



Winterbourne Valley CE VA First School
Winterbourne Abbas, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 9LW
Email: office@winterbournevalley.dorset.sch.uk
Web: www.winterbournevalley.dorset.sch.uk
Telephone: 01305 889297



Head teacher Mrs E Sleightholme

Friday 26th September 2025

Autumn Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to begin by saying how much I have enjoyed my first few weeks here at Winterbourne Valley First School. The staff, children and parents have all made me feel so welcome and I am delighted to be part of such a caring and vibrant community.

I have loved spending time in the classrooms, as well as teaching the children myself and I am encouraged every day by the wonderful teaching and learning that is happening throughout the school. It is a real privilege to see the children so engaged, curious and enthusiastic.

On Thursday, Mrs Joslin invited artist Darrell Wakelam into school to run an exciting art workshop with the children. Together, they created a beautiful new tree for our entrance, symbolising our school's mission statement of 'Strong Roots, Successful Futures.' It was a fantastic opportunity for creativity and teamwork, and the finished piece will be a wonderful reminder of what we value as a school community.

Next Thursday, I am also looking forward to meeting with our wonderful parent volunteer group to discuss ways they can support the school with some exciting events. Please look out for new dates in the coming weeks. We are very grateful for their time, enthusiasm and commitment.

In this newsletter you will also find some key dates for the term ahead. I would particularly like to highlight our Harvest Festival on Friday 3rd October, to which all parents are warmly invited. In addition, there will be an opportunity to meet me more formally on Thursday 9th October, either at 9.00am or 5.30pm. I would be very pleased if you could join me for a cup of tea and a slice of cake, and a chance to get to know each other better.

I hope you all have a wonderful weekend,

Kind regards,

Emma Sleightholme

Headteacher

Harvest Festival

Our Harvest Festival will take place on Friday 3rd October.

- Venue: School Hall
- Time: 9.00am
- Families Welcome: All parents, carers and family members are warmly invited to join us.
- Donations: We would be grateful for donations of non-perishable food items to support our local food bank.

Attendance and Sickness

Thank you for supporting us in ensuring that attendance remains high at Winterbourne Valley. Every school day really does make a difference to children's learning and progress.

Unfortunately, like many schools at this time of year, we have already had both staff and children off with illness. To help reduce the spread of germs, we are encouraging children to wash their hands regularly throughout the day.

We know it can sometimes be difficult to decide whether your child is well enough for school.

This helpful NHS guide offers clear advice:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

A Polite Reminder – We are a nut-free school

To keep all of our children safe, we kindly ask that no nuts or nut products are brought into school. This includes items such as peanut butter, chocolate spreads containing nuts, cereal bars or any snacks with nuts listed in the ingredients. Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment for everyone.

Clubs

Our lunch time clubs will begin next week. Children are welcome to come along for a taster session before deciding whether to sign up.

Once children have signed up with their teacher, in school, we do ask that they attend each week as part of their commitment to the club.

Our lunchtime clubs on offer this term are;

| Day | Club | Time | Teacher |
|-----|------|------|---------|
|-----|------|------|---------|

| | | | |
|----------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Monday | Gardening | lunchtime | Mrs Joslin |
| Tuesday | Lego/Computer Club | lunchtime | Ms Pearce |
| Thursday | Singing Club | lunchtime | Mrs Joslin |
| Friday | PE Club (Year 2,3 4) | lunchtime | Mrs MacSwiney |

Payments

A gentle reminder that Winterbourne Valley is a cashless school. All payments to the school must be made via BACS transfer. Thank you for your support in helping us to keep payments secure and efficient.

Please make BACS payments to: Natwest - Sort code 60-07-01, Account number 59190167

When paying by BACS, please add child's name as reference.

Name that House!

We have launched a competition to name our 3 school houses. They are currently known as House 1, House 2 and House 3 and as a school we want to make them much more relatable (and fun!) for our children. Some examples of themes are,

- **Historical Figures:**
Naming houses after figures important to the school's history.
- **Mythological Creatures:**
Using creatures like Griffins, Unicorns, or Phoenixes for their symbolic qualities.
- **Ancient Civilizations:**
Choosing names of historical civilizations that evoke a sense of tradition or strength.
- **Regional Features:**
Naming houses after local geographical features or prominent places in the region. The children will carry out this activity in class, with the help of their teachers, but please do talk to your children about possible ideas. Once the finalists have been chosen we will get the children to vote for their favourite.

Key Dates at a Glance – Autumn Term 2025

Please find attached a list of key dates for the Autumn term.