



## *Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day* **Thameside In-touch!**

### **Edition 6: 20<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to a very festive addition of Thameside in Touch. I can't believe that it is coming to the end of my first full term as Headteacher of Thameside School!



I have continued to feel very proud and privileged to be leading such a fantastic team of staff and to have been able to get to know our wonderful children. Thank you also to parents and carers for your kindness, support and lovely feedback since I have joined the Thameside family – it has been very much appreciated ☺

I am very much looking forward to 2023 and working with our whole school community to continue to implement and grow our ambitious vision Thameside:

**To nurture life-long learners who are aspirational, courageous, creative and kind.'**

It has been a busy term with lots of exciting 'Thameside firsts' – for example our football match; trips to Abingdon School Science laboratories and an author visit by Matt Oldfield, alongside lots of curriculum development work. We have had wonderful couple of weeks to finish the term and Christmas spirit has been overflowing, despite the number of coughs, colds and various winter illnesses and an unexpected burst water pipe yesterday! We have hosted a number of lovely Christmas events, including the PTA Christmas Fayre, our first festive book café, nativities and Christmas dinner – **thank you again to the PTA for making this very special for our children this year with decorations and crackers.** The staff sing-along also added an extra sparkle to the event!

I know that parents can feel pressure to create a 'perfect' Christmas at this time of year, but remember that you, your love, your time, kindness and feeling safe are the most important gifts that you can give.

We hope that you enjoy this final newsletter of 2022 – please do keep encouraging your children to read over the holidays; we would love to hear about their festive reading adventures on their return to school!

We hope that the many festive photos bring you some Christmas joy - we wish you a very merry Christmas and I look forward to seeing you in January!

Best wishes

*Laura Youngman*

Headteacher

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## Focus on... Learning to Learn

At the heart of our Thameside motto 'Every Child, Every Chance, every Day', is our aspiration for our children to be lifelong learners, confident to use their 'learning powers' in whatever they choose to do. The five key learning to learn words are integral to achieving this and an important part of teaching and learning at Thameside. Everything we do is underpinned by our values of **respect, responsibility, resilience, resourcefulness and reflectiveness**.



Each half term, we have a focus on teaching one of the skills explicitly each and continue to recognise and celebrate the other five skills simultaneously.

Since September, our focus has been on resilience and more specifically, perseverance. Each class looked at a book about perseverance, we had assemblies to think about what perseverance could look like

for each of us and children thought about the things they would like to become better at through perseverance. Across the term, we have seen so

many fantastic examples of this, from children persevering with their reading and times tables, to children showing perseverance in sports clubs.

Next term, we will be thinking about respect, with a focus on listening and empathy. This will be taught through lessons, assemblies and wow days with staff and visitors – we are delighted to be welcoming some student musicians from Larkmead in January!

## Our school rules – a recap!

As part of our positive approach to behaviour, our children devised their own three 'rules' that guide our work at Thameside, underpin our high expectations and form the basis of how we recognise children for their positive behaviours.

We just wanted to take a moment to remind everyone of these three guiding principles. We will be reviewing these later in the year with staff and pupils and will keep you updated on our newsletters!

- **First time, Every time**
- **Be respectful**
- **Learn from our mistakes**



## Thameside Festive fun photo gallery!







## Class reviews

### Year 5/6

What a festive fun-filled end of term! Year 5/6 have been using their computing skills to create their own vector drawing of Santa using a variety of techniques learnt over the last six weeks.



In English, the children have been writing their own version of the classic poem 'Twas the night before Christmas' - they have definitely captured the spirit of a modern

Christmas, while imitating the poetic form. Although the children have all been working hard this term, there has been a little time for fun; Mrs Russell and myself presented our own action-packed version of the Twelve Days of Christmas for the class to enjoy, as well as countless opportunities to sing Christmas songs!

