Term 1 Autumn Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

Once again, the weather has played its part in our end-of-term celebrations! Sadly, this time it has led to the postponement of our community Bike Bus and whole-school Orienteering afternoon, which will now take place after half -term. However, we were still able to welcome parents and carers into school to help us come up with additional activities for our Northbourne Awards Scheme.



As a reminder, the Northbourne Awards Scheme is part of our personal development programme, designed to broaden children's experiences beyond the classroom while promoting our school values of Courage, Compassion and Community. It aims to build confidence, resilience and independence, develop new interests and encourage children to make a positive contribution to their community.

Every child will take part in three school-organised challenges each year, earning a Northbourne Value Badge for each one. Alongside these, children can work towards Bronze, Silver and Gold Family Challenge Awards by completing 5, 10 or 15 challenges over the two years in their school phase. These optional activities might include learning a new skill, helping others, visiting somewhere new or taking on a personal challenge. The emphasis is on participation and experience, with children's achievements celebrated in our school assemblies.



I am delighted that we have reached this point in Northbourne's journey. Over the past two years, we have worked incredibly hard to establish high expectations in teaching, learning, behaviour and community engagement. Our recent Ofsted inspection has validated that progress, recognising that we now meet the expected standards across every area of school life. This gives us a strong foundation on which to build, and the opportunity to introduce exciting initiatives such as the Northbourne Awards Scheme that will further enrich our children's experiences.

I often talk to the children about having 'high expectations in all things, sprinkled with fun and joy along the way'. For me, the Northbourne Awards Scheme is a wonderful example of exactly that. We are maintaining our high ambitions for every child while creating even more opportunities for enjoyment, discovery, achievement and memorable experiences. It is exciting to see this next chapter of Northbourne's journey beginning to take shape



Andrew Denham

Family Challenge Awards

Courage



Be brave, try new things and challenge yourself.

- [ ] Learn to ride a balance bike or scooter
- [ ] Have a wild swim (sea, lake or river) with an adult
- [ ] Do a public performance (singing, speaking, drama or dance)
- [ ] Cross a road safely on your own
- [ ] Fix something at home (DIY)
- [ ] Try a new food three times
- [ ] Go shopping on your own
- [ ] Climb a big hill or mountain
- [ ] Go snorkelling
- [ ] Take part in a challenge that pushes you beyond your comfort zone
- [ ] Be screen free for a week (no TV, computer, phone or iPad)
- [ ] Learn to swim 10 metres
- [ ] Explore a cave
- [ ] Try a new sport
- [ ] Learn to tie your own shoelaces
- [ ] Have a sleepover without having a family with you
- [ ] Do a water sport activity
- [ ] Do some work experience with a family member or close friend
- [ ] Learn to ride a two-wheel bike
- [ ] Perform a tune on a musical instrument
- [ ] Try a new activity that you have previously been nervous about
- [ ] Take part in an organised race or event
- [ ] Speak to an audience about something you are passionate about
- [ ] Learn a new skill (e.g. cook, code, knit, take photos)
- [ ] Try something adventurous outdoors (e.g. tree climbing, abseiling)
- [ ] Travel on public transport on your own with an adult's permission
- [ ] Set yourself a personal challenge and achieve it

Compassion



Be kind, think of others and make a positive difference.

- [ ] Make a card to cheer someone up
- [ ] Try a completely new sport
- [ ] Make a present for someone
- [ ] Complete five acts of kindness for five different people
- [ ] Donate toys or books to charity
- [ ] Raise money for a local charity
- [ ] Raise money for a national charity
- [ ] Donate to the food bank
- [ ] Help prepare a family meal
- [ ] Attend a community event
- [ ] Volunteer or support someone over several weeks
- [ ] Create a 'Happy Hamper' to make someone smile
- [ ] Write and send a letter to someone who might be lonely
- [ ] Help a younger child learn something new
- [ ] Make a thank-you card for someone who helps your community
- [ ] Complete a week of helping at home without being asked
- [ ] Visit or spend time with an elderly relative or neighbour
- [ ] Make or bake something to give to someone else
- [ ] Help care for an animal or pet for a week
- [ ] Organise a collection of useful items for a local charity
- [ ] Give up some of your free time to help someone who needs support
- [ ] Create a kindness calendar and complete a kind act every day for a week
- [ ] Help someone who is finding a task difficult
- [ ] Make a small gift for someone to show they are appreciated
- [ ] Find out about a charity and explain how it helps people

Community



Be involved, work together and look after where we live.

