Start of Term 2 Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a brilliant day we have just had at Northbourne! From our fantastic Bike Bus to our whole-school orienteering challenge, it has been a wonderful celebration of our school community. We were delighted to present our **first Northbourne School Values Badge for Community** to the children, alongside our **very first Bronze Award** for completing five Family Challenges. Who will be next?

And the excitement doesn't stop there! We have an action-packed term ahead, as the three pages of events in this newsletter show. With so much to look forward to, it would be a real shame for children to miss out simply because they are not in school. This brings me to the important issue of **attendance**.

Following our Term 1 attendance review, some families will shortly receive an email where their child's attendance has fallen below our **expectation of 96%.** Where appropriate, we will also invite parents to meet with us to better understand the reasons for absence and explore how we can help.

Of course, we fully understand that children become unwell and that some families face challenging circumstances. We will always seek to **support families** where we can. However, we are also aware that **some** children are missing school when they **could and should be attending**.



The final week of last term saw our lowest attendance of the year so far, including instances where children were reported as unwell, or no absence was reported, when **families had actually taken holidays during term time.**



We recognise the financial pressures families face and that holidays can be cheaper during term time. However, missing even two or three days **can have a significant impact on a child's learning**. Our curriculum is carefully sequenced, with each day's learning building on the last. Missing essential knowledge can make subsequent lessons harder to access and take much longer to catch up on.

But **school is about much more than academic learning**. Some of the most memorable experiences, friendships & **special moments** happen towards the end of term. These are the things children remember long after leaving Northbourne, and **we want every child to be part of them.**



Every school day matters, not just for learning, but for the experiences, friendships and sense of belonging that make **Northbourne such a special community.**

Thank you for working with us to ensure every child can be here, take part and make the most of everything we have planned.

Kind regards,

Andrew Denham

School Values Challenge Awards

Bike Bus

Although taking part in the Bike Bus was not a requirement for earning today's Community value badge, we wanted to start the day with a wonderful sense of community spirit. To see over 100 children and parents joining us on bikes, balance bikes and scooters was fantastic!

We will definitely be doing this again, and next time we plan to introduce a longer, circular route, picking up children and families along the way.

If your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 and does not have a bike, **we can provide one free of charge through our Bike Library!** Simply contact the school office and we can arrange a bike for your child, and possibly a helmet too.

Northbourne Orienteering

In the afternoon, the whole school took part in a fantastic orienteering challenge. Children from Reception, Years 1/2, Years 3/4 and Years 5/6 were mixed into small teams and challenged to work together to follow a map, find the orienteering control markers, record the codes and then use a code breaker to reveal a secret message.

The children were absolutely amazing! They demonstrated wonderful teamwork, kindness and encouragement towards one another, which was particularly impressive given that they were working with children they did not necessarily know well, with ages ranging from just 4 to 11 years old!



All the staff were incredibly proud of the way the children approached the challenge and the fantastic community spirit they showed throughout the afternoon. We were delighted to present those who successfully completed the challenge with their **first Northbourne Award value badge for Community!**

What a brilliant way to bring our school values to life, with children of all ages supporting, encouraging and celebrating one another.

Yes, we did it!

Badges

We hope the children will **love and treasure** their Northbourne badges! They are very welcome to **wear them in school**, although we recognise there is always a risk of them getting lost. To help prevent this, we encourage you to write **your child's initials on the back** using a permanent marker. If a badge does get lost, a **replacement can be purchased from the School Office for £1.**

Family Challenge Awards

We were delighted to present our first-ever Bronze Award today to the first child to complete five of the challenges designed to encourage our school values of Courage, Compassion and Community beyond the school gates.

It has been wonderful to see so many children and their families embracing the challenges and sending in emails, often accompanied by photographs, showing what they have been doing. Sharing these achievements in our Achievement Assemblies has been a real highlight and is already inspiring other children to get involved!

We have included a copy of the challenges below and will also be sending home a paper copy next week, so you can pop it on your fridge as a handy reminder and tick off the challenges as you complete them.

A small amendment to the Family Challenge Awards

In our last newsletter, we mentioned that we would consider activities that were not included on the official challenge list. However, having reflected on this, we feel it is important to ensure that the scheme is fair and consistent for everyone, particularly when awarding our value badges. We have therefore decided that **only activities included on the published challenge list will count towards the awards.**

There are plenty of exciting challenges to choose from, and we hope families will continue to enjoy completing them together!



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)

How do we tell you what my child has done?

