

Thorncombe, St. Mary's CE Primary Academy



Living, Learning and Growing Together



Autumn Term 26-27 Newsletter Issue: 2 Friday 18th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been another lovely week in school, and we are very much looking forward to celebrating a very special achievement next Friday. Parents and carers are welcomed to join us at 9:00am on Friday 25th September for our OPAL Platinum Award ceremony. Platinum is the highest OPAL award, recognising our commitment to providing outstanding play opportunities for our children.

A gentle reminder that we ask all morning goodbyes to take place at the school gate. This is an important safeguarding measure, as anyone entering the school premises must be signed in. The children are doing a wonderful job of becoming increasingly independent and are gathering their things independently at the end of each day. Thank you for your continued support with this.

Our focus in the Relational Curriculum this week is "How can endurance help us achieve our future goals?" The children have been thinking about something they would like to get better at, what might make this difficult and how they can keep going when things feel hard. We will also consider who can help and encourage us along the way.

Mrs Jessica Evans
Head of School

Our core value this term is:

Love & Compassion

Our golden apple winners for this week.



The winning house this week:

Silver Birch

W/B 21.09.2026

Monday
R/1/2 PE

Tuesday
Forest School
R/1/2/3 PE

Wednesday
Music Lessons
Y4,5,6 PE

Thursday
Orchard Home Learning due

Friday
9am OPAL Celebration
Y4,5,6 PE

Breakfast Club | 8-8:30am
A relaxed start to the day with breakfast and play.

After School Club | 3:15-4:30pm
Child-led play and activities based on children's interests.

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.



Great things often take time.

Every small step helps us reach our goals. 🌱



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Class News from this Week!

Little Acorns - Claire Stockford

We have had another fantastic week in Little Acorns. We went on a wonderful Autumnal walk around our school field to spot the first signs of the season Autumn. Little Acorns had so much fun on this walk and enjoyed finding lots of leaves on the floor and hoping to see a squirrel. For gross motor this week we have explored how we can move our bodies in different ways, this was through riding on the bikes and trikes, balancing and walking across beams and yoga. Our topic for this was 'Family', we have been talking about who is in our family and the children have drawn some lovely pictures of themselves and their families. Our story of the week 'Brown bear, Brown bear' has been very much enjoyed by the children, they have created bear pictures and by the end of the week they were repeating key words and phrases from the story.

Pippin Class - Mrs Wheaton

In Art, we explored drawing lines in response to music. We listened to different genres of music. Some suggestions included: if the music is really intense, we might press a little harder with our art materials. If the music feels light and airy, we might use chalk on its side to express this. This was such a fun lesson that the children really enjoyed!

Reception have started learning their phonics sounds this week. They have learned m/a/s/d/t and have started having a go at forming these using letter formation rhymes to help. They have come home with laminated sound cards - please flick through these together at home. You are welcome to support your child in learning the letters too but please follow the rhymes that go alongside the cards.

In English, the children have been identifying nouns and using these in their writing. We are focusing on the foundational skills such as our handwriting grip, letter formation and basic sentence structure before we write a short story inspired by the 'Going on a Bear Hunt' story.

Orchard Class - Miss Taylor & Mrs Balcer

In Geography this week, children explored counties, learning what they are and where they are located across the UK. They located Dorset and its neighbouring counties on a map and had great fun discovering that many of them come from different counties!

In Maths, all children have continued their work on place value. They have used place value mats, counters and Base 10 equipment to build and represent numbers, working with four-digit numbers in Years 3 and 4 and six-digit numbers in Years 5 and 6.

As part of their Lighthouse project, children investigated conductors and insulators before making their own switches using split pins and paper clips. There were some very excited faces when they discovered that their switches could turn the bulb on and off!

Continuing their rhythm journey in Music, the class learned about crotchets, quavers, minims and triplets. They then read their own musical notation to perform a four-beat ostinato before combining their rhythms in a group performance. I was very impressed with their timing and teamwork!

Over the next week...

- Hear your child read at least 3 times each week. Please record this in their reading records. 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.