### Year 4/5

This last week, Year 4/5 have been having a real rhyming time writing their Christmas Limericks. They have been working really hard, coming up with a Limerick all about Father Christmas. The Limericks have to have a bouncy rhythm, an AABBA rhyming pattern and most importantly they need to be funny. It has been a surprisingly entertaining way to finish the term with some hilarious poems. Mrs Commander and I have certainly had a good chuckle after listening to them. We have finished our Crime and Punishment History topic as well as wrapping up our Christmas Christianity R.E topic. I have been so impressed with how much effort and resilience Anthony Horowitz class have displayed over this last term. It really has been a pleasure to work with such an enthusiastic group of students. I hope you all have a well-deserved rest over the Christmas break, and I look forward to next term. Merry Christmas to all.



### Year 3/4

Last week in English, we learnt about acrostic poems and the children have been writing a Christmas version. They have developed Christmas vocabulary by using dictionaries and thesauruses to improve their word choice. We have researched word meanings and found synonyms of different words, as well as

writing out poems using alliteration and an improved word choice bank. Year 3/4 have also got into the Christmas spirit by making Christmas bauble decorations. The class have all worked incredibly hard this term! I want to wish them all a lovely Christmas and I look forward to getting back to learning in the New Year!

## Year 2



What a brilliant first whole term in Year 2 and at Thameside. It has been wonderful to get to know everyone. Year 2 have worked extremely hard so far this academic year, with lots of progress. We look forward to more of the same in 2023.

It was so lovely to see so many of you at the Christmas play; the children made me feel very proud with their brilliant performances. The children have really got into the festive spirit and have been spreading kindness with Buddy the Elf. All that's left to say is thank you all for your support with your

child's education so far. Have a lovely Christmas break and a happy New Year.

## Year 1

Year 1 have been busy learning about how Christians celebrate Christmas and the birth of Jesus. As well as performing 'Born in a Barn,' we have been thinking about the different gifts Jesus received. We thought about the gifts we might have given if he had been born in Abingdon in 2022! A pram and a dummy featured high on our list! We finished our topic about Christmas, by making new baby cards for Mary and Joseph.

## Reception and Nursery

Nursery and Reception children have been feeling very festive and have been busy learning new Christmas songs, re-telling the story 'Dear Santa' going on Christmas hunts, creating a lot of Christmas crafts and decorating the classroom. Nursery also spent time writing their own letters to Father Christmas.



He was so impressed with their letters that he even wrote the children their own letter back! Nursery also enjoyed the Christmas lunch, it was yummy!



(Robyn was very proud of her picture to Father Christmas and she wrote her name on the board independently for the first time!)



## **Our stars of the TERM!**



**Well done to our very first 'Stars of the Term'!**

**Reception: Arya  
Year 1: Imogen  
Year 2: Allanah  
Year 3/4: Haroon  
Year 4/5: Lily Rose  
Year 5/6: Bailey  
Mrs. Youngman's Star: Noah (Year 6)**



## TTRockstars and Timestables at home!



We are so proud of all our little rockstars! Across the term the children's confidence with their timestables has continued to rocket and the difference since the start of the year is fantastic. Looking at some of the stats, we have been blown away by the sheer effort that everyone has been putting in.

A huge well done to **Cody** (Year 2), **Daisy** (Year 2), **Matthew** (Year 5/6), **Stanley** (Year 5/6) and **Peter** (Year 4/5) who have all banked 300+ minutes of practise time since September! 5 minutes a day on TTRS can make such a difference to children's knowledge and confidence.

A special mention to **Cody** who has banked 528 minutes!!

This averages out as exactly 5 minutes a day since the start of the school year. Well done Cody, you truly are a TT rockstar!!!!

### Learning at home resources

**Please do check out our website which is continuing to grow! We have included lots of new information about our curriculum and resources to help support you at home on the following pages:**

[Thameside Primary School - Keeping Safe \(thamesideschool.co.uk\)](http://thamesideschool.co.uk)

[Thameside Primary School - Families and Learning at home \(thamesideschool.co.uk\)](http://thamesideschool.co.uk)



## Library Corner

This week's recommendation is the wonderful Christmas poem, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas' - the original version by Clement C. Moore and a more modern re-write by Carol Ann Duffy.



