



*Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day*



## Thameside In-touch!

**Edition 25: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

**Facebook: @ThamesidePrimary**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you to everyone who attended our Christmas Fayre on Friday – it was such a wonderful festive event. We also welcomed a number of prospective parents for our open morning, and were able to show them what Thameside is like as a school – **our Year 5 tour guides did a fantastic job at showcasing and articulating how proud they were of their school!**

Our Christmas nativity rehearsals are also in full swing and we can't wait to share them with you – reminders of dates are on the back page of this newsletter.

Last week also saw our football team play against Caldecott at home – despite a loss, the team showed resilience and determination on a



super chilly afternoon with lots of shivering parents and teachers at the side-lines! Great job, guys!

A small group of our children also completed a term of play therapy which aims to support children to use play and art materials to express themselves; this is just one the many nurture and support groups we offer. We were so proud to hear that our children had enjoyed their sessions and to have this feedback from the Oxford Play Association: **'ALL of the Children were a delight; they played and shared beautifully.'**

### **Staffing updates**

As per my email last week, we said goodbye to Mrs Dawn McGowan this term. We wish her well in the future. In January, we welcome Mandy Bayliss to the Office Team and Karin Loudon to the Year 3 teaching team – they will both be popping into school before the end of term to meet everyone and the children. We will introduce them fully soon!



## **Communication update**

### **You said, we did!**

We appreciate that there is always lots going on and much to remember on a daily basis for parents and carers. We are keen to make communication as clear and accessible as possible for everyone.

In light of some feedback on volume of emails received, **from January, we will send out a weekly 'Friday Flyer' with key dates and admin reminders to try to reduce the amount of emails sent – this will include info such as PE days etc.**

**Thameside in Touch will then be sent out every three weeks to provide updates on what the children have been learning and other more detailed aspects of school life (twice per small term).**

Finally, please can we remind all parents about our **uniform expectations** – we have started to see various items of clothing being worn that are not part of our uniform policy.

Please refer to our website if you are unsure – if you are **struggling, please do get in touch via our home school link worker as we do have a small bank of uniform items we can share with families in need.**

Best wishes for a lovely weekend – stay warm!

*Laura Youngman*

Headteacher

### **In this edition:**

- **Focus on.... equality and diversity**
- **SEND and inclusion update**
- **Class learning reviews!**
- **Stars of the week**
- **TTRockstars update**
- **Library corner**
- **Diary dates**
- **Word of the week**



## *Mural Competition!*

We are delighted to have secured a grant to re-design and paint our wall murals on the field – we have sent home design sheets for pupils; please do encourage them to share their ideas.

**Deadline by 20<sup>th</sup> December to Mrs Youngman and copies are in the school office.**



## Focus on.... Equality and diversity

### Equality

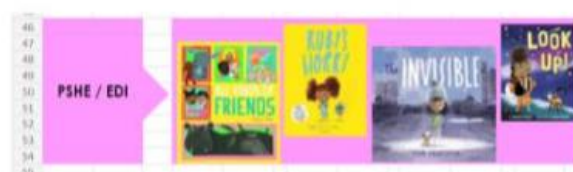
At Thameside we pride ourselves on being a welcoming and inclusive school. For us, equality means that everyone is able to participate and feel welcome and safe in the activities of our school. This includes pupils, parents, staff, governors and visitors. Everyone should be able to achieve the best possible outcomes as a result of their participation. We believe that equality should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of all members of the school and community

### Diversity

At our school diversity means acknowledging that there are differences between people that should be recognised, respected and celebrated. We promote respect of each other's differences and identities via our school values. We celebrate and raise awareness of diversity in the school and in the wider community and believe that teaching children about diversity prepares them for life as a caring and respectful individual.

**We wanted to take a moment to share some of the actions and work that we do at TS to promote these important aspects:**

- ✓ Our school value of respect and our school rule of 'showing kindness' permeates all we do
- ✓ An assembly programme that focusses on key social issues and celebrates inspirational individuals.
- ✓ Representation across our clubs and pupil leadership is carefully tracked -where families may need support to enable their children to attend, this is offered. We have also worked hard to secure grants to enable all children to access curriculum enrichment (e.g. yoga and bike classes)
- ✓ Our PSHE scheme covers topics such as discrimination and protected characteristics



- ✓ A diverse book spine that shows representation across a variety of themes and authors

In our Reading Spine, some of the books have race as a key part of the text, such as 'Proudest Blue', which gives us an explicit opportunity to talk about questions of diversity and our Thameside values of kindness and respect.

