Newsletter No. 8

2nd November 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome back! I hope you all had a lovely half-term break.

I am so delighted that our Year 5 children who visited Grafham Water seemed to have such a super time. As we always find when our children are away, they were beautifully behaved, showed fantastic resilience and made great team members. We are very proud of them!

I am sure all parents will join me in thanking Miss Budden for her leadership and all the wonderful staff team for making this trip possible. A great deal of planning, time and care goes into a residential visit, and we really appreciate everything they did to give the children such a memorable experience.

We have Parent/Carer Consultations this week for those parents/carers who have not already met with their child's teacher. Please book an appointment via eSchools if you have not already done so.

I would also like to highlight our Thunderbolt booklists. These books have been specially chosen for their quality, with wonderful stories, characters and language for children to enjoy. Lots of children have been working their way through them and we would be delighted if all children and parents would read these together. Even when children are confident readers, there is still so much pleasure in having a story read aloud and talking about it together. Research shows that reading together and talking about stories helps children develop their vocabulary and understanding, so sharing a book at home is a lovely way to support their learning. Why not look through the list with your child and choose your next book to share?

Have a super week.

Miss E. Dawson
Headteacher

EYFS School Admissions September 2027

Please note that if you wish to register your child for a place in EYFS for September 2027, you will need to apply online (applications will open on 9th November 2026) by 15th January 2027. To register your choice please visit:-

https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/admissions-september-2027

Year 5 Grafham Residential





Before half term, some of the Year 5 children visited Grafham Water on a two night residential. The children had the most amazing time and enjoyed lots of activities whilst there. Ferne Bradley (Ants) and Xander Weedon (Kestrels) give their respective accounts of the exciting trip below:-

"Before I went I was really excited and nervous. The coach journey was a bit long. Once we got there we sat down and one of the instructors told us all about it. Then we went to our rooms to look around and unpack our suitcases. Then we went back downstairs to eat our lunch. Then we did our first activities. I did raft building. We had to make a model out of little barrels and then we went outside to actually build it. Once we had built it, we went on it and it floated although it accidentally broke a bit. I enjoyed it because it was fun and we had to work together as a team. Then we came back





inside, had our dinner and then took part in the Grafham Challenge which was where we had to hold onto a rope and cover our eyes with a hat or sleeping mask and walk along holding the rope not knowing where we were going. After that we went to bed. I was really tired and slept well. The next day, I did fun boating. It's where someone has to steer the boat with a metal pole and then the other person held a bit of string and pulled the sail to make it strong so that it didn't flap around in the wind. Then we had our lunch. Then we went to our next activity which was crate stacking and high ropes. It was really good but it was wet so a bit slippery. I was a bit scared of the high ropes at first but after I went on it I loved it! Then we looked at the Grafham Challenge in daylight to see what we had done. Then we went back inside and played a little game, then we had our dinner and then got into our pyjamas and watched a movie. We had hot chocolate too which was nice. Then we went to bed and the next morning I did canoeing and kayaking. During kayaking we had to do little challenges like stand up and sit on our knees without falling in. I managed to do both. After we got out of the canoe, we looked at some



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rocks and crystals that we found. They were really big ones. Then we went back inside, had our lunch and then got onto the coach to come home. The whole trip was very exciting and a bit wet but I loved it and hope that I will be able to go on other school trips in the future." (Ferne Bradley)

"I was a bit nervous going to Grafham because I can't really swim well and it's a water centre. I felt a bit better when we got there and we met one of the instructors called Olivia and she reassured me that I would be ok. Then we were assigned to what rooms we would be in. There were two floors. The bottom floor was where the boys were and the top floor was where the girls were. Some of the rooms were big and some were small. We were in a big room with five beds. I was in group 3 so the first thing we did was the crate stack and high ropes.



I got really scared when I got to the 9th crate but it was really fun and I knew that I was



wearing a harness which would keep me safe. Then we went inside and had our dinner. We then had to go and get changed for the Grafham Challenge. The Grafham Challenge was where we were blindfolded, had to hold onto a rope and do an obstacle course. We were also getting sprayed with water some of the time. The next day we did kayaking and canoeing. I loved the canoeing as it was really relaxing. The kayaking I didn't like as much as I was in the kayak on my own. I had a paddle on each side but couldn't move it very much. Then, in the afternoon, we did raft building. We chose to do six barrels in a line and two logs, one on each side and tie it all together with some rope. I got into the water but my foot got stuck in the



