



DECEMBER GRAPEVINE

A Reflection on the Meaning of Christmas

As we reach the end of a busy and rewarding term, Christmas offers us a valuable moment to pause and reflect. In schools, our days are filled with energy, challenge and achievement, and this season gives us the opportunity to look beyond routines and consider what truly matters. I recognise this is a slight departure from my normal monthly newsletter, but this is, after all, a slightly different time of year.

For Christians, Christmas marks the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ – a story rooted in hope, humility and love. It reminds us that even the smallest acts of kindness can make a powerful difference, and that compassion and generosity sit at the heart of strong communities. The Vine is one such community and I am so lucky to have an incredible body of parents and staff that support these core values.

In our school, Christmas also carries a wider meaning. It is a time when values such as respect, care for others, gratitude and togetherness come to the fore. We see these values reflected daily in the way our pupils support one another, in the dedication of our staff, and in the strong partnership we share with families.

Over the past weeks, pupils have taken part in performances, enlightening activities and moments of reflection that remind us how fortunate we are, and how important it is to think of those who may be facing difficulties. These experiences help our children develop empathy and a sense of responsibility for the world around them. It has struck me, particularly this year more than any, how difficult and challenging the world is becoming. And yet, I continuously see tiny acts of kindness, compassion and genuine warmth on a daily basis which fills me with hope—especially at this time of year.

Thank you to our recent SCITT students Miss Begum and Miss Rain who are moving onto their next placements.

As we move into the Christmas break, I would like to thank everyone in our school community for their continued support and commitment. I hope the coming weeks offer time for rest, joy and connection with loved ones.

On behalf of all the staff, I wish you a peaceful and happy Christmas, and a hopeful start to the New Year.

Warmest regards,

Mr Hynes

ATTENDANCE AWARD - WEEK 15

WHOLE SCHOOL YEARLY ATTENDANCE— 95.2%

YEAR GROUP WINNER— Year 3

CLASS WINNER – Amethyst & Jasper



DECEMBER GRAPEVINE

Diary Dates

Autumn Term 2025

19 Dec Autumn Term Ends 1:30pm

Spring Term 2026

5 Jan Spring Term Starts

21 Jan EYFS Safari Stu

12 Feb EYFS Stay & Play 2pm

16—20 Feb Half Term

18 March VIAM

18 March Y2 London

18 -25 March Spring Book Fair

27 March Spring Term Ends 1:30pm

Summer Term 2026

13 April Summer Term Starts

4 May May Day

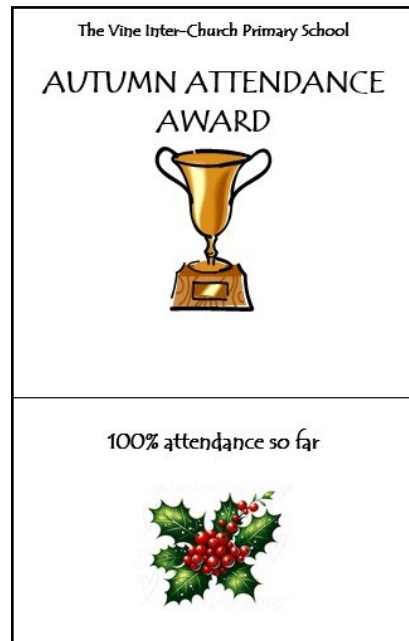
25 May—5 June Half Term

10 July Summer Fete

21 July Summer Term Ends 1:30pm

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SUCCESS

Well done to the 123 children who have been in school for the Autumn Term. We are proud of you!



KINDNESS VINE

We are slowly creating a culture of kindness throughout The Vine. Each week, children who have demonstrated these value, has had their name written on one of our 'kindness leaves'.

Our Kindness Vine has grown lots this week—Leaves have grown for Idris, for calmly and

cooly helping a friend.

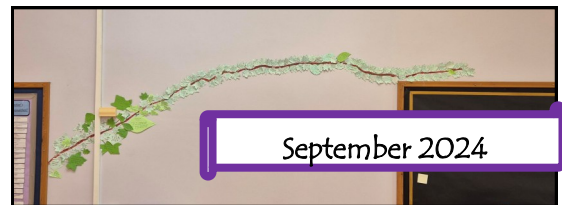
Riyansh for sharing spare oranges. Ryan B for sharing his orange for Christingle with Mia. Lexi for

swapping her cracker gift with another child that was upset. Evie, Harriett & India J. Thank you for helping year 4 with the sewing. Miss

Davenport for sharing her books with Y3.