Simply send a brief email explaining what your child has done to the relevant phase email address. You are welcome to include a photograph, although this is not essential. If photographs are shared, we will celebrate them in our Friday Achievement Assembly. We will then record the completed challenge on our Northbourne Awards tracking system.

News and Updates for Term 2

Remembrance Day – Poppy Appeal



We are currently selling poppies in school, 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

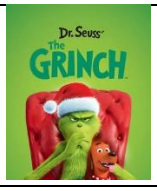
What You'll Gain:

- 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
					

Key Dates and Updates for the Autumn Term

November

All/Remembrance Day School Reflection: 8.50-9.00am, Wednesday 11th November



We will be holding a short time of reflection at morning drop-off, giving parents and carers the opportunity to join the children for a moment of remembrance. This will take place on the main playground. If your child is in Nursery or Reception, please come directly to the main playground at 8.40am. Parents who need to leave for work are welcome to leave their children in the care of their class teacher.

Following our time of remembrance, the children and staff will gather for a special assembly to help them understand the significance of Remembrance Day and why we wear poppies. We are also delighted to be welcoming a former soldier who was injured while serving on active duty. He will share his inspiring story of resilience, courage and what he has gone on to achieve since his injury.

All/Children in Need Day: Friday 13th November

Children can come into school wearing something spotty, yellow or 'Pudsey Ears.' We would like to support Children in Need by encouraging children to bring in a 'Gold Coin' (£1 or £2) that can be handed into their class teacher when they come in.

Year 1-6/Anti-Bullying Week: Commencing Monday 16th November

Our assemblies this week will be focused on the national Anti-Bullying Week. We will be helping the children to understand the difference between 'unkind' behaviour and 'bullying' behaviour, what they can do (and staff will do) if someone is doing either of these behaviours.

All/Odd Sock Day: Monday 16th November (all day)

As part of the Anti-Bullying Week and to celebrate children's individuality, children can come in to school wearing odd socks (with normal school uniform). Everyone is unique and Odd Socks Day is the perfect way to highlight that in a very simple fun way for children.

Year 1&2/Cinema Trip: Tuesday 17th November (morning)

The children will be walking to Cineworld in Didcot to watch **Dora: Magic Mermaid Adventures.** The visit will take place during the school day and will hopefully inspire some fantastic writing in their English lessons, as the children learn how to write a film review and use persuasive language to encourage others to go and see the film.

Year 3&4/Cinema Trip: Thursday 19th November (morning)

The children will be walking to Cineworld in Didcot to watch **Minions and Monsters.** The visit will take place during the school day and will hopefully inspire some fantastic writing in their English lessons, as the children learn how to write a film review and use persuasive language to encourage others to go and see the film.

Some/Parent's Evenings for children with SEND: Weeks commencing 23rd November and 30th November

This will be an opportunity for parents of children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to meet with the class teacher and discuss how their child has done during the Autumn Term and set targets for the Spring Term. Teachers will arrange appointments directly with parents.

Year 1&2/Old Toy Workshop: 24th November (all day)
The Old Toy Workshop Company will be coming in and giving children the opportunity to explore what toys were like in the past and how they have changed over time. Through hands-on activities, children will investigate and play with a range of traditional toys, discover the materials they were made from and compare them with the toys we use today. The workshop will help bring their history learning to life in a fun and engaging way.

All/RAF Benson Santa Drop & Helicopter Fly-Past: Monday 16th to Friday 20th November, Daily
We have registered to take part in this festive community event, which aims to spread Christmas cheer to children and families across Oxfordshire. Subject to operational commitments and weather conditions, RAF Benson personnel will once again carry out a special helicopter flypast and deliver donated Christmas gifts to children receiving care at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

We would love Northbourne families to get involved by donating a wrapped Christmas gift. Donated gifts must be wrapped and labelled with a brief description of what the item is and the intended age range of the gift. Donated gifts must be new and undamaged, and we cannot accept anything edible or damaged.

If you would like to contribute, please bring your gift to the school office during this week. We will then pass all donations on to RAF Benson, ready to be delivered to the hospital and help bring a little extra joy to children spending time in hospital this Christmas.

Year 5&6/Cinema Trip: Wednesday 25th November
The children will be walking to Cineworld in Didcot to watch **The Bad Guys 2.** The visit will take place during the school day and will hopefully inspire some fantastic writing in their English lessons, as the children learn how to write a film review and use persuasive language to encourage others to go and see the film.