- [ ] Complete a 5km family walk
- [ ] Sleep under the stars or go camping
- [ ] Lay the table for a week
- [ ] Visit a National Trust location
- [ ] Take something to a recycling bank or centre
- [ ] Volunteer for a local organisation
- [ ] Write to your local MP about something you care about
- [ ] Be a mascot for a team
- [ ] Upcycle an old item rather than throw it away
- [ ] Bake for a cake sale
- [ ] Watch a live theatre or music performance
- [ ] Visit another city
- [ ] Visit a museum
- [ ] Complete 7 household chores for 7 days
- [ ] Visit a significant landmark
- [ ] Help care for a pet every day for a week
- [ ] Visit a museum heritage site
- [ ] Make a bird feeder
- [ ] Play a board game with your family every weekend for a month
- [ ] Read a book from a library
- [ ] Learn 5 phrases in a new language
- [ ] Visit a local place of worship
- [ ] Plan, buy and prepare a meal
- [ ] Plant, grow and eat something
- [ ] Cook on an open fire with family or friends
- [ ] Take part in a litter pick in your local area
- [ ] Join a local club or group
- [ ] Do something to help look after the environment (e.g. plant a tree)

Northbourne Awards Scheme Questions and Answers

Do we have to take part? *No. The Home Values Awards are entirely optional.*

What is the difference between the school-organised Values Badges and the Home Values Awards? *We have created a separate list of values-based activities that children will complete during school time as part of our curriculum. This means that every child will have the opportunity to earn a Courage, Compassion and Community badge each year. The Home Values Awards are additional, optional activities that families can choose to complete outside school. These contribute towards the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.*

How do we tell you what my child has done? *Simply send a brief email explaining what your child has done to the relevant class or phase email address below. You are welcome to include a photograph, but this is not essential. We will then record the completed activity on our awards tracking system.*

Do we have to choose activities from the list? *Ideally, yes. We have carefully selected activities that we believe will help children develop our school values of Courage, Compassion and Community. However, if your child completes something different at home that you feel demonstrates one of our values, please email the details to the relevant phase address. We will happily consider whether it can count towards their Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.*

Can activities my child already does regularly count? *Ideally, no. One of the main aims of the scheme is to encourage children to try something new, broaden their experiences and develop new skills. However, we recognise that children may already take part in clubs, hobbies or other activities. If they take on a new challenge or achieve something different within an activity they already do, this could count towards an award. The important thing is that children are challenging themselves, stepping outside their comfort zones and demonstrating our school values of Courage, Compassion and Community, rather than simply receiving recognition for activities they already do regularly.*

How does my child earn a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award? *Children have two years to work towards their awards during each school phase: Bronze Award: Complete 5 activities; Silver Award: Complete 10 activities in total; Gold Award: Complete 15 activities in total. The four school phases are: Nursery and Reception; Years 1 and 2; Years 3 and 4; Years 5 and 6 When children move into their next school phase, they begin again, working towards a new set of Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.*

What happens if my child achieves the Gold Award in less than two years? *We will celebrate their fantastic achievement! They will then need to wait until they move into their next school phase before they can begin working towards a new set of awards. So there isn't a rush to get them done!*

Does my child have to complete different activities in each school phase? *Yes. Activities cannot be repeated in a different school phase. The aim is to encourage children to continue exploring new experiences as they grow and develop. By the time children leave Northbourne, they could have completed up to 60 different activities, each helping them to demonstrate and develop our school values of Courage, Compassion and Community.*

When will children receive their badges? *We will celebrate children's achievements and present any badges they have earned during our weekly Achievement Assemblies.*

When can we start? *TODAY! You can start exploring the activities with your child straight away. We look forward to hearing about the exciting things they achieve!*

News and Updates for Term 2

Remembrance Day – Poppy Appeal



We will be selling poppies in school straight after half term, up until Remembrance Day, to support the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. Children are welcome to bring in a minimum donation of 50p for Poppies and £1 for other items, if they would like to make a purchase.
We would also like to invite parents and carers to join us on the large playground at morning drop-off on Wednesday 11th November for a short moment of remembrance, as we come together as a school community to remember and honour those who have lost their lives in conflict and those who have served our country.

