The Griffin Federation
Nurture to Flourish

21st November 2025

Newsletter

Attendance (Thursday -Wednesday)

Weekly attendance for each school:
Holbeach St Marks –98%
Gedney Drove End – 92%
Westmere – 94%

Assessment Dates

Please find the dates of statutory national testing which will take place this year. Please make every effort to ensure your child is in school during these times, and avoid booking any holidays.
Y1 Phonics Screening Check: 8th – 12th June 2026
Y4 Multiplication Check: 1st – 12th June 2026
Y6 KS2 SATs: 11th -14th May 2026

Diary Dates

Monday 24th Nov – Phonics meeting Westmere
Monday 1st Dec – Phonics meeting HSM
Tuesday 9th Dec – Christingle GDE/HSM
Wednesday 10th Dec – FOW Bingo
Thursday 11th Dec – Christmas plays
Saturday 13th Dec – Breakfast with Santa
Tuesday 16th Dec – HSM Play
Wednesday 17th Dec - Pantomime
Thursday 18th Dec – Christmas Lunch
Thursday 18th Dec – FOW party games/raffle
Friday 19th Dec – End of Term 2
Tuesday 6th January – Start of Term 3

Open Days for Reception Starters September 2026

If your child is due to start school in September 2026, we are holding open days for parents to visit our schools to have a look around. **Westmere is holding a second open morning at 9.15am on Wednesday 26th November**. For Gedney Drove End and Holbeach St Marks, please contact the school to make an appointment.

Applications for a Reception Place – September 2026

If your child was born between 01/09/2021 and 31/08/2022, you can apply for a reception place from now until 15th January 2026. A letter giving details of how to apply is attached to the email.

RWI phonics parental information morning

We will be holding some meetings in school about the Read Write Inc phonics scheme. You are invited to come and find out what it is and how to best support your children in their reading. The sessions are open to parents with children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Please see below for remaining dates.

Westmere	Monday 24th November 9am – 9.20am
Holbeach St Marks	Monday 1st December 8.50am – 9.10am

Behaviour Notifications

Some parents have been a little shocked to hear from the senior leadership team (SLT) regarding their child's behaviour. Our behaviour policy states that SLT will contact parents if their child's behaviour is classed as a serious incident (hurting people or damaging property) which is why you may hear from SLT rather than a member of the class team. If your child has demonstrated lower levels of poor behaviour, you will be contacted by their teacher. We understand that this can be alarming and upsetting for parents: this isn't our intention, but it is important that we keep you up to date regarding your child's behaviour in school so we can work together to support them.

Online Safety

Join the Stay Safe Partnership for an essential online safety event for parents. We'll provide the latest information and practical tools to help you: Wednesday 3rd December 6pm – 7:30pm. Please see attached flyer for more information.

Frostie Friends

We'd like to remind all our families that you are welcome to have meals from our Frostie Friends freezer at Westmere. Please speak to Nic in the office. Some staff have had meals and enjoyed them so please don't miss out. At GDE and HSM, please let the office know you would like some meals and we can send them over for you.

Westmere Non-uniform Day

We'd like to say a huge thank you for all the donations of sweets and chocolate today. These will be used as prizes for the children's Christmas Fayre afternoon.

Donations to Friends of Westmere

FOW would like to say a massive Thank you to Howdens Joinery for donating £200, Tydd St Giles Community donating £236 and Sutton Bridge flowers donating £100.

Friends of Westmere Bingo

Friends of Westmere will be holding a bingo event on Wednesday 10th December. Doors open at 6pm, eyes down at 6:30pm. Refreshments will be on sale.

Christmas Plays

Please find below dates and times for all the school plays.

Westmere (China Class)	Thursday 11th December	1.30pm
Westmere (Yr1 & Yr2)	Thursday 11th December	2.15pm
Gedney Drove End (whole school)	Monday 15th December	2.00pm
Holbeach St Marks (whole school)	Tuesday 16th December	2pm at the Church

Christingle – Gedney Drove End and Holbeach St Marks

On Tuesday 9th December, we will be holding our Christingle Service in the church at Holbeach St Marks at 1.45pm. Everyone is welcome to join us and you may collect your children from the church. Children from Gedney Drove End will be transported over by coach. Any children not collected from the church will be taken back to their respective schools to be picked up at the end of the day.

Westmere Carbon Monoxide (CO) Workshops

We have workshops in school next week to educate children on the dangers of carbon monoxide and how they can keep themselves and their families safe.

Westmere Emotions and Relationships Workshops

Next Friday, we have the Lincolnshire Stay Safe Partnership in school delivering various workshops to children in Years 2-6. These are based around emotions and relationships.

Westmere Breakfast with Santa – Saturday 13th December

On Saturday 13th December at 10.00am, we will be holding a Breakfast with Santa event. We would like to invite you to come to school with your child/children and have breakfast with Santa. The children and adults will be provided with breakfast which will include bacon rolls and pancakes. The children will also receive a present from Santa. The cost per child will be £5.00 and the cost for adults is £4. Please come to the school office to book a place for this event by Friday 5th December.