mud and it took a lot of effort to get it out. My trainer was covered in mud! The raft floated really well and we



had to get on one at a time to level the weight. The building was a solid 9/10 and the testing was probably 5/10 because I got stuck in the mud. Then we had to try and get our wetsuits off which was quite tough. Then we went inside. Then we got changed into our pyjamas after dinner and we watched a little film. Half way through the film we had hot chocolate and then we had a choice - we could either go to sleep after the hot chocolate or stay and watch the rest of the film. I was so tired I decided to go to sleep. The next day it was too windy to go fun boating and sailing so we went on a motor boat called Tiger Lily which was really fun and relaxing. Whilst I was waiting to steer the boat, the instructor let me use a jug to get water out of the bottom of the boat. Then when we got back on the land, we did problem solving which was actually pretty cool. Then it started raining and we got absolutely soaked. Then we had lunch which was absolutely amazing. After that we sorted out our bags and got on the coach to come home. I enjoyed canoeing, building the raft and going on the motor boat the best. It was my first time staying two nights away from home and my roommates were all of my best friends so I had the best time." (Xander Weedon)

Tag Rugby Triumph!

A squad of eleven Year 6 children braved the wild weather at Canvey Rugby Club to compete in the District Tag Rugby Tournament on what was the last day of term. Spirits were high and the children were brimming with energy – which was good as they faced a gruelling 8 match schedule - playing every school present! They showed absolutely incredible determination and teamwork throughout and scored some amazing tries that showcased the talent across the whole squad. Amazingly, they won 7 of their 8 games and drew one, which meant that they were crowned champions on the steps of the rugby club! Well done children for representing our school so well and huge thanks also go to the adults that supported so positively, keeping the children warm and spirits high! Isabelle Hawkins (Badgers) tells of her experience below:-

"It was all nice and sunny and we won our first game. I wasn't in that game but I was in the next one which we won also. Then we went over to where we were sitting with all our stuff and put our coats on as we didn't play the next game. Then we had a few snacks and then got back to our third game which we drew. After that we played our next game which I wasn't in. Then it started raining a lot. Mr. Wilson was also there cheering us on. In the other game we won and then in the next game I wasn't in as we all took turns. In the last game I went on in half time and then Hermione scored a try which meant we won the game. At the very end we got all our stuff and then we went to the front to hear all the scores. We won all our 7 games and drew 1 which meant we won the whole competition. We all went crazy screaming and then lifted the trophy in the air. The whole event was really fun although it got a bit cold towards the end. I definitely would like to play Tag Rugby again hopefully against some different people



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eSchools App

We kindly ask that you download the eSchools app (free of charge), in order that any messages we send you are not charged to the school and you will be able to access the calendar, newsletter and website easily.

Twitter

Please keep checking our Twitter feed for various updates/messages:-

@Thundersley_P_S

Early Birds Breakfast Club & Treetops After School Club



We offer a Breakfast Club called Early Birds (7.45am to the start of school) and an After School Club called Treetops (3.15pm to 6.00pm) each day. If you are interested in a place for your child and would like more information, please either speak to Mrs. Hayward by calling 01268 793251 or email her directly on:-



Katie.Hayward@tps.robusmat.co.uk

Uniform Shops

We would like to advise that we now have two uniform shops as follows:-

Penn UK,
15-17 Kents Hill Road,
South Benfleet,
Essex, SS7 5PN.

Telephone:- 01268 751724

www.pennuk.com

Danielle's Uniform,
Claydons Lane,
Rayleigh,
Essex, SS6 7UP.

Telephone 01268 967542

www.daniellesshop.co.uk

PTA

Next Meeting

The PTA AGM is on Tuesday, 3rd November 2026 at 7pm in the White Hart. Everyone is welcome.

Community News

Private Fostering

Please find attached a flyer in respect of the above.

Free SEND Evening with Steve Challen

Please find attached a flyer in respect of the above.

Free Courses for Parents/Carers

Please find attached flyers in respect of the above.

Give Girls Cricket A Go

Please find attached a flyer in respect of the above.

School Calendar – Dates

Academic Year 2026-2027

21/12/2026 to 01/01/27 – Christmas Break
04/01/27 – Start of the Spring Term
15/02/27 to 19/02/27 – Half Term
26/03/27 to 09/04/27 – Easter Break
12/04/27 – Start of the Summer Term
03/05/27 – Bank Holiday
31/05/27 to 04/06/27 – Half Term
21/07/27 – Last Day of Summer Term

******NON PUPIL DAYS******

22/02/27

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