The Griffin Federation
Nurture to Flourish

11th September 2026

Newsletter

Attendance

Weekly attendance for each school:
Holbeach St Marks – 96%
Gedney Drove End – 91%
Westmere –95%

Attendance

The Department for Education 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. If you are struggling with attendance in any way, please come and talk to us as we can often offer some kind of support.

Each week, we will publish attendance figures for the week and one child from each class will get the attendance award and become an attendance hero. One class from each school will get the class certificate for the week. Our weekly target is 95%.

Diary Dates

Monday 19th October – Parents' Evening HSM
Tuesday 20th October – Parents' Evening GDE
Wednesday 21st October – Parents' Evening Westmere
Wednesday 21st October – Harvest HSM / GDE
Thursday 22nd October – Parents' Evening Westmere
Friday 23rd October – Harvest Westmere
Friday 23rd October – End of Term 1
Monday 2nd November – Start of Term 2
Tuesday 8th December – Christingle GDE/HSM
Thursday 10th December – Nativity GDE 2pm
Tuesday 15th December – Nativity Westmere (1.30pm Year 1&2, 2.15pm Reception)
Wednesday 16th December – Nativity HSM 2pm
Friday 18th December – End of Term 2

Keeping Us Informed

We ask that you please keep us informed of anything which happens at home that may affect your child in school. If you let us know, we can provide support for your child quickly. Sometimes in the past, we have noticed a child 'isn't quite right' but have not been aware of anything significant at home for some time, meaning that the right support wasn't in place straight away. We have ELSA support (emotional literacy support assistant), a family support worker, class teachers and teaching assistants who are all able to help - just have a chat, a phone call, or shoot us an email.

Healthy Minds

We're pleased to welcome back Healthy Minds to Westmere Primary School for a helpful and practical workshop exploring co-regulation and children's emotional development. The session will provide useful strategies to help adults understand and support children when they are feeling overwhelmed or dysregulated. This is available to all of our families. Please see the attached flyer.

22nd September
10.00am–11.30am
Westmere Primary School

Please let us know if you would like to attend. We'd love to see you there!

Hot School Meals

To cut down on food waste, we have asked our meal provider, Ideal, to **remove the automatic order facility** for children in Reception to Year 2 who are entitled to Universal Free School Meals. If you would like your child to have a meal, you will need to place an order. If you haven't set up an account yet, please see the attached document that will guide you through the process.

St Lucia, Norway & Sweden Trip to Burghley House

As part of their Tudor topic, St Lucia class from Holbeach St Marks and Norway and Sweden classes from Gedney Drove End will be visiting Burghley House in Stamford on Wednesday 30th September.
The coach will pick up Gedney Drove End at 8.50am and Holbeach St Marks at 9.10am, we expect to be back by the end of the school day. Children should bring a packed lunch and a drinks bottle, if your child is entitled to Free School Meals you can order a packed lunch from our meal provider. Children should wear normal school uniform.
The cost of this trip to school is £17.25 per child, we are asking for a voluntary contribution of £10 per child. Please either return the signed permission slip or email your permission to the office.

Breaktime Snack

We are encouraging healthy snacks in school. Children in reception, year 1 and year 2 receive fruit each day under a government scheme. Children in other year groups may bring one of the following to eat at breaktime;

A piece of fruit or vegetable (cucumber, pepper etc.)
A plain biscuit (rich tea, digestive, malted milk etc.)
Dried fruit (raisins, sultanas, apricots, mango etc.)
A yoghurt (tube or pouch only)
Plain breadsticks
A cereal bar (must not contain chocolate)

If possible, please pack the snack be in a separate container and not in your child's lunchbox.

Secondary School Applications

If you have a child in year 6, you should have received an email from us this week with details of how to apply for a secondary school, the closing date is 31st October. If your child is taking the 11+ test you should wait for the results before making an application.

Here are details of the open evenings we have been made aware of.