A key piece of research which has informed our text choices is the 'Reflecting Realities' report from the CLPE which describes the positive impact on children's identities from seeing themselves in the texts they encounter at school and many of our reading spine books are on their recommended reading lists.

In addition to racial diversity, we also consider different socio-economic backgrounds, family set-ups, disabilities and other important aspects of children's lives. Examples for these books include 'What happened to You?' and 'It's a No Money Day' which again give valuable opportunities to discuss EDI matters with the children.

Our reading spine is a constantly evolving document, responding to the needs of the Thameside children and trying to make links as often as possible to other curriculum areas. I'm always really open to suggestions of books to include / share with the children, so please do drop me a line at [kdaniell@vale-academy.org](mailto:kdaniell@vale-academy.org) if you have any great recommendations!

## **Inclusion and SEND update – sleep advice and support**



At any given time up to 40% of adults and 50% of children (this rises to 80% with a SEND diagnosis) have difficulties with their sleep. Yet in a recent survey, almost 60% of adults felt there was a lack of support for sleep issues. Sleep problems can leave people feeling isolated and lonely.

There is a free helpline, run by trained sleep advisors, many of whom are specialists in working with SEND. They can talk to young people directly, or parents (they can also talk to adults, including older people, about their sleep issues).



The helpline is open 5 times a week, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday evenings 7-9pm, and Monday, Wednesday mornings 9-11am. The number is 03303 530 541.

You can read more here: <https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/national-sleep-helpline/>



**the national sleep helpline**

**Does your child suffer with sleep issues?**

Do you struggle with your child's bedtime?  
Will your child not sleep in their own bed?

**WE CAN HELP**

**03303 530 541**  
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 7pm - 9pm  
Monday & Wednesday 9am - 11am

**the national sleep helpline**

**Want to know more about sleep?**

ASK US THE QUESTIONS YOU WANT ANSWERS TO

**03303 530 541**  
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 7pm - 9pm  
Monday & Wednesday 9am - 11am

## Book Amnesty – a reminder!

### Phonics and Reading Books - Amnesty Update

Last year, we lost over £450 of specialist Little Wandle phonics books and about £400 of other reading books. A big THANK YOU to the parents who have responded to our appeal and have brought some of these back - we really appreciate it! This pile alone (in the photo) has saved us £140 😊

**Please keep looking** for any Thameside books you have at home and drop them into the office. We will be very pleased to have any books back, however long you've had them! Thanks again.



## Class learning reviews

**To find out more about what each year group is learning, please do check out our updated parent curriculum overviews on the class pages of our website!**

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

### Year 6

Year 6, have really enjoyed learning about light this week. The children designed an experiment to answer the question 'Which material reflects the most light?'

The children decided that 'the smoother the material the more light it reflects.'



### Year 5

Another busy couple of weeks for Year 5! We have completed our scripts with Oxford Playhouse, which are now with the production team - our words will be put into action ready for performances next year. We have also been very fortunate to have another 'special guest' teacher this week - Mr Campbell - who has been teaching more Solar System themed music!

Over the next couple of weeks, we will be getting more festive and fun in all our learning activities - there will be some special cards coming home as a result of our DT work and an alternative version of 'A Night before Christmas' will be shared with family and friends at home.

### Year 4

Another busy few weeks in Year 4 Farook Class. With the end of term rapidly approaching, we have been working towards our hybrid instruction texts where we will be explaining how to mummify a tomato. Before we start our final write, we have been working hard to develop our self-evaluation skills. We have been learning how to check our spelling, proofread effectively to check grammar, edit and improve our punctuation and explore how we can develop more interesting vocabulary. We are all excited to see how this translates to our final writing pieces.

