



THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL
Rock Road
Storrington
West Sussex
RH20 3AA
Headteacher: Will McDonald
Senior Teacher: Bex Stender
Inclusion Manager: Bex Stender
Operations Manager: Georgina Ritchie

Tel: 01903 740176
Email: office@thakehamps.co.uk
Web: <http://www.thakehamps.co.uk>

'At Thakeham we CARE'

Courage • Ambition • Respect • Enjoyment.

Tuesday 9th September, 2025

Dear Families and Friends,

Welcome Back!

We are delighted to welcome all pupils back to school. Please see below for some useful information. I apologise for the very long letter. We will not make a habit of doing this.

Safeguarding

The Safeguarding Team has had some changes. Mr McDonald is Safeguarding Lead with Mrs Stender, Mrs Ritchie and Mrs Bowbrick as Deputies. If you have any concerns, please ask to speak with one of them in the first instance. Refer to our website for associated policies and contact information. Remember, if a child is in immediate danger please call 999.

Routines

Our routines remain the same.

The gate will open at 08:40am and pupils can enter from that point and go straight into class. Marley and Franklin pupils walk around the side to the rear entrance; Wonder pupils use the side playground entrance; and Beatles pupils use their front classroom door. Only Beatles parents should enter the playground of a morning.

At the end of the day, teachers will bring pupils out for you to collect at 3:15pm. Please wait for them on the playground. The usual arrangements for Year 6 remain in place with Year 6 being the only year group that can walk home on their own (subject to permissions being received via the school office).

A reminder that animals are not allowed on the playground as they can trigger allergic reactions.





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The gate will shut at 08:50am after which you will be considered late.

Morning and afternoon gate duty staffing is as follows (unless an email states otherwise):

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday drop off: Mr Goodwin in the car park, Mr McDonald on the main gate, Beatles staff on the Beatles gate and Miss West at the side gate.
- Wednesday drop off: Mr Goodwin in the car park, Beatles staff on the Beatles gate and Miss West at the side gate. For any urgent messages, please pop into the school office and Mrs Campbell will gladly support.
- Pick up every day: all teachers will be out on the playground.

Attendance

Attendance is a legal requirement and parents/carers are expected to do all you can to ensure your child is at school. This is a top priority for us this year as we had too many pupils with attendance concerns last academic year. We do not encourage taking term-time holidays and ask that you ensure children arrive on time. Regularly missing school or being late adds up. For example, missing one day a term equates to one week which can be an entire unit of work missed. In turn, they may then struggle to acquire the missed skills and underperform. This can lead to feelings of low self-esteem and no one would want that for a child.

We will only authorise absences in exceptional and compelling circumstances, such as death of an immediate relative or medical appointments. You will need to complete a removal from learning request form and provide evidence.





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Please note, the government has now changed the guidelines around Fixed Penalty Notices. The school and WSCC is now empowered to administer an FPN even when dates are not consecutive, e.g: if a family are clearly using an INSET day or a weekend to bulk out a holiday in an attempt to avoid a fine, we can now still issue a notice.

If I suspect a child SHOULD be in school and is not, be aware that this academic year, we may visit your home to check if you need any support with bringing your child in.

Uniform

As you will know, the uniform is something that is on my mind. We did look at changing it last year, but have decided to stay with it for the moment. Please sure your child is wearing the following:

Standard Uniform:

- White polo shirt or blouse, with or without the school logo
- Royal blue jumper or cardigan with or without the school logo
- Plain grey trousers, smart shorts or skirts (jogging pants, sports shorts and leggings are not acceptable)
- Royal blue and white small checked summer dress
- Grey or white socks, grey tights
- Sensible black shoes, not trainers or boots

PE Uniform:

- Royal blue shorts
- White crew neck T-shirt (with or without the school logo)
- Plimsolls or trainers
- During cold months children may wear plain black tracksuits (not leggings please)

On PE days, pupils should come wearing their PE kit. Please ensure it aligns with the





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requirements above. We will let you know later this week which day PE is being taught in each class.