School	Date	Time
University Academy Long Sutton	16th September	5.30pm – 7.30pm
University Academy Holbeach	23rd September	6pm - 8pm

Home Time Collection

When you collect your child at the end of the day, please keep them with you rather than let them play on equipment. Bikes and scooters must not be ridden on school grounds by anyone as we want to keep everyone safe.

Smoking and Vaping

Smoking and vaping anywhere on school grounds is not permitted.

Dogs

No dogs are allowed on school grounds.

Afterschool Clubs Term 1 & 2

All clubs start week commencing 14th September unless otherwise stated.

HSM

Please find details of clubs: places are allocated on a first come, first served basis. Please let Mrs Lintott know if your child is interested in taking part in any of these angela.lintott@griffinfederation.co.uk

Day	What	Which year groups	Who
Monday	Film	Year 2 – Year 6	Miss Wells
Monday	Art / Colouring	Reception – Year 6	Mrs Thompson
Thursday	Lego	Reception – Year 2	Mrs Ransom

Westmere

Day	What	Which year groups	Who
Monday	Nature	Reception, Y1 & Y2	Mr Allcorn
Monday	Football	Year 1 & Year 2	Mr Timmins
Monday	Sensory	Year 1 – Year 6	Miss Pooley
Monday	Dance	Year 1 & Year 2	Miss Richardson
Monday	SATS	Year 6	Mrs Bailey
Monday Lunchtime	Singing	Year 3 – Year 6	Miss Taylor
Tuesday	Art	Year 1 & Year 2	Miss Winn
Tuesday Lunchtime	Colouring	Year 3 – Year 6	Miss Taylor

Tuesday Lunchtime	11+	Year 4 & Year 5	Mrs Leatherland
Wednesday Lunchtime	11+	Year 4 & Year 5	Mrs Leatherland
Thursday	Dance	Year 3 – Year 6	Miss Spriggs
Thursday	Choosing	Year 1 – Year 6	Miss Hardstaff
Thursday	Creative Writing	Year 3 -Year 6	Mrs Richardson

GDE

Please find details of clubs: places are allocated on a first come, first served basis. Please let Mrs Baxell know if your child is interested in taking part in any of these karen.baxell@griffinfederation.co.uk

Day	What	Which year groups	Who
Wednesday (lunchtime)	Times Table Rock Stars	Year 3 – 4	Ms Sage
Thursday	Construction Club	Year 1-6	Mrs Ashby-Morley

School Uniform

What a child wears to school reflects his/her attitude to learning. It portrays the school's ethos and shared positive values. The school governors have agreed a uniform for the children of the school to wear. It is hoped that all children will wear the school uniform as it is both practical and smart. The items of clothing in the uniform are such that they may be obtained from shops in local towns such as Kings Lynn, Wisbech and Holbeach or through one of the many Mail Order catalogues available. Items marked with a star can be purchased through the school office and have an embroidered logo, alternatively you can purchase a suitable alternative.

Holbeach St Marks	Gedney Drove End	Westmere
• Maroon or red checked dress (summer) • Black or grey skirt or pinafore dress • Black or grey trousers • Black or grey tailored shorts (summer) • White blouse/shirt/ polo shirt • * Maroon sweatshirt (school logo) • * Maroon cardigan • * Maroon fleece jacket • Dark coloured school shoes (no high heels or mules) • Smart sandals (summer)	• Green checked dress (summer) • Black or grey skirt or pinafore dress • Black or grey trousers • Black or grey tailored shorts (summer) • White blouse/shirt/ polo shirt • * Green sweatshirt (school logo) • * Green cardigan • * Green fleece jacket • Dark coloured school shoes (no high heels or mules) • Smart sandals (summer)	• Maroon or red checked dress (summer) • Black or grey skirt or pinafore dress • Black or grey trousers • Black or grey tailored shorts (summer) • White blouse/shirt/ polo shirt • * Maroon sweatshirt (school logo) • * Maroon cardigan • * Maroon fleece jacket • Dark coloured school shoes (no high heels or mules) • Smart sandals (summer)

PE AND GAMES KIT

Children will be told the days that they have PE lessons. They will be asked to wear their PE kit and PE hoodie on these days. The basic requirements are:

- * Griffin or plain blue PE hoodie
- Plain jogging bottoms or shorts
- * PE T-shirt in house colour
- Trainers / Plimsolls

NO JEWELLERY including earrings
No clothing with branded commercial logos is allowed (e.g. Nike, Adidas, football shirts)
Hair longer than shoulder length should be tied back.