In Computing this term, we have been learning all about photo editing. Over the past few weeks, we have looked at rotating and cropping images, changing colours and effects and cloning and removing elements of photos. It has not been an easy unit but I have been very impressed with the computing skills students have been able to display and remember.

### Year 3

Y3 Percival Class have had another great week and enjoyed another specialist Science session with the Trust Science Lead, Mrs Boaz. They have been learning about how light can be reflected and how darkness is the absence of light. Can they find more reflective surfaces at home? We have also started a new book (which they love!) called 'The Dog That Saved Christmas' by Nicola Davies. The main character, Jake, has autism and finds Christmas rather overwhelming. We will be learning more about the autistic spectrum and how to support our friends who have autism. In Music (pictured) the children have been composing their own pentatonic melodies 😊 Next week, we're looking forward to making torches out of plastic bottles.



### Year 2



Year 2 have been busy practising for the Christmas Nativity (tickets for this came home last week, please do remember to bring your tickets on the day!).

The children have grown in confidence so much and have really enjoyed learning the songs and actions. We are so proud of them all.



In Maths, we have continued our learning about shapes, focusing on 3D shapes and their properties. The children have amazed us with their correct use of the terminology (faces, vertices, edges) and they can name a variety of both 3D and 2D shapes. They all had a go at making their own 3D shape bracelet with repeating patterns today. We had some great creations!



## Year 1

In Year one we have been very busy getting ready for Christmas.

In our R.E lessons, Mrs Youngman has been teaching us about the Christian meaning of Christmas and how Jesus was born in a stable. We have been learning about the gifts he was given and have thought about what we might give Jesus if he were born today.

We have had great fun rehearsing our nativity play 'Baarmy Bethlehem' which we are performing to our friends and families next week.

We have also been busy writing to Father Christmas! We are expecting a reply any day now. We are sure we are on the good list!



## Reception

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in Superworms class, log in to Tapestry to see what Christmas bits we've been up to. Thank you as always for your engagement on Tapestry; it really does help link the learning with the children. The children have been learning about the Christmas story, retelling through puppets and showing they can collaborate together.



This week we've focused on the children's climbing and balance as part of the prime area - Physical development. The children loved balancing and make assault courses. We have also written to Santa to ask him for one toy we would like for Christmas. Finally we've been having a daily visitor from the North Pole - Jingles, the elf, has been spreading kindness with his daily kind challenges.

## Nursery

Christmas has landed in Nursery! We have been busy making Christmas cards for our families and writing Christmas cards for our friends, family, Father Christmas and even the Gruffalo!

We have been enjoying snowy tuff trays and wrapping up our own presents. Last week, the children arrived for the day, and it was transformed into a Christmas wonderland. This week we have been looking at The Christmas Story and playing with our nativity set learning about Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus.



## **Our stars of the week**

**Well done to our Stars of the week!**

**Year 1: Aaron**

**Year 2: Millena**

**Year 3: Wolfie**

**Year 4: Theo**

**Year 5: Logan**

**Year 6: Leighton**



## **TTRockstars, Numbots and Times Tables at home!**

**We are so impressed with everyone's work in practising their timestables and number bonds. Keep going! Year 4 are leading the way with some incredible progress since September – we wonder if another year group can match their success? Keep going!**

**Some top tips can also be found here to support parents:**

**[Times table games video](#) | [Oxford Owl](#)**

### **Learning at home resources**

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

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

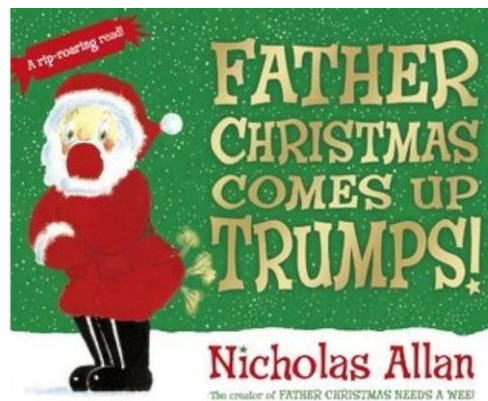
**[Thameside Primary School - Families and Learning at home \(thamesideschool.co.uk\)](https://thamesideschool.co.uk)**



## Library Corner

This week, Mrs. Youngman wanted to share her favourite (and rather silly!) Christmas book!