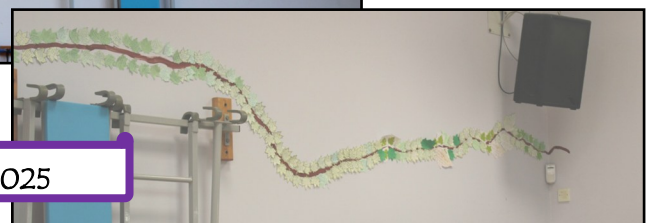
September 2023



September 2024



September 2025



December 2025



DECEMBER GRAPEVINE

READING @ THE VINE

Accelerated Reader Update



Keep up the excellent work with your reading! We have already had lots of pupils reading regularly. Congratulations to the following pupils who reached their AR target in Autumn 2:

Dhruv (Y2)

Asra, August, Charlie, Leo, Lexi, Max, Nasya-Rae and Sofie (Y3)

Alisha, Nathaniel and Shriya (Y4)

Aon, Ashley, Elizabeth, Javier, Kessana, KJ, Lukas and Quinn (Y5)

Peter, Talen and Yolien (Y6)

Huge congratulations to our newest word millionaires, Chloe and Peter (Y6)

Remember you have until the end of the Christmas holidays to reach your Autumn 2 target!

House Bake Off—Congratulations to Kestrel House who won our House Baking Challenge.

With over 700 votes cast by pupils and parents, it was an incredibly popular House Competition and we look forward to holding future baking competitions.

Congratulations to the individual winner: Sharada, who received the highest points and votes from all the pupils and parents.

Congratulations to Mrs Stewart, who was crowned staff Bake Off Champion!

Our Overall House Winner for the Autumn Term was Harriers! We look forward to seeing what the pupils decide as their treat!

SCHOOL HOUSES

House Baking Competition



Eagle

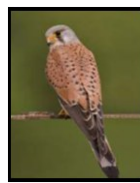
Falcon

Harrier

Hawk

Kestrel

Kite





DECEMBER GRAPEVINE

Further News

Beat the street

We won overall... fabulous certificate, trophy and a
£100 Amazon Gift Card



Christmas Dinner

On Tuesday 16th December, our pupils enjoyed a fabulous Christmas dinner with all the trimmings.

The pupils and staff enjoyed tucking into a feast, listening to classic Christmas tunes and sharing some awful cracker jokes.

Thank you to ABM for their brilliant catering.

Existing Winter Menu continues until February half term.

Staffing Changes—Breakfast and After School Club

We are pleased to announce Mrs Chouskey (Deputy) will be The Vine Breakfast and After School Club Manager from 2026.

Miss Bates will continue to work in breakfast and after school club and be a valued member of The Vine wrap around team.

Wider staffing changes

Whilst we try and maintain consistency in staffing throughout the year, sometimes we recognise the need to make tweaks to suit the needs of the school.

From January 2026—Miss Smalley will be the full time class teacher for Moonstone.

Mrs Gawthorpe (Previously Moonstone—Wed, Thurs and Friday) will teach Pre-School on Thursday and Friday.

Mrs Hien (Pre-School) will be the full time Ruby Class Teacher

Mrs Grimshaw (Early Years Lead) will teach in Pre-School—Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday).

Miss Garner will also be joining the Pre-School team in January.

We will be staggering these changes in the first few weeks to minimise disruption for the pupils.

Disco Fundraiser

Many thanks for supporting our Christmas Disco this year.

An enormous thank you to Danny Smith (Lewis' Grandad) for being our DJ and giving up his time to ensure all the pupils had a fantastic time.

Thanks you to our fundraising guru—Mrs Beetle for pulling it all together as well!

We raised a whopping £1285

Christmas Raffle

We had some lovely prizes donated from our local businesses, Bowdens Estate Agents, Fish n Chickn, Belfry Spa, Monkfield Arms, Enis'z Barbers, Co-op and more....

Our winners are....

Robyn 'Pops', Evelyn, Dolly's Dad, Lewis NanB, Nathaniel & Eva Grandad, Kerry S. Mrs McKnight, Tommy g Grandad Nick, Amelia G Mum, Kiara family Topaz, Annabel & Harry L, Kaleb preschool dad.

We raised a fantastic £313

*******Thank you*******





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WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Bikeability

Proud smiles all around last week in Year 5 – both children and staff – when pupils were awarded their Bikeability certificates and badges. Over four days, the pupils were taught how to approach junctions, pass parked vehicles safely and many other important aspects of riding a bicycle on the road. Despite the rain, the instructors were impressed with the resilience and determination on display, especially from some who were new to riding a bike. Well done to all Year 5 pupils who took part.



Garden Club draws upon many subjects. Science: pollination, seed dispersal, nutrition, photosynthesis. Geography: learning about different worldwide habitats for a host of not only beautiful plants, but plants that feed our entire population. History? This term we have been planting acorns and conkers which will grow into Oak and Horse chestnut trees respectively. Some acorns looked very unusual because they are the host to a parasitic wasp, forming a knopper gall. These were used to make ink in Europe for 1,400 years from the Roman empire until the 19th century. This term, alongside our willow weaving and weeding we have been mashing knopper galls and creating our very own biodegradable Vine school ink which we used to make pictures using feather quills. As modern ink contains petrochemicals, members of our new Vine school Eco-team were suitably impressed with our efforts. We have also been maintaining our log pile habitats which support a number of insect species, pupils have enjoyed learning about insects such as the violet ground beetle that live there. If you are interested



in insects and their life cycles you may enjoy this video about other gall wasps found in the uk: [Bing Videos](#)



Willow weaving.