Changes to PE days in Term 2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Puffins Swans Falcons Owls	Penguins Owls Falcons Kites Eagles	Nightingales Wrens Hawks Robins	Kites Eagles Wrens Kestrels Hawks	Phoenix Robins Nightingales Kestrels (Swimming)

Become a Foundation Governor – Make a Lasting Impact on Education

The Board of Governors is currently seeking volunteers to join us as Foundation Governors. If you know of anyone who is not currently a parent at the school and who may be interested in this rewarding role, we would be delighted to hear from them.

What is a Foundation Governor?

Foundation Governors play a vital role in ensuring the school's religious character is preserved and developed. They are appointed to bring valuable perspective to the leadership and strategic direction of the school.

What We're Looking For

- A commitment to supporting the school's ethos and values
- An interest in education and the welfare of children
- Good communication and teamwork skills
- Willingness to attend meetings (usually termly) and take part in governor training

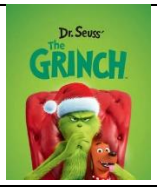
What You'll Gain:

- A chance to give back to your community
- Valuable experience in strategic leadership and governance
- The opportunity to support and challenge the school to be the best it can be
- A rewarding role that makes a real difference in young people's lives

No prior experience in education is needed—we welcome people from all walks of life who are willing to learn and contribute.

If you're ready to make a difference and would like to find out more, please contact marie.murphy@northbourne.oxon.sch.uk

North Stars Friday Films for Term 2

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Hotel Transylvania	Inside Out 2	The Grinch	The Polar Express	Arthur Christmas	Home Alone
					

Northbourne CE Primary School
Nurturing Excellence.

Winter 26/27 Northbourne North Stars: Playful and Purposeful Provision by Professionals

A one-stop-shop of children's clubs and wrap-around care for working parents, for children aged 4 and above.

North Stars

Sessions	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning 7.30am to 8.35am	**Breakfast Club** *Craft, games, activities & breakfast.*	**Breakfast Club** *Craft, games, activities & breakfast.*	**Breakfast Club** *Craft, games, activities & breakfast.*	**Breakfast Club** *Craft, games, activities & breakfast.*	**Breakfast Club** *Craft, games, activities & breakfast.*
Afternoon Session 1 3.15am to 4.30pm	**Drink & Snack for All**	**Drink & Snack for All**	**Drink & Snack for All**	**Drink & Snack for All**	**Drink & Snack for All**
	Dodgeball (Y2-Y6) *Dodge, duck, dip & dive.*	**Gymnastics (Y1-Y6)** *Building confidence through movement.*	**Dance Club (Y1-Y6)** *Learn a routine and perform at Oxfordshire Dance Festival!*	**Football (Y3-Y6)** *Improve technically and tactically, together!*	**Chill Zone (R-Y6) 15:15-16:30** *Relax, play, create.*
	Archery (Y3-Y6) *Precision, focus, steadiness.*	**Christmas Crafts (Y1-Y6)** *A merry mix of craft & Christmas creativity.*	**Go for it! (Y1-Y6)** *Fun games & challenges with Mr Denham!*	**Choir (Y1-Y6)** *Be a part of the Northbourne Choir for free.*	
	Chill Zone (R-Y6) *Relax, play, create.*	**Chill Zone (R-Y6)** *Relax, play, create.*	**Chill Zone (R-Y6)** *Relax, play, create.*	**Scrap Book Club (Y1-Y2)** *Complete a scrap book by exploring new styles each week.*	
				Chill Zone (R-Y6) *Relax, play, create.*	**Chill + Film Zone (R-Y6) 15:15-18:00** *Fun with friends and food with a film. Snack bag and a drink all included for only £12!*
Afternoon Session 2 4.30pm to 6.00pm	**Tea and Drink**	**Tea and Drink**	**Tea and Drink**	**Tea and Drink**	
	Free Play *Relax & play.*	**Free Play** *Relax & play.*	**Free Play** *Relax & play.*	**Free Play** *Relax & play.*	
Nursery Provision	**8.00-8.35**	**8.00-8.35**	**8.00-8.35**	**8.00-8.35**	**8.00-8.35**
	3.15-5.00	**3.15-5.00**	**3.15-5.00**	**3.15-5.00**	**3.15-5.00**