For health and safety reasons, all jewellery, including earrings, must be removed for sporting activities and long hair should be tied back. If your child is unable to remove their earrings by themselves, it should be arranged that they do not wear them on their PE days. When planning to get your child's ears pierced, please aim to do this at the beginning of the summer holidays.

Watches (smart watches are not allowed) and studs or sleepers worn in pierced ears may be worn (these must be removed for any sporting activities), however, no other jewellery should be worn. Please note that staff are not allowed to remove or look after jewellery for children. The safest place is at home.

The Griffin Way

We have a new behaviour curriculum called The Griffin Way. At our schools, we develop children's character through 'The Griffin Way' curriculum. In order to build character, we define the behaviours and habits that we expect students to demonstrate. We want to support our pupils to grow into adults who are polite, respectful, grateful and who put others before themselves. We believe that, as pupils practise these behaviours over time, they become habits that positively shape how they feel about themselves and how other people perceive them. As philosopher Will Durant states, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

Our aim is to teach the behaviour we want to see, recognise it when we see it, calmly correct it when we do not, and use consequences and restorative practice to help pupils put things right and make a better choice next time. Please see the attached information for parents which gives more details.

PE Days

Please check the tables below for your PE days. Children should come to school in their PE kit on these days. PE kit is as follows: Blue PE Hoodie or plain blue hoodie

Westmere

Class	PE Days
China	Wednesday & Friday
France	Wednesday & Thursday
Italy	Monday & Friday
Australia	Monday & Wednesday
Brazil	Monday & Friday
Mexico	Tuesday & Thursday
USA	Wednesday & Friday
Spain	Wednesday & Thursday
Canada	Tuesday & Wednesday

Gedney Drove End

Class	PE Days
Finland	Monday & Friday
Sweden	Monday & Friday
Norway	Friday

Holbeach St Marks

Class	PE Days
Cuba	Thursday & Friday
Barbados	Thursday & Friday
St Lucia	Thursday

Holbeach St Marks - Tesco Fruit & Veg Grants – Please Vote for Our School!

We are excited to share that our school Gardening Project has been selected for the Tesco Fruit & Veg Grants Programme and will be taking part in a customer vote at **Holbeach Tesco from 3 August 2026 until the end of November 2026.**

Every vote could help us secure funding to enhance opportunities for our pupils and support exciting projects within our school community. When you shop at Tesco, simply make any purchase and you will receive a voting token at the checkout. Place your token in our school's voting box and help us move one step closer to receiving this valuable funding. Please encourage your family members, friends, neighbours and colleagues to vote whenever they visit Tesco during the voting period.

Thank you for your support – together we can make a real difference for our children.

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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 values are Wisdom and Knowledge, Koinonia (working together), Respect, Perseverance.

Our Value next week is: **Koinonia**

Fundamental British Values

- Democracy - A culture built upon freedom and equality, where everyone has an equal say, and the government is accountable to the people.
- The Rule of Law - The principle that all individuals are subject to the same laws, ensuring a safe, orderly, and fair society
- Individual Liberty - The freedom to make personal choices, pursue goals, and express oneself freely within the bounds of the law.
- Mutual Respect and Tolerance - Understanding that people have different faiths, beliefs, and values, and respecting those differences without imposing one's own views.
- As part of our curriculum, we teach about British Values and how these are lived out in life and around our school. Each week, we will focus on one of the values. Our next British value is **Democracy**

Kind regards,
Sally Massey
Assistant Executive Headteacher

St Lucia, Norway & Sweden Trip to Burghley House

I give / do not give permission for my child(ren) …… to attend the visit to Burghley House on 30th September.

I do / do not enclose a contribution of £10 ☐

Signed …… Date ……