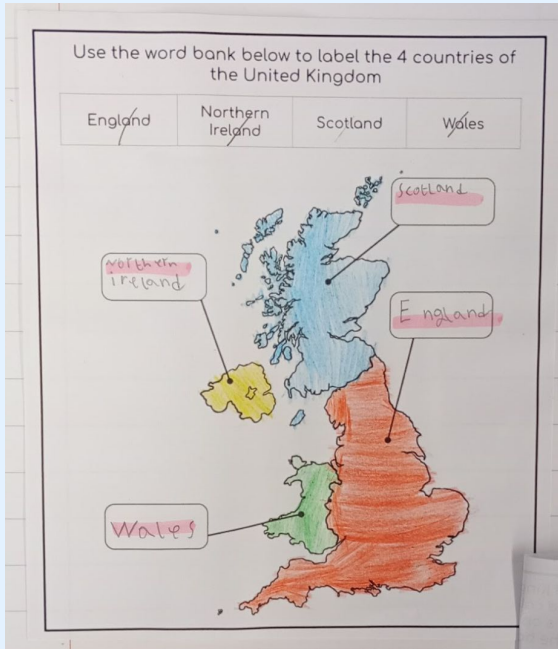
## Over the next week...

- 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.

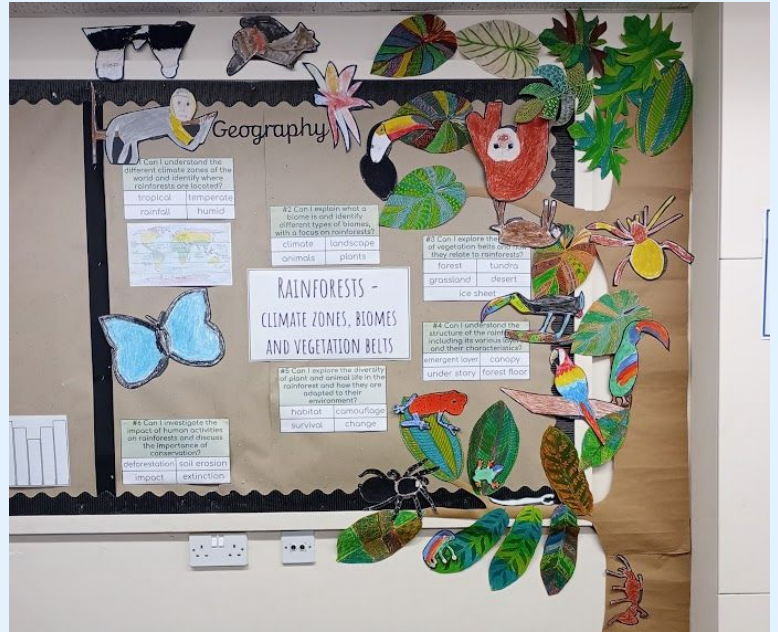
Year 1	2s, 5s, 10s
Year 2	2s, 5s, 10s
Year 3	3s, 4s, 8s
Year 4, 5 and 6	all multiplication tables up to 12x12

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

# What a lovely week!



# What a lovely week!



## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# POP-UP ADS

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Pop-up advertisements have been a staple of the internet since they were first introduced in the late 1990s. This form of advertising causes a small window or banner to appear in the foreground while someone is browsing a website. Although these adverts are merely irritating for most people, pop-ups can present more severe risks to younger users.

#### DECEPTIVE TACTICS

Children sometimes don't understand that adverts (including pop-ups) are designed to sell a product – and can't distinguish between a legitimate feature of a site and an advertisement. Video games, for example, can be full of pop-up ads that tempt users into spending money, yet they might take the form of a mini-game or extra level.

#### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While some adverts are targeted based on a user's interests and activity online, that isn't always the case. This means that children may unfortunately be exposed to ads for age-inappropriate goods or services such as tobacco products, alcohol and gambling sites.

#### MALWARE RISK

Most pop-ups from reputable advertisers are safe. However, in some cases, pop-ups can trick you into downloading malware – whereby cybercriminals install software on your device, allowing them to access your sensitive data. It can be difficult to know if malware has been installed on your device, so your best option is to avoid engaging with these pop-ups altogether. Be wary of sites that suddenly bombard you with ads or try to prevent you from leaving.

#### PRIVACY RISK

Many app and game developers will collect their users' personal data, such as their name, address, email address, geolocation information, unique numerical identifiers, photos and payment information. If a child clicks on an illegitimate pop-up laced with malware, all this information could be put at risk.

#### RACKING UP BILLS

If a child has access to a payment card on their device – be it a smartphone, laptop, or tablet – they could very quickly rack up a massive bill by interacting with pop-up adverts and buying products shown to them. Try to keep a close eye on their spending.

#### BEHAVIOURAL IMPACT

Research has found that pop-up ads can even have an impact on children's behaviour. Some of these adverts use manipulative tactics that take advantage of children's developmental vulnerabilities, intentionally or otherwise. This approach may cause a child's mood to shift: becoming more stubborn, for example, if they begin wanting their parents to buy a specific product for them.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

#### START A CONVERSATION

It's important to have regular conversations with children about online advertising so that they understand the risks of interacting with pop-ups. For example, if a child asks for a product which has been advertised to them online, ask them why they want it and how they found it: this will present an opportunity to talk youngsters through the tactics used in online marketing.

#### SPOT THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child may be following pop-up ads to make online purchases or viewing content that could be harmful, it's important to be able to spot the signs. Due to the often-manipulative nature of these adverts, children who interact with them regularly may show signs of distraction, stubbornness and an increasingly materialistic worldview.

#### MONITOR CONTENT

It can often be difficult to spot when a pop-up advert is malicious – even more so for impressionable younger users. It's important to monitor the content they're consuming to prevent them from clicking on something dangerous. If a pop-up ad seems too good to be true – promising a free iPad, for example – it probably is.

#### PRIVACY SETTINGS

Most modern devices have privacy settings that let you limit the amount of advertising a child is subjected to while using apps or browsing the internet. You may also want to speak to teachers about avoiding sites and apps with advertising, as well as adjusting digital privacy settings on any education technology they use.

#### LIMIT SPENDING

Try to stay aware of what children are spending and ensure that payment details aren't linked to or saved on the gaming platform that they use. Most video games and internet-enabled devices have settings that can help you manage what children can or cannot purchase online.

#### CUT DOWN ON SCREEN TIME

Given the prevalence of pop-up ads (which can appear on everything from smartphones and tablets to internet-connected toys and games), it might be beneficial to limit the time children spend on digital devices to curb their exposure to digital advertising.

## Mental Health Support Services:

[Dorset Support](#)

[Somerset Support](#)

[Devon Support](#)

## Safeguarding Information

Mrs Jessica Evans  
Head of School  
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Miss Merryn Chestney  
EYFS Lead and Pippin Teacher  
Deputy DSL



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