



**Thornhill Primary School**  
**Thornhill Gardens**  
Shildon  
Co. Durham DL4 1ES

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2<sup>nd</sup> September 2025

Dear Families,

We are almost ready to welcome the children back to school for the Autumn term and we are very excited to see their faces on Thursday morning!  
We cannot wait to meet our new Reception class and we wish the best of luck to our Y6 leavers from last year as they embark on their next step to secondary school.  
Please note Reception class either start back on Thursday or Friday and then the whole class will be in school on Monday.

Over the holidays, we have put the finishing touches to our new outdoor classroom 'Locomotion Lodge' and we are pleased to say that we are ready to use this wonderful space. We also had a special coal tub made by Bowes Museum which is next to the classroom and we have had some amazing, graffiti art by Dan Wall completed on the wall outside Y6 and Reception gate. We are delighted with the end result. It is a special legacy to the railways, which are so important to the heritage and history of Shildon.



Here are some reminders for the new term. Please can we ask that parents/carers read this information carefully.  
Our school website also has lots of information too.

### School Day

- The school day will be the same for all pupils this academic year 8.45am-3.15pm. Please note our official time is now 8.45am and it is important that pupils are not coming in after this. We will be locking the school gates at 8.50am. Pupils can arrive in school from 8.30am.
- Gates on a morning will be open as usual from 8.30am to go straight into school. Gates will open from 3pm on a night. Children are not allowed on the low level / sandpit area / climbing frame before or after school and cannot play with school equipment during these times. Can we ask parents/carers to wait on the 3G surface at home time and not on the yard area where the children come out, terrace and benches or sit on the steps next to the climbing wall. Just a reminder no dogs on the yard. Can we also ask parents/carers to supervise children to walk their scooters and bikes across the yard rather than riding them across. Parents/carers must pick up from the yard and not wave from the fence. This is to ensure the safety of our pupils with traffic and congestion.  
A reminder that only adults on the pick-up list can pick up children. To add additional adults we must have this in writing via email. Only Y6 can walk home on their own from school, but need a letter to authorise this (however Y6 cannot walk home on their own from an after school club or wrap around care).

### Arbor

- Just a reminder that we are now operating a cashless system in school so all payments must be made via Arbor. If you need any help to get this set up please contact the office.

### School Dinners

- Details are on our school website - <https://www.thornhill.durham.sch.uk/parents/school-lunches/>
- All pupils from Reception to Year 2 are eligible for universal free meals and all our pupils in those year groups have a school dinner.
- School dinners need to be paid from Year 3 onwards unless your child receives Free School Meals. Can we please ask that school dinners are paid immediately and kept up to date on Arbor. If balances are not paid, then we may need to ask you to provide a packed lunch for your child. All Nursery children pay for school dinners.
- If you think your child may be eligible for FSM, please contact the office and we can check this for you. The form is also available on the website.
- Pupils from Year 3 – Year 6 can have a packed lunch. Please ensure the contents adhere to our Packed Lunch guidance. We are a NUT FREE school.
- **CAN WE ASK THAT SCHOOL DINNER DEBTS FROM LAST YEAR ARE PAID BEFORE THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER. WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE A SCHOOL DINNER IF THERE ARE BALANCES OWED.**

### Wrap Around Care

- Breakfast club starts at 8am or 8.30am.
- Breakfast club is free for pupils eligible for Free School Meals from 8.30am.
- After school care is until either 4.30pm or 5.30pm – children cannot be picked up at any other times.
- Please use the bottom gate and your child can be collected at the top yard, the same as home time.
- Good behaviour is expected by all pupils at our Wrap Around Services. Our Wrap Around Care Policy is available via the website.
- This can be booked via Arbor. Again this service needs to be paid for in advance and outstanding balances may result in the school not being able to provide the service.
- This year, we require payment in advance for Wrap Around Care.
- **CAN WE ASK THAT ALL WRAP AROUND CARE DEBTS FROM LAST YEAR ARE PAID BEFORE THURSDAY 4<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER. WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE WRAP AROUND CARE IF THERE ARE BALANCES OWED.**

## Uniform

- Details are in our uniform policy on the website.
- Shoes /trainers must be plain and dark coloured.
- A reminder that earrings / jewellery are not permitted to be worn for school. If your child has had their ears pierced over the holidays, they **MUST** be taken out for the first day back.
- Hairstyles should be as simple as possible.
- Pupils must not come to school with their hair dyed, shaved, patterned or sculptured or with any styling products applied. Hair styles such as 'rat's tails' and 'Mohicans' are prohibited.
- Hair should be neat (e.g. not over the face / eyes) and presentable and long hair should be tied back for Health & Safety reasons.
- Hair bands and bobbles should be plain red or black.
- A simple watch which cannot receive messages or connect to the internet can be worn. Please do not allow children to wear expensive items or watches which may distract them.
- No key rings on bags or jackets.
- Pupils do not require a school bag or PE kit – these are provided.
- Water bottles are required from Y1-Y6 and must be plain and not a screw top lid in case of spillages.

