



THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
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Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2026

## **Wednesday Weekly**

Dear Thakeham families,

This week, families who have children in Reception, Year 1, Year 4 and Year 6 should have received Parent Information leaflets regarding the statutory testing that the school had to administer for the pupils in these year groups this academic year.

As a way of supporting our families, the school will host parent information workshops to complement the information sent home.

The first workshop taking place is on the Reception Baseline and an introduction to Phonics for Beatles class, led by Mrs Usherwood. Please do come along to the new hall on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2026 at 2:30-3:00pm to find out more.

### **New, improved hot meals at Thakeham**

Over the summer holidays the school benefitted from new kitchen equipment, courtesy of our new hot meal provider ISS.

Children can now receive a healthy, homecooked meal every day, which are oven baked and include fresh bread, salad and vegetable options as well as a range of dessert options. If you haven't yet managed to sign up, why not visit their website.



To learn more, visit our website:  
[www.feedwestsussex.co.uk](http://www.feedwestsussex.co.uk)  
THANK YOU!



### **Changes to Free School Meals (FSM)**

There have been some important changes to Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility that will take effect from September 2026.

Going forward, schools will record FSM eligibility under one of two categories:

Targeted FSM – for families receiving Universal Credit with household earnings below £7,400 per year. These pupils will receive a free school meal and are eligible for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. The child's school will also receive Pupil Premium funding.

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**Respect • Enjoyment**



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Expanded FSM – for families receiving Universal Credit with earnings above £7,400 per year. These pupils will be entitled to free meals only.

(Please note: ALL pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will continue to receive a free meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme.)

### **What this could mean for some of our families**

If your child currently receives FSM, their eligibility will be re-checked before the new school year. If West Sussex County Council (WSCC) do not hold the relevant information you may be asked to provide updated information to confirm whether your child qualifies.

As re-checks are processed, if you have previously applied and WSCC hold an up-to-date email address, you will receive an email notifying you of updated eligibilities.

Households that no longer meet the criteria will not automatically continue to receive FSM, as previous transitional protections in place since April 2018 will end when the current school term finishes.

### **Next steps...**

If you have previously applied for Free School Meals via the WSCC website and your details remain the same, you do not need to do anything else now.

If you have not previously applied, even if your child is currently receiving free meals in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, please apply by visiting Free school meals - West Sussex County Council

Please note, once your child has their updated status this will last for a full school year. The status will only be changed if a re-check is requested by a parent/carer or school.

If your child (from Year 3 upwards) currently receives FSM, and after re-checking is not entitled to free meals from September, please ensure you have made arrangements for lunches.

### **Free Family Learning Courses Now Available**

The West Sussex Family Learning team has launched its latest programme of **free courses** for parents and carers. Designed to provide practical support for families, the courses help parents, grandparents and carers build confidence, develop new strategies, and support their children's learning and wellbeing.

This term, they are offering virtual courses, including '**How to Help Your Child with Learning in Reception and Key Stage 1**' and '**Managing Screen Time**', alongside in-person courses, such as '**Supporting Children with Anxiety and Building Resilience**', available in Horsham and Crawley. The team also offer a range of courses across the county for families with pre-school children, focusing on developing key skills for learning and preparing children for a successful start to school.

These short, practical courses provide useful advice, evidence-based strategies, and the opportunity to connect with other families facing similar challenges. To find out more and view our latest courses, please visit the [Family Learning website](#).

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## Key Dates

| Date        | Event                                                                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 24.09.26    | Wonder Class walk to Sandgate Park                                                  |
| 24.09.26    | Beatles Class Phonics session 2:30-3:00pm                                           |
| 25.09.26    | Year 4 trip to Worthing Symphonic Orchestra                                         |
| 28.09.26    | Year 3/4 Football Taster – SGS Shooting Field site (during school day)              |
| 01.10.26    | Individual School Photographs                                                       |
| 05.10.26    | Hedgehog visit - Beatles class                                                      |
| 08.10.26    | Whole School Flu Vaccinations                                                       |
| 12-16.10.26 | Year 5/6 Bikeability Week                                                           |
| 13.10.26    | New Reception Parent Tour 2-3pm                                                     |
| 19.10.26    | New Reception Parent Tour 11am-12pm                                                 |
| 22.10.26    | Franklin Class trip to South Downs Planetarium, Chichester (info to follow)         |
| 26-30.10.26 | October half term - school closed                                                   |
| 02.11.26    | <b>INSET DAY - school closed.</b>                                                   |
| 03.11.26    | School open. Children return<br>New Reception Parent Tour 2-3pm<br>Parents' Evening |
| 05.11.26    | Parents' Evening                                                                    |
| 10.11.26    | New Reception Parent Tour 2-3pm                                                     |

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Warm regards,  
 Mrs. K Houston  
 Executive Headteacher  
 Thakeham Primary School

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