The Griffin Federation
Nurture to Flourish

28th November 2025

Newsletter

Attendance (Thursday -Wednesday)

Weekly attendance for each school:
Holbeach St Marks –98%
Gedney Drove End – 93%
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 1st Dec – Phonics meeting HSM
Wednesday 3rd Dec – Christingle Westmere
Tuesday 9th Dec – Christingle GDE/HSM
Wednesday 10th Dec – FOW Bingo
Thursday 11th Dec – Christmas plays Westmere
Saturday 13th Dec – Breakfast with Santa
Monday 15th Dec – GDE Play
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

Christingle - Westmere

KS2 pupils at Westmere will be going to church to celebrate Christingle on Wednesday afternoon. Unfortunately, due to lack of space in the church, we are unable to invite parents. If your child has shoulder length or longer hair, please ensure that it is tied back on this day. Thank you.

Poppy Appeal Westmere

We raised an amazing £214.22 for the Poppy Appeal. Thank you to everyone who donated.

Poppy Appeal Holbeach St Marks

Well done to everyone who donated to the Poppy Appeal, we raised £92.07.

Elf Day – 3rd December

Ideal meals are having an Elf Day on Wednesday 3rd December. On this day, children may wear their Christmas Jumpers or elf themed non uniform. KS2 will be walking to the church for Christingle so will need suitable clothes (non-flammable), footwear and coats.

Westmere – Board Games Club Miss Pooley

There will be no board games club on Monday 1st December.

Open Days and Applications for Reception Starters September 2026

If your child is due to start school in September 2026 and you would like to have a look around, please contact the school to make an appointment. 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.

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.

FOW Christmas Raffle

FOW are now selling tickets for the Christmas raffle. Top Prize is £100 cash. We also have many other great prizes including hampers, gift vouchers, sweets and chocolates. If you would like to donate a raffle prize, please speak to Mrs. Wiles in the office or email nicola.wiles@griffinfederation.co.uk. Thank you for all your support so far this year.

Online Safety

Join the Stay Safe Partnership for an essential online safety event for parents. They'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 Freezer Food

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 Mrs. Wiles 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.

Donations to Friends of Westmere

FOW would like to say a massive Thank you to Howdens Joinery for donating £200, Tydd St Giles Community for donating £236 and Sutton Bridge flowers for 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 at the Village Hall
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 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 voluntary 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 this 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.

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Westmere Children's Christmas Fayre Games Afternoon

On Thursday 18th December, after the Christmas dinner, we are having a Christmas Fayre during the afternoon 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.

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

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: **Perseverance**

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: **Good Listening**

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.....