THORNS AUTUMN NEWS

OCTOBER 2026

Half Term & INSET

Reminder: **School is closed to pupils on Friday 23rd October and Monday 2nd November for INSET days.**
School will also be **closed** for Half Term from **Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October.**
We would like to wish all our families a fun, relaxing, and enjoyable Half Term break.

Rememberance Assembly

Parents and carers of children in Year 5 & 6 are invited to our assembly of remembrance on Wednesday 11th November. Doors open at 10.30am and the assembly begins at 10.40am.
Each family will be allocated two seats.
We look forward to seeing you.



Autumn Walk

On Wednesday 11th November, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will be going on an Autumn Walk around the park. We are very excited to explore the changing season and see what autumn treasures we can find. Details will be confirmed closer to the date.

Reception Parents Maths Workshop /Forest School

On Thursday 5th November Reception parents are invited join us for our Maths Parent Workshop and see how maths is taught at Thorns. These friendly sessions are designed to help you support your child's learning at home. Please click on this link to confirm your attendance.
Reception Maths Workshop - Mastering Numbers – Fill in form
This day will also Forest school for Reception so please ensure children attend school prepared for the weather in their Forest School clothes.

Sustainability Champions

Does your child care about our planet and want to help make our school an even greener place? We are looking for enthusiastic children to become our new Sustainability Champions.
How to Apply 🌍🌱💚
They need to write their name and class on their application.
Then choose one of the following:

- Make a list of ideas that would help our school become greener.
- Draw a picture showing how you would help improve our school environment.

Deadline Please hand your application to Mrs Rees by the end of the first week after Half Term.

Panto!

It's pantomime time... Oh no it isn't! Oh yes it is!
The whole school will be heading to the pantomime on Friday 12th February. We are delighted to be supporting Mary Stevens Hospice, with all proceeds from the trip going to this wonderful charity.
Thanks to support from the school fund, we are subsidising the cost of the trip, meaning it is only £10 per child.
Payments can be made via the Arbor app, or by cash or card at the school office. Please ensure all payments are received by Monday 30th November, as we are required to pay for the tickets in advance.
It promises to be a fun-filled and exciting morning for everyone, and we can't wait to enjoy this special treat together!



Attendance Reminder

When reporting your child's absence, you **must** telephone the school and speak to a member of staff. Emails will **not** be accepted as notification of absence and absences reported by email will not be authorised.

We would also like to remind all parents and carers how important good school attendance is. **Good attendance helps children to:**

- Achieve their full potential academically.
- Build friendships and social skills.
- Develop confidence and good routines.
- Avoid gaps in learning that can be difficult to catch up on.

In line with our Attendance Policy, if your child is absent for a **third consecutive day**, a home visit may be carried out unless circumstances or capacity prevent this.

Please note that holidays taken during term time will not be authorised. Head Teachers may approve leave only in exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education does not consider family holidays to be exceptional circumstances.

If we believe a child may be absent due to an unauthorised holiday and the appropriate leave of absence paperwork has not been completed, a home visit may be undertaken.

Schools are accountable for pupil attendance and are required to demonstrate to both Ofsted and the Local Authority that every reasonable effort has been made to promote and secure good attendance for all pupils.

Thank you for your support in ensuring your child attends school regularly and arrives on time each day.



OPAL - Outdoor Play

As an OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) school, we believe that children benefit hugely from spending time outdoors every day. Outdoor play helps children develop their confidence, creativity, problem-solving skills, independence and social skills, while also supporting their physical and emotional wellbeing.

As the weather begins to turn more autumnal, we would like to remind parents that children go outside in all weather conditions, unless it is unsafe to do so. To ensure they can fully enjoy their outdoor learning and play opportunities, please make sure your child has appropriate clothing in school, including:

- Wellies or suitable waterproof footwear
- A waterproof coat
- Waterproof trousers or a puddle suit (where possible)
- Warm outdoor clothing for cooler days

OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING

Having the correct clothing allows children to make the most of the fantastic outdoor experiences that OPAL provides, whether they are splashing in puddles, exploring nature, building dens or enjoying imaginative play with friends.

Thank you for your support in helping us ensure that every child can enjoy outdoor play safely, comfortably and to the fullest extent.

School Photographs

On Tuesday 17th November, the photographer will be in school to take individual pupil photographs.
If you have a pre-school child and would like them to have a photograph taken with their older sibling(s), please bring them to the school hall at 8:30am.
Please note that this arrangement is for pre-school children only. Siblings who are both of school age will automatically be photographed together during the school day.