Michael Buble has recorded a great version of the traditional poem which you can listen to on YouTube: ['Twas The Night Before Christmas - Narrated by Michael Bublé - YouTube](#)



There's also an Accelerated Reader quiz on the poem! Please do encourage your children to listen to the poem a few times and then have a go at the quiz. The link is in the following section.

Carol Ann Duffy's version brings the poem into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with motorways and mobile phones, but doesn't lose the magic of the original. Read all about what happens when the little girl spies Santa Claus landing in her town in the middle of the night! We have a copy of the book in school, with its beautiful illustration, but you can find the text here: [A Poem A Day:: Day 185: 'Twas the Night Before Christmas \(a-poem-a-day-project.blogspot.com\)](http://a-poem-a-day-project.blogspot.com)

Finally, it's been great to talk to people about Jolabokaflod since the last newsletter. If you do give it a try, please send us some photos! We'd love to see them and hear about the reading the children have done with you over the Christmas break. Happy Christmas!

## Accelerated Reader

Wow – what an amazing effort on AR since September! **The children have been so committed to their quizzing and have passed an amazing 787 quizzes, compared to 278 this time last year.**

We are seeing a clear impact of this regular reading on the children's reading ages. In their second online assessment of the year, all the classes made accelerated progress; in other words, the children's reading had improved even more than you'd expect it too! Year 4/5 can be particularly proud, averaging six months of progress in just three months!

Please keep encouraging your children with their reading and quizzing. They can log on to AR from home using this link:

**AR Website:** [tinyurl.com/dk98jpc](http://tinyurl.com/dk98jpc)

**Username:** same as school log-in (children should know this!)

**Password:** abc

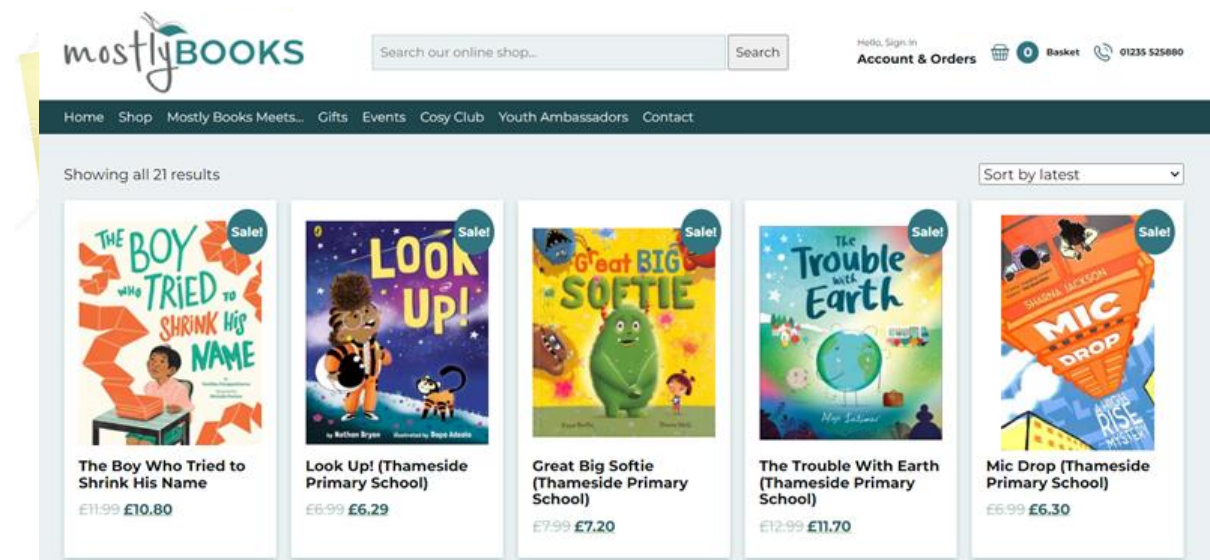
Click on the orange square marked Accelerated Reader to start quizzing.