**Father Christmas Comes up Trumps!** Is the second book in a series – poor Father Christmas has eaten lots of different food and unfortunately it has made his tummy feel funny! As he moves through Christmas night, he has to try really hard not to wake up children with his 'trumps!' A funny picture book for younger children (and even grown-ups!). Mrs. Youngman's son has been loving this book every night since the start of December – thank you to Miss Cross for recommending it!



We would also love any children's books which you no longer need to use in our classrooms and to give out to other families. Please drop them into the school office or email [kdaniell@vale-academy.org](mailto:kdaniell@vale-academy.org) if you have a big box you'd like collected. Thank you in advance!

### Pay it Forward - £2 or £5 for our new library?

If you'd like to support our new library, there's now a '**pay it forward**' option on our brilliant 'Mostly Books' website (scroll to the end – link below). You can donate £2 or £5 towards a new book. Every little counts, so please do consider helping our amazing school in this way. Maybe skip a coffee at Costa or Starbucks this week and give us the money instead!

Thank you for the fantastic donations already 😊 Thameside Primary School Archives - Mostly Books ([mostly-books.co.uk](http://mostly-books.co.uk))





## Key Diary dates for this term

Please also keep an eye on the website online Calendar!

- Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> (am) and Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> (pm) – KS1 performances to parents – please see letter sent out
- Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas dinner day and **Festive Reading Café** – please do come and join us after school in the main hall!
- Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December – 2.30pm Nursery and Reception Christmas singalong to parents
- Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December – 9.00am Star of the Term assembly (invites for parents of nominees to follow)
- Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December – 1.30pm end of term and Merry Christmas!

# Word of the week!

Developing vocabulary is a key element of our curriculum at Thameside – each week we will be sharing some new words on the newsletter you to discuss and share with your children!

## Word of the Week

### Diligent

Adjective (Describing Word)

**Definition:** Showing care in doing one's work.

**Examples:**

1. The **diligent** researcher made sure to double check her measurements.
2. The teacher reported that the student was very **diligent** in class.

Join us for

# Stay and Play

at Abingdon Library



For babies and toddlers

Every Thursday

9:30–11:00am

Free drop-in sessions

Children must be accompanied by an adult

# Is your child 3 or 4 years old?

## Primary school place – you must apply now

If your child was born on or between **1 September 2019** and **31 August 2020**, 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 2024**.

## Apply online at

**[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions](http://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](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions)**

Email: **[admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk)**

Tel: **0345 241 2487**



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**



# ParentLine 5-11 years

New School Health Nursing messaging service for parents and carers of children 5-11 years attending a state school in Oxfordshire

**Text 07312 263227**  
to message a school health nurse



## Locality and Community Support Service



Dear parents,

My name is Sophia Lazarou-West and I work for the Locality Community Support Service (LCSS) and will be the link worker for Thameside Primary School.

As the school's link worker, I offer support and guidance to school staff, can refer and signpost to external agencies and ensure all children and families, where needed, are offered Early Help. This might look like a Strengths and Needs conversation being had with families or attending a team around the family meeting. For more information on what Early Help is please see here: [Early-help-guide-for-families-Sept-2023.pdf \(oscb.org.uk\)](https://www.oscb.org.uk/early-help-guide-for-families-sept-2023.pdf)

The aim of LCSS is to ensure families have their support needs met by agencies within the community so that support is offered in a co-ordinated way, at the right time to make sure worries don't become bigger for children and their families. This could include support from school staff, school health nurse, a GP, the voluntary sector, anyone that offers a service to children and families. Please see further information here: [Early Help and the Locality Community Support Service \(LCSS\) - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board \(oscb.org.uk\)](https://www.oscb.org.uk/early-help-and-the-locality-community-support-service-lcss-oxfordshire-safeguarding-children-board)

There can be opportunities arranged for me to meet with you in person where I am happy to answer any questions you may have. I look forward to supporting your child's school to ensure all children and families are supported by Early Help when its needed.

Many thanks,

Sophia