Registration: Families need a My Child at School (MCAS) account to be able to register their children for activities
Sign Up: By 9am on Friday of the week before you would like them to attend. Sign-up via MCAS. Sign up will close after 9am Friday & reopen again at 9am on Monday morning for the following week.
Activity Choice: Families must choose an activity to do in Session 1 e.g. dodgeball, rounders or chill zone.
Cost: Flat rate (regardless of what time the child arrives or leaves) of £6 per child for Breakfast Club; £7 for Afternoon Session 1; and £8 for Afternoon Session 2
Nursery: Flat rate (regardless of what time the child arrives or leaves) £4 for the morning session; £12 for Afternoon Session, including the snack and tea.
Reductions: Children on Free School Meals may be entitled to a subsidy. Please contact the email below for more information.
Last Minute Bookings: Parents can book their children into the provision 'on the day' by phoning the School Office. This will cost £10 per child, per session.
Expectations: Northbourne North Stars is not school but the expectations for good behaviour are just as high so that all children feel happy and safe.
Question? Please contact **northstars@northbourne.oxon.sch.uk** **not** the School Office

Courage **Compassion** **Community**

Times Table Rock Stars (TTRS) Heatmaps

Supporting your children at home with times tables

You will have seen that children in Key Stage 2 (Years 3–6) recently came home with a TTRS Heatmap stuck into their reading diary.



So, what is a Heatmap?

A Heatmap gives us a picture of how quickly and fluently children can recall their multiplication and division facts. Every child who uses TTRS has their own Heatmap, which changes colour as they answer questions.

The colours show how quickly a child has answered each fact in their most recent attempts. A dark red square indicates that a fact is currently taking longer to recall, while a dark green square indicates that the fact is being recalled very quickly. The colours in between show the different stages of fluency.

No data	0 - 1s	1 - 2s	2 - 3s	3 - 4s	4 - 5s	5 - 6s	6 - 7s	7 - 8s	8 - 9s	9 - 10s	> 10s

The Heatmap is therefore a useful way of spotting which multiplication facts a child knows confidently and which ones might benefit from a little more practice. It is not a test or a score – it is simply a snapshot of their current fluency.

The Heatmap is based on children's answers in the timed game modes on TTRS. Jamming is not included because it doesn't have a timer.

Most importantly, please use the Heatmap as a helpful guide rather than something to worry about. Every child develops fluency at their own pace, and regular, low-pressure practice can make a real difference.

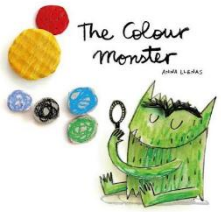
How can you use the Heatmap at home?

Take a look at your child's Heatmap together and see if you can spot any facts that are taking them longer to recall. You could then use these facts as a focus for short, regular practice sessions. For example:

- **Pick a small number of facts** from the Heatmap that aren't yet green and practise these together.
- **Ask the fact in different ways** – for example, "What is 7 × 8?", "How many 8s make 56?" or "56 divided by 7?"
- **Look for patterns and connections.** If your child knows 5 × 8, can they use this to work out 6 × 8 or 4 × 8?
- **Keep practice short and positive.** A few minutes regularly is much more effective than a long practice session.
- **Use TTRS and Numbots regularly** to help build speed and fluency. The aim is for multiplication facts to become increasingly automatic, so children don't have to stop and work them out each time.
- **Celebrate progress**, not just speed. If a fact changes from red towards green over time, that's something worth celebrating!

The Nursery Team

Mrs Pearson (Penguins) writes: We have had a wonderful first term exploring our topic, 'All About Me!' The children have enjoyed learning about themselves, their families, where they live and the different jobs people do. We looked at ourselves in mirrors and used them to create our own self-portraits. We also spent time talking about our emotions and feelings, particularly enjoying The Colour Monster book, which helped us understand and recognise different emotions.





We have loved sharing Peter Rabbit stories and exploring healthy foods. The children enjoyed trying different vegetables before making and tasting our very own vegetable soup! We also used fruit and vegetables in our creative activities. As autumn arrived, we explored the season and harvest, learning new songs such as Big Red Combine Harvester and Dingle Dangle Scarecrow.



In Maths, we have been practising counting using our fingers and developing our subitising skills by recognising groups of up to three objects without counting. The children particularly enjoy the Goldilocks song and other counting songs that make learning fun.

Our creative activities have been full of colour! We have enjoyed painting at the easel and experimenting with marble painting, watching with excitement as the colours moved, mixed and changed across the paper.



In Phonics, we have been developing our listening skills by exploring sounds in our environment. We went on a listening walk around school, listened to animal noises and identified familiar sounds we might hear at home. We also used musical instruments to experiment with loud and quiet sounds, enjoying singing and marching together.