## Thameside Reading Wishlist at 'Mostly Books' - a reminder!

We have teamed up with local independent bookshop, 'Mostly Books', to create a wish list of texts that we'd love for our class reading corners:

[Thameside Primary School Archives - Mostly Books \(mostly-books.co.uk\)](http://mostly-books.co.uk)

If you would like to gift us a book – maybe as a Christmas present to the school – then please do check out our wish list online or pop in to talk to the lovely staff in the shop. Thank you so much!



## School admissions information

Applications for a place in Reception for September 2023 and can be made at the following link [Reception applications | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

**Please remember that if your child is in our Thameside Nursery, you still need to apply for a place via the link above.**

**The deadline is 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023 so please ensure that you have applied by this date.**

If you would like a tour, please do contact the office and we would love to show you around!

A poster for primary school admissions. The top half has a blue background with the text 'Is your child 3 or 4 years old?' in large, bold, red and white letters. Below this, on a white background, is the text: 'Primary school place – you must apply now', 'If your child was born on or between 1 September 2018 and 31 August 2019, you need to apply for a primary school place now.', 'You must still apply even if your child already attends a nursery attached to the school.', 'Deadline for applications is 15 January 2023.', 'Apply online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions', '– it's quick, easy and secure.', 'You can get free access to the internet at many of our libraries and children's centres – ask for details at your local facility.', 'For help and information: Web: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions, Email: admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk, Tel: 0345 241 2487'. On the right side, there is a red triangular warning sign with a black border and a black silhouette of two children walking. Below the sign is a black rectangular box with white text: 'Deadline for applications is 15 January 2023'. At the bottom right is the Oxfordshire County Council logo.

## Handwashing advice



It is essential that everyone washes their hands more often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside).

## Family Links

### **Family Links -The Nurturing Programme Starting on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

What is the Nurturing Programme?

We will look at understanding why children behave as they do  
Recognising the feelings and behaviour (ours and theirs)  
Exploring different approaches to discipline  
Finding ways to develop co-operation and self-discipline in children  
Learning the importance of looking after ourselves

The Nurturing Programme helps deal with those challenges so that you can have a calmer, happier life.

If you would like further information about this programme, please contact our Home School Link Workers, Alison and Mandy, on 01235 527600 Option 1 or email them on [hslw.2598@thameside.vale-academy.org](mailto:hslw.2598@thameside.vale-academy.org).



## Key Diary dates

- **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January – INSET DAY (Children not in school)**
- **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January – Children back in school**

**\*\*Our term dates for next year, 2023-2024, are also now available at the following link:**

**[Thameside Primary School - Term Dates \(thamesideschool.co.uk\)](https://thamesideschool.co.uk)**

## Winter Mini Reading Challenge 2022

Join in with The Reading Agency's Gadgeteers, Winter Mini Challenge 2022

Oxfordshire Libraries are excited to announce the return of the Winter Mini Challenge! The Reading Agency has teamed up again with the Science Museum Group to bring back the Gadgeteers from this year's Summer Reading Challenge.

It starts on Thursday 1st December 2022 and finishes on Sunday 20th February 2023.

Parents and carers can register their children for free at [wintermini.org.uk](https://wintermini.org.uk)

The children set their own reading challenge. A target of 3 books is recommended.

They can read any books for their Challenge, including eBooks or eAudio which can be borrowed for free from Oxfordshire Libraries.

For some brilliant book ideas a collection will be available on our Overdrive platform: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ebooks](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ebooks) .

Parents and carers can join their children to the library by visiting [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)

Children rate and review the books they have read on the Winter Mini Challenge website to unlock virtual rewards and a special Winter Mini Challenge certificate.

There are also games, reading activities and book reviews on the web