Please note that any children who arrive in incorrect uniform may be asked to change into some of our spare uniform. We will liaise with you if this has had to be the case.

Staffing

A reminder that Mrs Stender is now our Senior Teacher and Inclusion Manager.

Sadly, Mrs Younger will be leaving us this week. Her last day is this Friday, Friday 12th. She has agreed to take up an offer to start her own business! So, while we will miss her, it is actually a very exciting moment for our lovely Mrs Y. We wish her the very best of luck.

Volunteers

If you would like to help out in school, at events or on school trips please let Mrs Campbell in the office know. We really value the support and it can be good fun!

Medicines, First Aid and Healthcare Plans

Please ensure we know of pupil medication or first aid needs so that we can liaise with you and staff. Mrs Campbell and Mrs Elvery are our Medicines, First Aid and Healthcare Plan Leads. They will liaise with you if needed.

Mr McDonald is our Education Visits Coordinator. He is the designated member of staff to speak with regarding any concerns you may have around any upcoming trips.

Positive Behaviour Policy

We continue to use our Therapeutic Thinking approach to behaviour. We like it because it focuses on the needs of pupils, the context and the individual voice of the children. If you have any questions, please ask to speak with Mr McDonald about it.





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Communication Going Forward

As always, we are extremely keen to include you in school life. For the past few years, we have been sending home a fortnightly newsletter. However, this has never quite felt enough! We really would like you to feel more involved. With that in mind, last year we trialled Class Dojo in Wonder Class. It is essentially a secure Facebook-like platform onto which we can post photographs, images, posters and up-coming events details. It was a resounding success in Wonder Class; such that we will be extending the trial to the entire school this academic year.

The invitation letters for Class Dojo will be going home this week. When you receive it, you will need to download the Class Dojo app and use the code on the letter to join your child's class. The app is free! There is no need to sign up for anything. Once you have access, you will be able to see a 'story' for the whole school as well as for your child's class.

The whole school story is how we will communicate pupil successes, event posters and adverts. You should receive a whole wealth of information that will really help to make you feel connected. With this in mind, we will switch to a termly rather than bi-monthly newsletter.

Please note that there is a messaging system built into Class Dojo. But, teachers have strict instructions to ignore any messages sent to them by parents. If you want to contact a teacher, you will need to continue to use the normal methods. So, please do not message them – you will not get a reply!

If you need any help with Class Dojo, feel to ask me and I will do my best to assist you. There is a list of key dates at the end of this letter for the Autumn Term. These dates will also be put on Class Dojo. The app will then send you a reminder notification.





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Finally, it goes without saying that the relationship between school and home is important. It needs to be deep and positive. If we work together then there is no limit to what your child can achieve. Please feel free to approach us, speak to us and help us ensure Thakeham is the best school it can be.

Here's to a great start back; fab term; and amazing academic year!

Take care,

Will

Autumn Term Key Dates

Please note that we reserve the right to make alterations to these dates. If we do, we will communicate in advance. Specific details for events will be emailed to you by Mrs Campbell.

- Franklin PE days: Monday and Friday
- Marley PE days: Monday and Tuesday
- Wonder PE days: Monday and Friday
- Beatles PE day: Wednesday
- 15/9: SGS Rock Road Open Day for future Year 6
- 22/9: Mobile library visiting the school
- 26/9: FOTS Quiz Night
- 9/10: Whole school pupil photos
- 21/10: FOTS after school bake sale
- 24/10: FOTS Halloween Disco
- 3/11: INSET (school closed)
- 5/11: Wonder Class dinosaur workshop





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- 6/11: Pupil Consultation Evening
- 7/11: Flu vaccinations for pupils
- 13/11: Pupil Consultation Evening
- W/C 24th November: Year 6 bikeability week
- 6/12: FOTS Christmas Fayre
- 15/12: Beatles Christmas nativity
- 16/12: Key Stage 2 Christmas carol concert
- 17/12: Whole school Christmas lunch day
- 18/12: Whole school Christmas show
- 19/12: FOTS sponsored santa run