Through PSHE, we have been learning how to be kind friends, help others and care for one another. We have also been working hard to develop our independence, practising everyday skills such as putting on our coats & shoes.

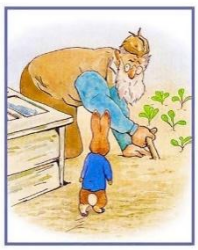


We are so proud of how the children have grown in confidence, developed new skills and built friendships this term. We look forward to more exciting adventures next term!

The Reception Team

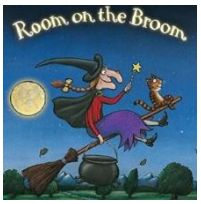
Mrs Stanley (Swans) and Mrs List (Puffins) write: What a wonderful first term we have had in EYFS! The highlight for—Mrs Stanley, Mrs List, Mrs Kearsley and Ms Sear—has been watching the children build friendships and settle beautifully into school life, embracing new routines with growing confidence and enthusiasm.

The children have enjoyed their first Forest School sessions, exploring nature, working together and discovering the world around them.



In Literacy, The Tale of Peter Rabbit was a firm favourite! Mr McGregor himself kindly sent vegetables from his garden for us to try, and we were delighted to welcome two beautiful giant rabbits, Poppy and Primrose, thanks to Ms Schembri & Erika. The children asked thoughtful questions and learnt how to care for rabbits.

Other stories inspired wonderful discussions about individuality (What Makes Me a Me), kindness and sharing (The Rainbow Fish), feelings (The Colour Monster) and our own families (The Great Big Book of Families). We also enjoyed the autumnal mystery of The Leaf Thief and the rhymes, potions and magic of Room on the Broom.



In Maths, we have been subitising numbers to four, comparing quantities using more than and fewer than, and sorting objects and exploring patterns.



During Music, we have used symbols to follow sounds, experimenting with our voices to create imaginative soundscapes. We have explored marrows, pumpkins, and all things autumnal, celebrating the season through our Harvest Festival songs. Big Red Combine Harvester was a firm favourite.

We are so proud of how the children have grown in confidence, curiosity and independence this term. Thank you for your continued support in making their first weeks so special.

Year 1 & Year 2 Team

It has been so lovely to welcome our Year 2 children back and say a big hello to our new Year 1s! We have all settled well into the new school year, and the children have done a fantastic job of adjusting to their new routines and expectations.

We have been working incredibly hard in English, focusing on the important building blocks of sentence writing, including capital letters, finger spaces and full stops. Inspired by our class text, *The Secret Forest*, we have also been busy creating our very own fact files. The book has sparked lots of creativity in our Art lessons too! We have created beautiful woodland-inspired scenes, explored colour mixing and practised our careful observational drawing skills.



In Science, we have been learning all about animals, classifying them into the five main animal groups, exploring their characteristics and discovering what different animals like to eat.



In Geography, we have been learning about map symbols and keys before putting our new skills to the test by creating our own aerial maps. In RE, we have explored the Christian creation story, learning about the sequence of events and building our confidence in retelling the story aloud.

Our PE lessons have been full of energy and excitement as we have developed our football skills! We have practised dribbling with control, explored which parts of our feet to use when kicking and stopping a ball, and even managed to squeeze in a few exciting penalty shoot-outs!

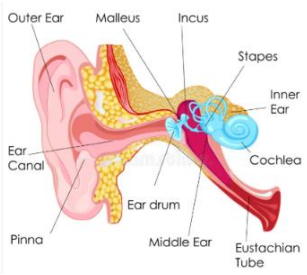


We finished the term with an exciting launch of our very own Northbourne Awards! Sadly, the plans to start the day with a Bike Bus, followed by an afternoon packed with an orienteering challenge have been delayed but we are excited to complete these where we return to school. Thank you to the parents who started the day with us on Friday and contributed to the planning stages for the home challenges.

Year 3 & Year 4 Team

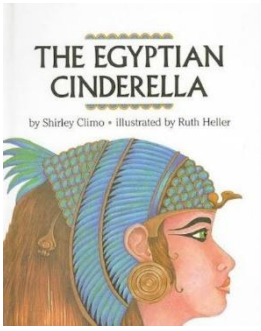


Mr Guy (Owls), Mrs Smith (Falcons) and Miss Hagger (Hawkes) write: What a fantastic start to the year the children in Lower Key Stage 2 have had! Our big topic this term has been the Ancient Egyptians and the children have thoroughly enjoyed learning all about the importance of the River Nile, the purpose of the enormous pyramids and the incredible beliefs that dictated much about Ancient Egyptian life. A highlight has been making papyrus in art and learning about the gory process of mumification – which we attempted ourselves using tomatoes!