Jack and the Beanstalk Pantomime – Wednesday 17th December

On Wednesday 17th December, the whole federation will be going to the Pantomime at King's Lynn Corn Exchange. We would like all the children to wear their blue PE hoodie on this day. We will advise nearer the date what time your child will need to be at school, but coaches will return at approximately 1.00pm. The children will have their lunch on their return to school. There will be no hot meals on this day, and all children will need a packed lunch. Packed lunches are available to order on the Ideal website. The cost of transport has increased dramatically recently and unfortunately; we need to ask for a contribution of £5 per child towards coach travel. Please return the permission slip below or email your permission to the office. At GDE and HSM contributions can be made by cash or bank transfer to the usual account. Contributions for Westmere can be made by cash, card or bank transfer.

Christmas Lunch

We will be having Christmas lunch at school on Thursday 18th December. You can order the usual way through the Ideal website. On this day, children are welcome to come to school in non-uniform with Christmas Jumpers but with sensible footwear for outdoors.

Westmere Children's Christmas Fayre Games Afternoon

On Thursday 18th December, after the Christmas dinner, we are having a Christmas Fayre in school time for the children. There will be a range of games and activities where children can win small prizes. Please send your child with a maximum of £5 for them to take part.

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National Child Measurement Programme

If you have a child in Reception or Year 6, you should have received a letter from school about the National Child Measurement Programme. Every year in England, school children in reception and year 6 have their height and weight checked at school. This is called the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). The checks are carried out by trained providers. Children are measured fully clothed, except for their coats and shoes, in a private space away from other pupils. You can watch the NCMP process animation. The animation explains the process of the NCMP and why it is important. It will guide you through what it involves, how your child's data is collected and processed and what it will be used for.
https://youtu.be/vF64MebBnNc?si=YKwnpKCIRABchk3s

Portugal, Canada, Spain and Norway- Anglo-Saxon Adventure at Lincoln Castle

We're thrilled to announce an exciting educational visit to Lincoln Castle on Thursday 27th November for a day of immersive Anglo-Saxon workshops, hosted by Investigate Learning. This experience will bring history to life as children explore the early medieval world of Anglo-Saxons through hands-on activities, storytelling and artefact investigation. We would like the children to wear their school uniform, federation hoodies and sensible shoes. Children should arrive at their own school by 7:45am via the office. Coaches will leave promptly at 8am from both Gedney Drove End and Westmere. All children will need a packed lunch in a named, disposable bag. If your child has a school lunch, these are available to order on the Ideal meals' website. We aim to be back at each school by 4pm and will update Facebook. Children can be collected from the office. This trip promises to be a memorable journey into the past, helping children deepen their understanding of Anglo-Saxon life, beliefs and legacy. For more details about the workshops, visit the Investigate Learning website. The cost of the trip is £21.15 per child but we are subsidising some of the cost and ask for a contribution of £15 towards the cost of the trip. Please complete the slip at the end of the newsletter or email the office to give permission for your child to attend.

Attendance

The Department for Education has updated school attendance guidelines, effective from 19th August 2024, stressing the importance of regular attendance for academic and social development. Parents must report absences by 8:30am daily and provide proof for medical appointments during school hours. Term-time holidays are no longer allowed and will be marked as unauthorised unless exceptional circumstances apply. Unauthorised absences, including late arrivals or unapproved holidays, will lead to penalty notices after 10 sessions (5 days) of absence within a 10-week period. Parents could face fines or legal action if absences persist. Please read the information sent home this week for further details. If you are struggling with attendance in any way, please come and talk to us as we can often offer some kind of support.

We will publish attendance figures from next week based on Friday - Thursday: Each week, one child from each class will get the attendance award and become an attendance hero, and one class from each school will get the class certificate for the week. Our weekly target is 95%.

Value of the Week

Each week we have a value of the week where we focus on one of our federation values. We discuss what this value is and how we can live this out in our everyday lives. At the end of the week, certificates are awarded to children who have who have shown evidence of that value during the week. Our Value for the first week back is: **Respect**

Golden Behaviours

Our Golden Behaviours in school are:

- Good manners and be polite
- Good listening
- Kind hands, kind words, kind feet
- Respect people and property
- Be honest

Each week, we will focus on one of the behaviours, discussing what this means, modelling it and looking out for children who demonstrate that behaviour. Certificates will be awarded to the most noticeable pupils each week. Our Golden Behaviour next week is: **Be Honest**

Kind regards,
Sally Massey
Assistant Executive Headteacher

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Jack and the Beanstalk Pantomime – Wednesday 17th December

I give / do not give permission for my child(ren) .....to attend the pantomime on Wednesday 17th December.

I do / do not enclose a contribution of £5 per child towards the transport.

Signed ..... Parent/Carer Date.....

Saxon Adventure at Lincoln Castle – 27th November – Westmere - Portugal, Canada & Spain

I give / do not give permission for my child(ren) .....to attend Lincoln Castle on Thursday 27th November

I do / do not enclose a contribution of £15 per child towards the cost of the trip.

Account details for bank transfers
Account Name: Westmere County Primary School Fund.
Sort code: 30-99-50
Account Number: 12661063
Reference: Child's Name

Signed ..... Parent/Carer Date.....

Saxon Adventure at Lincoln Castle – 27th November – Gedney Drove End Norway

I give / do not give permission for my child(ren) .....to attend Lincoln Castle on Thursday 27th November

I do / do not enclose a contribution of £15 per child towards the cost of the trip.

Account details for bank transfers
Account Name: Gedney Drove End & Holbeach St Marks Federated School Fund.
Sort code: 30-97-95
Account Number: 01058013
Reference: Child's Name

Signed ..... Parent/Carer Date.....