## Attendance

- Our attendance information is available on the website.
- A separate letter will be sent regarding attendance.

## Boosters

- We will also be offering after school boosters for pupils who would benefit from some extra tuition. We find these sessions are invaluable in helping with your child's education as well as promoting their confidence in lessons. They are informal and fun for all involved. Letters will be sent out if your child is selected to start w/c 8<sup>th</sup> Sep.

## Parking

Just a reminder about safe parking and driving outside of school. This is such a busy time of the day and it is important we all put the safety of children first. Can I remind parents/carers to not park on the yellow zig zag lines outside of school, drive slowly and also to be respectful to our neighbours. Our zig zag lines have been freshly painted so they are clear for drivers. The Park & Stride facility is available and you may park in Elm Road Club or Nellie's Nursery carpark and walk the rest of the way.

## Smoking / Vaping

- Parents/carers are reminded not to smoke or vape outside the school. We had a number of incidents last year with children picking up cigarette ends and disused vapes, which I am sure you will agree is not very nice.

## Dogs

- Please can we ask dogs are not tied up to railings or that you wait directly outside the gates with dogs. We have children who are nervous of dogs and it can affect the start and end to their day. Please also make sure dog dirt is picked up.

### Educational Visits

- This year, we are trying to make sure we offer as many of our educational visits at no cost to our families. This is the 5th year, we have strived to ensure visits are free or minimal amounts. Letters regarding visits / events will be sent out separately. In instances where payment is required, such as the Y6 residential visit and Y5 camping visit, we aim to give parents/carers the opportunity to pay in instalments over the year. We have some brilliant visits and activities planned as always!

### Academic Year Dates:

#### Autumn term:

- Thursday 4th September 2025 – Friday 24th October 2025
- Monday 3rd November 2025 – Friday 19th December 2025

#### Spring term:

- Monday 5th January 2026 – Friday 20th February 2026
- Monday 2nd March 2026 – Friday 2nd April 2026

#### Summer term

- Monday 20th April 2026 – Friday 1st May 2026
- Monday 4th May 2026 – May Day
- Tuesday 5th May 2026 – Friday 22nd May 2026
- Monday 1st June 2026 – Friday 17th July 2026

### Calendar

- The school aims to try and give parents/carers as much notice about school events and term time dates. This way, time can be requested from work for events at school and holidays can be booked well in advance during school holidays.
- Swimming starts for Year 3, 4, w/c 8<sup>th</sup> September and will be every Wednesday.
- Parent Autumn term events below:

### Meet the Teacher Meetings and Parent session

All parents/carers are encouraged to come along to meet the teacher and find out about what is in store in the new class.

- Mon 8th Sept Year 6 – (9.15-10am)
- Mon 8th Sept Year 1- (2.15-3pm)
- Tues 9th Sept Year 5 – (9.15-10am)
- Wed 10th Sept Year 4 – (9.15-10am)
- Thurs 11th Sept Year 3 – (9.15-10am)
- Fri 12th Sept Year 2 – (9.15-10am)
- Fri 12th Sept Reception Phonics – (2.30-3pm)

### Autumn Assemblies - 9.15am – 10am

- Fri 19th Sept Year 6
- Fri 17th Oct Year 5
- Fri 3rd Oct Year 4
- Thurs 23rd Oct 2.15pm – Year 3 – Please note this date has changed from Fri 10th Oct.
- Fri 14th Nov Year 2
- Fri 28th Nov Year 1
- Fri 12th Dec Reception Class Nativity (afternoon – time TBC)
- Mon 15th Dec Nursery Christmas songs 11am & 2pm

- Online Parent's evening – w/c 13th Oct – Mon / Wed
- Halloween disco – w/c 20th Oct

### Queries

If you have any queries once we start back at school you can contact the school office, speak to myself at the entrance door each morning or email your child's class teacher. Their email can be found on the website in the class page queries can be emailed into [parents@thornhill.durham.sch.uk](mailto:parents@thornhill.durham.sch.uk) We are always happy to help. Please note that emails are responded to between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday (term time) within 48 hours. If you have an urgent query it is always best to phone. The office is open 8-3.30pm Monday to Friday (term time).

I know that there is a lot of information, but thought it would be useful to be in one place at the beginning of the term. You can also find all information on our website -

<https://www.thornhill.durham.sch.uk/>

Also don't forget to look at our Facebook page as we add pictures and activities of what the children are doing in school.

I look forward to a busy, happy year at Thornhill and can't wait to see what our pupils achieve this year – our 'Promise for the Future'!

Children return to school on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September and look forward to seeing everyone.

Reception children will either do Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September or Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September and then start altogether on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September.

It is important that all pupils return to school on Thursday.

Kind Regards,

Miss Overfield – Head teacher