In science we have been learning about sound. The children learned how their ears work, how sound travels and how the size of vibrations can affect the pitch. They learned about what materials insulate sound the best which generated discussions about why, and how a decibel meter can be used to measure the volume of sound.

In our literacy, we looked at the story, The Egyptian Cinderella, and the children worked towards creating a persuasive advert for the Pharoah's new chariot. We then put our investigation hats on and unpicked the mystery of the missing items in our classrooms. We were fortunate to have them returned by Hermelin, the detective mouse! We then proceeded to learn about his adventures solving mysteries on Oakly Street. In fact we were so intrigued, that we wrote an application letter to become a detective assistant, using our skills of persuasion!



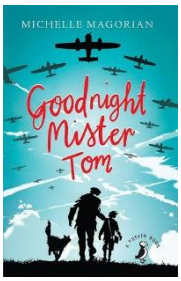
Year 5 & Year 6 Team

Mrs. Billings (Kites), Miss Hill (Eagles) and Mr. Mallam (Kestrels) write: What a fantastic first term we have had in Year 5/6! The children have thoroughly enjoyed exploring our World War Two topic, Boom, Bang! It's the Blitz!, and have impressed us with their enthusiasm, curiosity and thoughtful engagement throughout.



One of the highlights of the term was our fabulous trip to Didcot Railway Centre, where the children experienced what life might have been like for evacuees during the war. Dressed for the occasion, they enjoyed a memorable train ride, ventured into an air raid shelter and took part in a range of drama scenarios that brought the experiences of wartime children to life. It was a wonderful opportunity to develop empathy and deepen their understanding of this important period in history.

Back in the classroom, the children have continued to demonstrate their creativity and imagination. They have produced some wonderful artwork inspired by Henry Moore, exploring how his work captured the experiences of people sheltering during the Blitz. In English, our writing inspired by Goodnight Mister Tom has encouraged the children to think carefully about characters, emotions and the challenges faced during wartime.



We have also enjoyed a visit to the library, helping to nurture the children's love of reading.

We have been absolutely delighted by the incredible World War Two home learning projects. The creativity, dedication and perseverance shown have been outstanding and truly reflect the children's enthusiasm for our topic. A huge thank you to parents and carers for your encouragement and support at home.

What a brilliant start to the year! We are incredibly proud of everything the children have achieved and look forward to another exciting term together!



Term 2 Autumn Key Dates

Further details for these events will be given in the Start of Term Letter

Monday 2nd November	**All:** INSET Day
Tuesday 3rd November	**All:** Term Starts
Friday 6th November	**All:** Bike Bus Event (8.15-8.45am)
Wednesday 11th November	**All:** A Moment of Remembrance (8.45-9.00am)
Friday 13th November	**All:** Children in Need Day (during the school day)
Monday 16th November	**All:** Odd Sock Day (National Anti-Bullying Week)
Tuesday 17th November	**Year 1&2:** Cinema Trip (during the school day)
Thursday 19th November	**Year 3&4:** Cinema Trip (during the school day)
w/b 23rd November	**Some:** Parent Meetings with SEND Children
Tuesday 24th November	**Year 1&2:** Old Toy Workshop (during the school day)
Wednesday 25th November	**Year 5&6:** Cinema Trip (during the school day)
w/b 30th November	**Some:** Parent Meetings with SEND Children continued
Thursday 3rd December	**All:** PTA Christmas Disco (5.00-7.00pm)
Friday 4th December	**All:** PTA Elfridges Event (1.00-3.00pm) **Some:** Boccia Sports Tournament (3.30-5.00pm)
Thursday 10th December	**Some:** SEND Coffee Morning (8.45-9.45am)
Monday 14th December	**Year 1&2:** Nativity (2.00-3.00pm & 5.00-6.00pm)
Tuesday 15th December	**Year 1 to 6:** Christmas Service (10-11am @St Peter's Church) **Nursery & Reception:** Nativity (2.00-3.00pm & 5.00-6.00pm)
Wednesday 16th December	**IRock Bands:** Concert (2.20-3.05pm)
Thursday 17th December	**All:** Christmas Jumper & Christmas Dinner Day
Friday 18th December	**All:** Last Day of Term (1.15pm finish)

Courage Compassion Community