After School Club Cancellation

Unfortunately, there will be no after school club on Thursday 12th November. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause. All staff are required to attend safeguarding training delivered by an external provider after school on this date. The training dates offered were very limited and all fell outside of normal school hours, meaning this could not be avoided. Thank you for your understanding and support as we ensure all staff receive this important training.

Christmas Events and Festive Fundraising

As always, we have lots of exciting activities planned for the festive season. Our Christmas Community Carols and Fair is one of the highlights of the school year and is always a well-loved and successful event.
The money raised through our fundraising events helps make many of the special experiences we offer possible, including Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter events, the Pantomime trip, World Book Day Brunch, Bedtime Stories and much more. Unfortunately, there is no funding within state school budgets for these extras, so they are made possible entirely through the generosity and support of our families.
To help make our Community Carols and Fair a success, we will once again be holding a series of MUFTI Days. Children may come to school in non-uniform (appropriate for school) in exchange for the following donations:

- Friday 6th November - £1 donation
- Friday 20th November - Bottles or chocolates
- Friday 4th December - Tombola items

Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 1st December - Christmas Decorations Day
Children may wear a Christmas jumper with their school uniform, along with Christmas boppers or Santa hats if they wish.
Wednesday 2nd December - Bedtime Stories Under the Stars
Wednesday 9th December - Whole School Visit to Quarry Bank Church to hear the Christmas Story and sing carols / Christmas Dinner Day / Parents' Evening
Monday 14th December - Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity Performances at 9:30am and 2:30pm
Tuesday 15th December - Christmas Fun Day in School
Wednesday 16th December - Reception Christmas Singalong
Thursday 17th December -Community Carols and Fair
Friday 18th December - School closes for the Christmas break at 1:30pm.
Further information about all events will be sent closer to the dates, in the weekly roundup.
Thank you, as always, for your continued support. It is your generosity and involvement that help us create such memorable experiences for our children throughout the year.

Reminder: Clocks Change This Weekend

Just a friendly reminder that the clocks go back one hour this weekend.
The clocks change at 2:00am on Sunday morning, when they go back to 1:00am, giving us an extra hour in bed! Please remember to adjust your clocks and alarms.
As the evenings become darker and the weather turns colder, please also ensure children come to school with warm coats and appropriate footwear.





Summer Trips 2027



All of our summer trips have now been booked. Further details will be sent out after half term.
To help make the trips more affordable for families, the costs have been split into smaller payments over three or four months. We greatly value and appreciate your contributions towards these enriching experiences for the children.
As with all school visits, the viability of the trips depends on receiving sufficient parental contributions. Unfortunately, if we do not receive enough contributions, we may have no option but to cancel the trips, as school does not have the budget to cover any significant shortfall.
Last year, the school had to absorb a funding shortfall of over £500, which is not something we can sustain again. We therefore kindly ask that, wherever possible, contributions are made by the stated deadlines to ensure that all trips can go ahead as planned.
Thank you for your continued support. It is through this partnership between home and school that we are able to provide these valuable experiences for our children.

Parents' Evening

Parents' Evening will take place on Thursday 9th December 3.30pm - 6.30pm. As normal you will be asked to book an appointment with your class teacher on the Arbor App. If you do not book an appointment at a time to suit, you will automatically be sent an appointment. You will be notified on the weekly roundup when the bookings are open.

Coming soon!

Our Christmas Raffle tickets will be going on sale next month. We already have some excting prizes and many more to come:
Up for grabs so far are:
Cash prize £100 / Family Ticket for The Safari Park
£40 Pub Meal Voucher / Hampers / Gin
Coffee Shop Vouchers / Air Fryer / Various Toys

Safe Parking Around School

The safety of our children is everyone's responsibility, and we would like to remind all parents and carers to park considerately and legally when dropping off and collecting pupils. We have recently received concerns from members of our school community about vehicles being parked in bus stops, double parking, blocking traffic lanes and pulling out into moving traffic on Thorns Road.
These actions not only cause congestion but also create serious safety risks for children, pedestrians and other road users. We ask all families to allow extra time for their journey, use designated parking areas where possible, avoid stopping in restricted locations and show patience and courtesy to others. By working together and setting a good example, we can help ensure that every child arrives at and leaves school safely.

We would also like to remind parents and carers that, under no circumstances, should the school staff car park be used unless you have been issued with a parking permit by the school. Permits are generally only provided to those who hold a Blue Badge or who have been given temporary permission due to illness or exceptional circumstances.
The staff car park is small and simply cannot accommodate all families. It is therefore important that it remains available for those with authorised access, ensuring fairness for everyone and allowing staff and visitors with genuine need to park safely.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep our children, families and the wider community safe.

Paper copies of this newsletter are available from the main reception on request.