The Year Sixes had a fantastic time at Hilltop and we are so proud of them for all that they achieved!

“My favourite activity was the high ropes. I really liked them because I threw myself into the challenges and then after that, I wasn't really scared to do any of the other activities.” – Pia

“Hilltop was even better than I expected. My favourite activity was the Tree Top Trail; it was amazing. I also enjoyed completing the pizza box on the high ropes. We had to climb a pole with a small box on top. Three people had to get up there, hold hands, lean back and fall off! I am so proud of myself because I conquered my fear of heights.” – Poppy

“Hilltop was great! I am proud of myself for trying every activity, especially the Tree Top Trail.”

– Dervis





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WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Vine Vision Day

On Friday 28th November, we had a whole school Vine Vision Day. This is an RE enrichment day, whereby the whole school focuses on our vision prayer: to create pupils and international citizens who make the world a better place. We focused on different Festivals of Light which are celebrated all over the world by people of different religions.

- Reception learnt about the Jewish festival of Hannukah, made wooden stars to represent the Star of David, and enjoyed eating some yummy doughnuts, as per Hannukah tradition!
- Year 1 learnt about the Chinese Moon festival. They had a very busy day creating moon landscapes, cooking traditional Chinese mooncakes, creating paper lanterns and decorating willow pattern plates.
- Year 2 learnt about the Hindu Diwali festival, which included making diya lamps from clay, creating henna patterns and using coloured sand to make rangoli patterns.
- Year 3 learnt about the Sikhi Diwali festival and created their own tassels to attach to a special coat, as Guru Ji had done when released from imprisonment.
- Year 4 learnt about the 2 Thai light festivals: Loy Krathong and Yi Peng. They made their own floating lotus flowers and used banana leaves to create krathongs. They also investigated the floating sky lanterns, although were not very successful in making their own lanterns fly, unfortunately!
- Year 5 learnt about the Jesse tree, a Christian advent tree that tells the story of the Bible up until the birth of Christ. They created their own ornaments which represent each of the 24 stories, which turned out superbly!
- Year 6 learnt about different Bible 'light' scriptures that show how Jesus is the Light of the World and how Christians are also called to be the light. Pupils created fantastic artistic representations of these Bible passages.

We had a brilliant day getting stuck in with the celebrations, combining lots of areas of the curriculum with our school's vision. We encourage everyone to let their lights shine too!

Christingle



Sewing club enjoyed learning to cross stitch and completed their sessions by creating a Christmas Card.





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WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

Christmas Door Competition

Theme—12 Days of Christmas

Winner—Year 1



Nativity

The Ofsted Inspectors were out in full force at the Vine with a specific focus on *Tinsel and Tea Towels*. Mr Hynes and several members of the teaching team have been given a yellow card by the inspectors who feel that the 'mini-mes' could be taking some jobs in the future.

This year the children from year 2 were joined in the retelling of the Nativity story by year 1 and together they performed some beautiful songs which spread lots of joy. Tinsel covered the hall floor, tea towels were everywhere and the year 1 and 2 staff could not be prouder of how well the children learnt their lines and the songs. Merry Christmas



EYFS Choral Nativity

The Early Years children did an awesome job with their Choral Nativity on the 10th December. Families were full of festive cheer watching their little ones sing their hearts out. For many, it was the very first time performing and they all did them selves proud. Thank you to families for supporting them learning all those words!



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Carol Concert

We finished our calendar year with one of our best attended events at The Vine—Our traditional KS2 Carol Concert. What started out three years ago with Mr Harvey playing the piano has turned into a mini production. I can only thank the incredible staff, led by Miss Foster (music lead) for putting together a very polished performance.

A special well done to Poppy (Year 6) for opening our Carol Concert with the solo in Once In Royal David's City and our Year 5 and Year 6 boys for singing Hallelujah. We teach our pupils the importance of positive mental health and the challenges they may face when they are older. Singing is a wonderful outlet and perhaps there is a slight stigma attached to singing at aged 10 or 11. As I mentioned, sometimes there is safety in numbers and each of them rose to the challenge. Well done.

A particular thank you to Mrs Stewart, Mrs Bransbury (Pastoral Manager), Mrs Rees (Governor and Parent) and Mrs Bowen (Cambridgeshire Music) for their musical talents. For all those parents who are in need of a new years' resolution—I look forward to perhaps you joining us in 12 months time!



Twelve days of Christmas