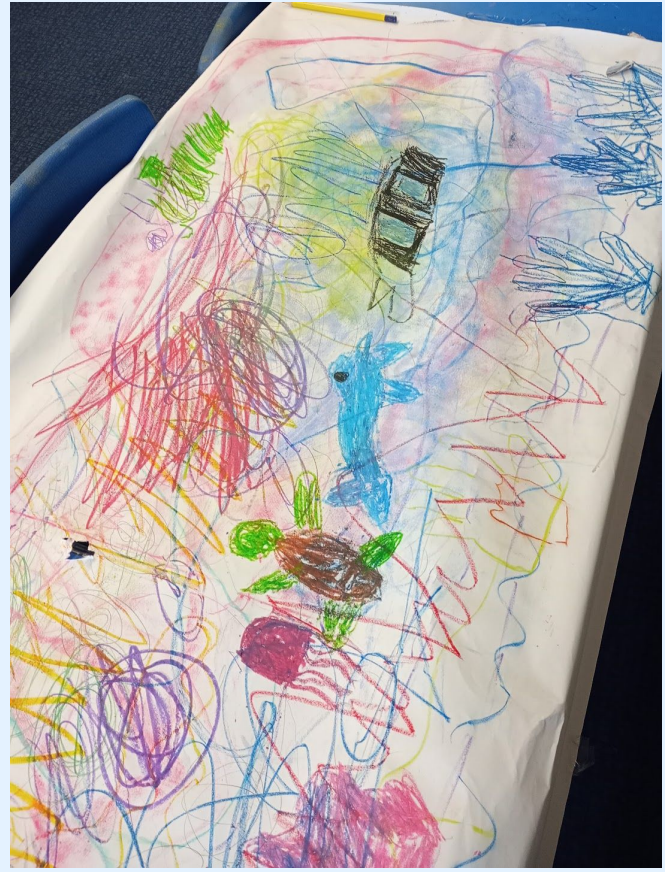
Year 1	2s, 5s, 10s
Year 2	2s, 5s, 10s
Year 3	3s, 4s, 8s
Year 4, 5 and 6	all multiplication tables up to 12x12

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

What a lovely week!



