The Griffin Federation
*Nurture to Flourish*

23rd January 2026

# Newsletter

## Diary Dates

Monday 9th February- FOW Valentines Disco
Friday 13th February – End of Term 3
Monday 23rd February - Start of term 4
Thursday 5th March - World Book Day
Thursday 12th March – FOW Mothers' Day Afternoon tea

## Attendance (Thursday -Wednesday)

Weekly attendance for each school:
Holbeach St Marks –98%
Gedney Drove End – 95%
Westmere –89%

## 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

## Hilltop Payments

If your child is attending the Hilltop residential then this is a reminder that the next payment deadline is on 13th February. The second instalment of £100 must be received by Friday 13th February and the remaining balance of £100 needs to be paid by Friday 1st May. If payments are not received by these dates, then your place will be cancelled.

## Westmere, HSM and GDE Valentine's Disco – Monday 9th February

FOW are holding a Valentine's disco at Westmere on Monday 9th February. The start time will be 3.15pm and it will finish at 4.30pm. Pupils at HSM and GDE may leave school at 3pm on this day. Entry to the Disco is by ticket only. **You will not be able to pay on the door.** Tickets for the disco will be available from the school office from Monday 26th January. The cost of a ticket is £4 which will include a sweet cone and a drink. Hot dogs and glitter tattoos will be available to purchase. Children should bring no more than £3 spending money. Please ensure this is in a named purse and is in change. Children are responsible for their own money. No mobile phones are allowed at the disco due to safeguarding. **We are hoping this will partly be an outdoor event, so please ensure your child is dressed accordingly, however there will be a disco in the hall and a quiet room inside school.**

## Bonanza Creative CO Workshop – Spain & Canada

Bonanza Creative will be delivering a workshop to your child's class to educate your child on the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO), understanding what it is and how we can keep ourselves safe. The CO Crew will be visiting on Tuesday 27th January.

## Best Start In Life

For parents of our youngest children in school, including pre-school, and those planning to send their children into Reception with us next year, the Best Start In Life website has some great information and tips especially in the School Readiness section. Click the link here - **School readiness - Best Start in Life**

## Lincolnshire children starting primary school or secondary school in September 2026

If your child is starting primary school or transferring to secondary school in September 2026 they may be eligible for school transport. If you think your child is eligible please apply for transport from 2 March (secondary offer day) or 16 April (primary offer day) once you have your offer of a school place. Applications can be made online at the website below.

Please do not apply until you have a formal offer of a school place. For more information about the home to school transport policy and online applications please go to www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/school-college-transport. Queries can be emailed to schooltransportapplications@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

## Uniform Price Increase

The price of our school uniform has been the same since 2022, but our suppliers have increased their prices from January. To cut the costs as much as we can for parents, Westmere PE T-shirts will not have names on the back and book bags will not have a logo. School does not make any money on the sale of uniform.

## Times Tables Rock Stars Tournament

It's that time again! We will be holding another federation-wide tournament where houses (Nene, Ouse, Welland and Witham) will compete to score the most points and claim a trophy. Between 7am and 7pm, children can log on to play.ttrockstars.com and play in any game mode with every correct answer to a multiplication or division question earning themselves and their house a point. The winning house will have the honour of decorating the TTRS Trophy with their house colours and displaying it in school at the end of the tournament. There will also be certificates for the top players within each house and a prize for the class with the most engagement. In addition, the winning team will get to wear their colours on a non-uniform day (date to be confirmed). The tournament runs from Monday 12th January 2026 to Friday 30th January 2026 with an award ceremony on Monday 2nd February 2026. please don't play on your child's behalf. We do know sometimes children can become obsessed with gaming (even educational games), please support them to understand that taking part should be fun, it shouldn't impact on family plans or cause high stress levels.

## Jewellery, false nails, nail varnish, makeup and toys

Children may only wear studs or sleeper earrings and a watch (no smart watches). They should not wear necklaces or bracelets of any kind. We do not allow makeup to be worn in school. Some children recently have had false nails – these should not be worn, especially as long ones can cause injury to the person wearing them if they are caught, or to someone else if they are scratched. We also do not allow nail varnish to be worn. Children should not bring toys or resources (including fidgets) into school as these can get lost or broken and can cause arguments and upset. We know sometimes children try to sneak these things into school, so we ask that you please speak to your child and check they don't have any of these things – Thank you!

## 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: **Be Honest**

**Kind regards,**
**Sally Massey**
**Assistant Executive Headteacher**