Some Y3-6 SEND Pupils/Boccia Tournament: Friday 27th November, 3.30-5.00pm
Boccia is a fully inclusive sport that encourages teamwork, confidence, and participation regardless of physical ability or sporting background. This event aims to create a supportive and enjoyable environment where children can engage positively, build self-belief, and experience the joy of friendly competition. We will select a team closer to the time.

December

All/RAF Benson Santa Drop & Helicopter Fly-Past: Thursday 3rd December, sometime in the morning
RAF Benson will do their annual Santa Drop fly-past during the morning, and everyone gets VERY excited!

Year R-6/Autumn Disco: Thursday 3rd December, 5.00-6.00 & 6.15-7.15pm
This event is run by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). For Year R,1&2, it will be running between 5.00-6.00pm. For Years 3-6, it will be running between 6.15-7.15pm. Tickets must be bought through MCAS. There will be a Tuck Shop and a pocket money/ glitter tattoo stall so children will need to bring some small change on the day if they want to buy something.

All/PTA Selfridges Event: Friday 4th December, 1.00-3.00pm
We're excited to announce that our much-loved S**elf**ridges Secret Elf Room will be returning on Friday 4th December during the school day! Children will have the chance to visit the Elf Factory to choose and wrap a special gift for someone they love, during the school day. Tickets will be available to purchase via MCAS later in the term, with more details to follow in due course.

Most/Learning Review Meetings: Monday 7th December and Tuesday 8th December 3.30-6.00pm*
Parents and carers will only be able to sign up for these meetings using our parent communication system MCAS. We will send out meeting times to sign up to in the next couple of weeks. Parents will have the option of having the meeting in person (Monday) or via Microsoft Teams (Tuesday). SEN parents do not need to book on to these meetings because they will have had meetings separately.
***Falcon class children** will have their meetings on the Tuesday 8th (online) and Wednesday 10th (in person)

Parents of children with Special Educational Needs/Coffee Morning: Thursday 10th Dec, 8.45-9.30am
We would like to invite parents and carers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to our termly SEND coffee morning with Mrs Parsons. This is **a particularly important session**, and we would strongly encourage as many parents and carers as possible to attend. We will be sharing some of the changes we are considering and planning as we move forward, in response to the Government's proposed reforms to SEND provision nationally. These developments may mean that some aspects of how we support children with SEND at Northbourne will look different in the future.

We feel it is important that parents and carers are part of these conversations from the outset, understand the reasons behind any potential changes and have the opportunity to ask questions, share their views and contribute to our thinking. We recognise just how important our SEND provision is to our children and families, and we remain fully committed to providing the best possible support for every child. We want to work together with you to ensure that any changes are carefully considered, clearly communicated and, above all, focused on meeting the needs of our children.

All/Christmas Book, Biscuit & Brew: Week Beginning 14th December, 8.45-9.30am
This wonderful community event where parents will be able to come in, have a biscuit and brew before spending a time with their child reading Christmas stories. More details will come out closer to the time.

Nursery and Reception Parents/Nativity Concert: Monday 14th December, 2.00-3.00 and 5.00-6.00pm
Tickets will be made available for parents to get closer to the time. There will be two tickets per family. Parents of children who have separated will be given two tickets, so a total of 4 tickets for the child's family.

All/Christmas Church Service: Tuesday 15th December, 10.00-11.00am
The **Church Service** will be held at St Peter's Church and parents are welcome.

Year 1 and Year 2 Parents/Nativity Concert: Tuesday 15th December, 2.00-3.00 and 5.00-6.00pm
Tickets will be made available for parents to get closer to the time. There will be two tickets per family. Parents of children who have separated will be given two tickets, so a total of 4 tickets for the child's family.

iRock children and families/iRock Concert: Wednesday 16th December, 2.30-3.05pm
The children who have been practicing with their IRock band will be performing. Parents are welcome.

All/Christmas Jumper Day & Christmas Dinner: Thursday 17th December, All Day
Children can wear a Christmas Jumper instead of their school jumper (Note: this is a different day to the National Christmas jumper day) and we will have our Christmas Lunch on this day.
Could you please ask parents to complete the below to give us an idea of how many children we can expect to have Christmas Dinner please. https://forms.gle/3LrqDf7d68hjteW76

Year 1-6/Last Day: Friday 19th finish at 1.15pm December
This is the last day of Term 2. We will be encouraging the children to come in with traditional board games to play in the morning, alongside some fun school-based activities. We will not be showing films during the last few days of term, instead we will be encouraging continued learning, activities and games that encourage the children to interact and collaborate together.