



Vernham Dean Gillum's Church of England Primary School Newsletter



Creating compassionate, courageous, creative citizens for the future in God's love
November 2025

Dear Families,

I think it's fair to say that the Christmas season is truly upon us. Christmas lights are on in city and town centres and families are starting to put up (or think about putting up) their Christmas decorations at home. I will be resisting for a little while, but I do like seeing the many varied Christmas lights on and in people's homes at this time of year.

At school we have given thought to two key themes within the Nativity story so far: connectedness and trust. We considered connections with people and places in our own lives and thought about the connections that Mary had and needed when she found out that she would be giving birth to Jesus. This week we thought about people we trust and talked about the trust needed between Mary and Joseph as they travelled to Bethlehem. Next week it will be the turn of the shepherds and we'll be thinking about the joy that comes through sharing.

Have a great weekend!

Ian Hickman
Executive Headteacher

Safeguarding: Protect Neurodivergent Children from Scams in Games

Neurodivergent children can be amongst those most vulnerable online, therefore more likely to become victims of things like scams. Those with ADHD, autism or other divergent ways of thinking might not recognise when someone intends to do harm. Internet Matters have put together a brand new free guide for parents which explores how neurodivergent children's unique traits can leave them open to scams, particularly in games. You can download the free guide here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/neurodivergent-children/neurodivergent-children-gaming/roblox-parents-guide-neurodivergent-children/video-game-scams/>

School Christian Value



This half-term our spotlight is on the Christian value of Trust. Our daily act of worship is based on a theme linked to trust.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me." John 14:1

Andover Food Bank

This morning Y5 and Y6 spent an hour at Tesco Extra in Andover supporting Andover Foodbank. The children handed out shopping lists to customers highlighting the items most needed, and they also collected monetary donations as well as food and household goods kindly given by shoppers.

To say I was proud of them is an understatement. The children showed compassion and excellent manners; they were friendly, polite, and helpful to everyone they met. I received so many positive comments about their behaviour and how they were a credit to the school - with several people asking if we could return again! Our pupils truly demonstrated that we are a small school with a big heart.

"I think this was so important to do as it was helping those in need" said Leo.

The school will be collecting further donations for Andover Foodbank when the Festival of Trees is displayed on the 18th December.



Nativity Play Rehearsal

The school has been filled with excitement this week as rehearsals for our Nativity play are now in full swing. The children have been working incredibly hard to learn their lines, and perfect the songs.

From confident narrators to enthusiastic shepherds, and a wonderfully patient Mary and Joseph, every child is embracing their role with energy and pride.

We are so proud of the children's focus, teamwork, and growing confidence as they rehearse. It has been a joy to watch them support one another and celebrate each other's achievements.

We can't wait to share the final performance with families very soon!

Christmas Raffle

It's that time of year again! There are some fantastic prizes to be won, all generously donated by our amazing parents and wider community..

Tickets have been sent home in your child's book bag. If you would like additional tickets please see Miss Pauk in the school office. The draw will take place on Wednesday 17th December. All funds raised will help us continue providing enriching experiences for all children.

We appreciate your support - and good luck!



Christmas Crafts Afternoon Reminder

We are delighted to invite children starting school in September 2026 to our Christmas Crafts Afternoon on Thursday 4th December! This will be a fun, festive opportunity for them to get creative and make some special holiday-themed crafts to take home. Please see the image for full details.



If you would like any leaflets to share with friends or family, please speak to Miss Pauk in the school office.

REMINDERS

Rucksacks

Rucksacks should be only used for school trips etc. Book bags are perfect for bringing into school all the children need e.g. book, reading record, homework and any letters that go home.

Snacks

Break time snacks should be fruit, vegetables or cheese only please

Parking

When dropping off and picking up your child from school, please refrain from parking in School Close. This is a residential area and should not be used for parking. Please use the Burydeane car park.

DIARY

December

- 4th – Christmas Crafts Open Event
- 11th – Christingle Service in School Hall (2:00pm)
- 11th – Christmas Jumper Day
- 11th – Whole School Christmas Dinner at Village Hall
- 11th – Work Showcase 3:10pm

- 16th – Nativity Play at Village Hall (4:15pm)
- 17th – Christmas Raffle to be drawn
- 18th – Robin Hood & Maid Marion Panto at Newbury Corn Exchange
- 18th – Carol Service at the Church (2:30pm)
- 19th – Class Christmas Parties
- 19th – Break up for Christmas Holidays

INSET DAYS 2026

Monday 23rd February
Friday 3rd July