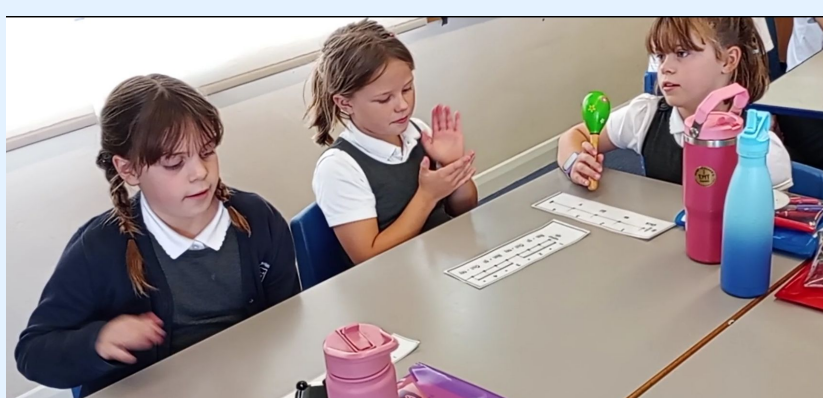
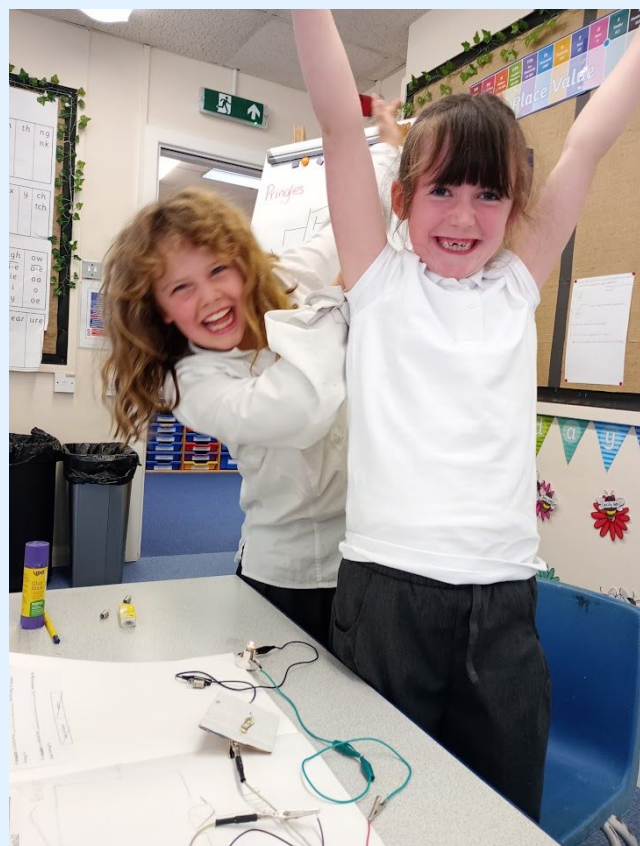
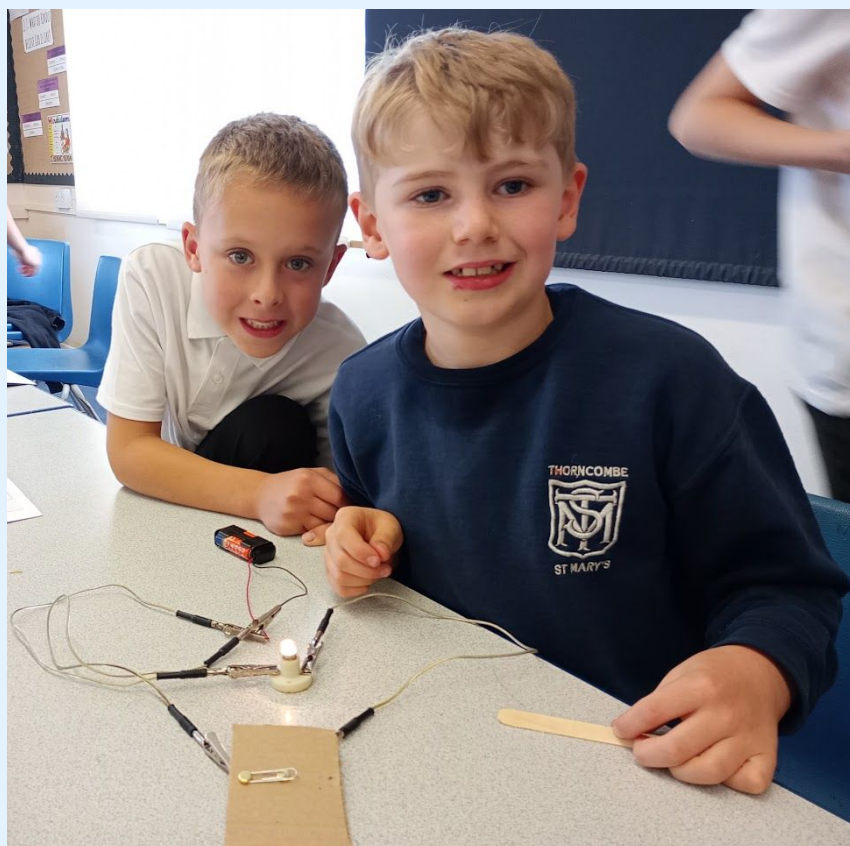
What a lovely week!



Creating lines in response to different music styles!



What a lovely week!



Additional Information



The poster is a colorful invitation for an OPAL Platinum Celebration. At the top left is the OPAL logo, which features three stylized figures in orange, red, and blue jumping, with the word 'Opal' in a blue circle and 'Outdoor Play and Learning' written below it. To the right of the logo, the word 'PLATINUM' is written in large, bold, grey letters with a white outline, set against a green brushstroke background. Below this, the words 'Parents and Carers' are written in large, colorful letters (red, orange, green, blue). Underneath, it says 'You're invited to our' in a smaller font, followed by 'OPAL Celebration!' in large, bold, green letters. The bottom section contains three icons: a calendar icon for 'Friday 25th September', a clock icon for '9:00am', and a location pin icon for 'At our school'. Below these icons, it says 'We have been awarded PLATINUM for our playtimes and breaktimes!'. At the very bottom, a yellow banner contains the quote 'One of the top schools in the country for your playtimes' in green and red text. The entire poster is decorated with green leaves and white daisies.

PLATINUM

Parents and Carers

You're invited to our
OPAL Celebration!

 **Friday 25th September**

 **9:00am**

 **At our school**

We have been awarded PLATINUM
for our playtimes and breaktimes!

**“One of the top schools
in the country for your playtimes”**

Safeguarding Information

Mrs Jessica Evans
Head of School
Designated Safeguarding Lead



Mrs Merryn Wheaton
EYFS Lead and Pippin
Teacher
Deputy DSL



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