

DECEMBER 2024

THE GRAPEVINE

THONGSLEY FIELDS PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL



SEASONS GREETINGS!

BY MR JONES, HEADTEACHER

As another very long and busy Autumn term draws to a close, we reflect on all the amazing moments and successes of the past few months! Academic results continue to rise and show just how much progress our children are making - I am so proud of all of them and our staff for all their hard work and dedication!

However, as we know, that is just a small part of what we are about. It has been fantastic to see more and more trips out to various places and events and always with such great feedback from members of the public. We have also had amazing visitors into school, especially the many, many authors and illustrators who have worked with our children to enthuse and support. We are particularly looking forward to Steven Butler, our new Reading Patron's return after a fantastic first visit earlier this term!

There has been yet more sporting success too in bowling, football and various multi-sports events - we definitely need another trophy cabinet!

Sadly though, we are saying goodbye to two members of staff this week: Ms Clark who has done so much to support our reading endeavours over the past few years and Mrs Clayton who has been a fantastic member of our Nursery team. I know you'll join me in saying a huge thank you and good luck to them as they embark on new chapters.

Finally, from all of us in school, we wish you a very happy and safe holiday!



Little Acorns joining in with the Santa Dash.

TERM DATES

Last day of term	20/12
Staff Training Day (SCHOOL CLOSED)	6/1
Back to School	7/1
After-school clubs begin	13/1
HSSP Panathlon (KS2)	21/1
KS1 Sleepover (TBC)	31/1
Parent Consultations	12/2 & 13/2
Half Term Holiday	17/2 - 21/2
Bookish Fortnight	24/2 - 7/3
EYFS/KS1 Farm Visit	14/3

More details and other diary dates will be available soon.



Celebrating Christmas with Year 5/6.



'Born In A Barn' performed by Year 1/2.



Homemade Christmas baubles.



"Sometimes the best present is remembering what you've already got."

– Cathy Guisewite

NEWS IN BRIEF

FROM TEAM THONGSLEY

GOVERNOR VACANCY

We are always on the lookout for people to join our Local Advisory Board to support our work in school. If you are interested or have any questions please arrange to speak to Mr Jones.

UNIFORM

Thank you to all those who ensure that the correct items are being worn everyday including for PE. The school office has stock of the very smart looking white polo shirts, navy blue PE t-shirts and jumpers with our logo. We also have stock of good quality seconds that make for excellent spares. More information is available on our [website](#). Speak to a member of staff in confidence if you are struggling with anything.

FESTIVE BAUBLE CHALLENGE

We held our now traditional Christmas Bauble Challenge again this year to design and make a festive bauble to decorate all of our Christmas trees. Each class is assigned one of our school family values: Compassion, Independence, Resilience, Cooperation, Thankfulness, Respect, Patience, Generosity, Honesty and Kindness. All of the decorations look amazing as always!

PERFORMANCES!

Once again, we have been treated to fantastic performances from Nursery, Reception and Year 1/2. They have done an excellent job of learning festive lyrics, dances and actions; sorting costumes and looking fabulous! Despite the usual sickness bugs requiring last minute stand-ins, this season's festivities have been fantastic - thank you to all those who came along in support!

OTHER NEWS & REMINDERS!

FROM TEAM THONGSLEY

PGL RESIDENTIAL

Y5/6 had a blast at their residential visit to PGL again this year. Swinging and climbing and ambushing and bouncing and LaserTagging their way through three, jam-packed days! And despite the excitement, they were probably the quickest to fall asleep each night of any of our previous groups! As usual, the centre staff praised their teamwork, behaviour, manners, etc. - a pleasure to be with! #teamThongsley!

APPLICATIONS FOR RECEPTION PLACES

Have you applied for your child's Reception school place for September 2025? The deadline is 15th January 2025 and any applications submitted after this date will be classed as a late application. [Click here](#) to apply or find out more.

BURWELL RESIDENTIAL

Y3/4 had a marvellous time a couple of weeks ago - chilly and slightly muddy but great! There was lots of team building, problem solving, learning to look after each other, developing their independence, crafting with clay, enamelling and for some of those at Burwell House, sleeping away from home for the very first time! Well done all!

ATTENDANCE REMINDERS

School gates open from 8:40am so don't be late! From February Half Term, our gates will close slightly earlier, at 8:50am, to ensure registers can be taken on time. As currently, anyone arriving after this time must enter via the school office with their parent or carer. Routine medical and dental appointments must be outside of school hours.



Reading Ambassadors visiting The Chase care home.



Making fantastic clay faces at Burwell.



Overcoming fears and scaling terrifying heights at PGL.

Help your child with reading.

I spy...

Play 'I spy' type games. Can you find words beginning with...? Can you find a picture of a...? How many ... can you see?

Ask questions

Ask questions about the story as you read it e.g. What is the story about? Why do you think they made that choice? Was it a good choice? Why did that happen? What do think will happen next? What was your favourite part of the story? Why?

Make it fun!

Enjoy reading together. Give characters funny voices and engage with the pictures. Make a game out of finding words that rhyme or start with the same sound.

Be seen

Make sure you are seen reading too. Keep books, comics and appropriate magazines within easy reach.

Get out

Go to your public library and book shops regularly - you don't have to borrow or buy something every visit! Find the books you loved as a child to read together.

Get creative

Use reading and stories to inspire drawings. Create new stories through building, painting or drawing.

Go online

Look online and in app stores for appropriate word and spelling games. Use Bug Club, Oxford Owl and Spelling Shed regularly.

Make space

Have a special place or a certain time to read together. Involve other siblings or agree different times and places for each. Protect that time and space so it is special.

Read everything out loud!

Books, poems, nursery rhymes, newspaper and magazine articles, comics, food labels, recipes, instruction manuals...

...anything that is close to hand will help!