



Thornden School Newsletter

24th October 2025



Welcome - Ms Lowing (Headteacher)



Dear Families,

We have some amazing news for you - the league table for GCSE results have been published and Thornden is the best performing school in the whole of Hampshire (including Southampton and Portsmouth)! You can see the table [here](#).

We are so proud of the class of 2025 - thank you to all of their teachers, support staff and to parents for helping them last year.

This means that we have had a brilliant start to the year; the best results, the Telegraph rating us the best school in Hampshire and our glowing Good Schools Report that found us to be "A big school with a big heart". We are really proud and this all takes us closer and closer to our goal - to be the Best School in the South.

I have had another instalment of my Ofsted training. As I have explained to most parents, the framework has changed so that there are no overall judgements but grades over 7 areas. The language of the grading has also changed so there is no more "Good" and "Outstanding" but instead schools have to meet an "Expected standard" but may be judged "Strong" in some areas. There is an "Exceptional" grade but the bar for this is extremely high - schools would have to lead nationally on an area to achieve this. We are not due to be inspected until June 2026 so I can share more information as we get it.

We have had an action packed half term so please do take the time to read through our newsletter.

Have a brilliant half term break and we hope to see you soon,

Caroline

Dates for you Diary

Event	Date	Information
Half Term	27 th -31 st October	
Inset day	Monday 3 rd November	Closed to students
Year 7 Reports	Wednesday 5 th November	Shared with parents/carers
French Play	Thursday 6 th November	Year 8 and 9
History Dockyard Trip	Friday 7 th November	Year 8
RS Mosque Trip	Tuesday 11 th November	Year 10
Year 7 Parent/Carer Evening	Wednesday 12 th November	Year 7 only
GCSE Certificate Evening	Tuesday 18 th November	
Year 10 Reports	Friday 21 st November	Shared with parents/carers

Inset Days 2025-2026

03/11/2025

16/01/2026

30/06/2026

08/07/2026

Extracurricular Timetables

Please follow this [link](#) to our new Extracurricular timetables.

The PE timetable changes each half term. The Autumn Term 2 timetable is now available on the website.





Year 9 & 10 Visit to i-construct- Miss Stickland (Head of BTEC Enterprise)

Careers – Year 9 & 10 Visit to i-construct

On the 15th October we took 11 students to CEMAST and CETC in Fareham to investigate the construction industry. (Centre of Excellence for Engineering, Manufacturing and Advanced Skills Training and the Civil Engineering Training Centre)

When we arrived, students were tasked with interviewing companies within the construction industry. They had to find out as much information as they could about their company, their purpose and the available roles within it. Once they had the necessary information the student teams created a presentation to deliver to a panel of judges. The students were fantastic and really thought about how to get the information across and how to present effectively with confidence, good eye contact and personality.



After the presentations were complete, we got to go and chat to more members of the construction industry and experience what they do day to day in their jobs. Students were surveying land to find electricity cables, manoeuvring equipment, laying bricks, watching a drone as it took off to gather data and then getting to try out their skills on crane simulators.

It was a really great afternoon that students got a lot out of and hopefully it has helped them with some of their upcoming decisions about their future careers.

If you have a student who is interested in these industries it is well worth a visit to the two colleges. They have some of the most impressive courses, facilities and resources. Their **open evening is on the 19th November**. You can find out more and book your place on the Thornden Careers website here: [Career Events & Opportunities](#)





Year 9 Persuasive Speaking Competition- Miss Herridge (3rd in English)

In English, Year 9 have kicked off the year with a focus on the skills of rhetoric and the art of persuasion. They have learned how to use the Aristotelian Triad - ethos, logos, and pathos - to influence and manipulate their listeners. As we all know, Thornden's young people are opinionated and passionate in their beliefs. This, combined with their learning of rhetoric, was celebrated on Wednesday 22nd with our annual Year 9 Persuasive Speaking Competition.

In lessons, students were encouraged to select a topic they are genuinely interested in and passionate about. After performing speeches in lessons, representatives were chosen to deliver their speech to the whole year group in Thornden Hall. These brave speakers were: James B, Ambar T, Scarlett S, Austin C, Lily C, Charlie W, Isla C, Theo H, George F, Jess T, Taleen A, Rayyan P and Gloria E.

Miss Herridge would like to thank Ayesha N and our amazing Year 11 Student Leaders in English for taking notes throughout the competition. For example, James "spoke like an MP"; Scarlett and Taleen were "passionate"; Austin and Jess were "confident"; Lily was "empowering"; Charlie is "a natural speaker"; Isla and Theo's speeches were "truly emotive"; George "confidently used pauses effectively for emphasis"; Rayyan and Gloria's speeches were "impressively researched"; Harry's speech topic was "perfect for Year 9"; Ambar "used an effective reference to Martin Luther King".

The overall winners are as follows:

1st place - Charlie W - 'We should not be judged by exams'

2nd place - Jess T - 'School should start later'

3rd place - Taleen A - 'The dangers of AI'

Congratulations to all Year 9 students on their excellent work in English.

Diwali Event

Thank you to all the families and community who joined us for our Diwali event. We enjoyed a meal together while we listened to music and watch dancing. Thank you to everyone who helped run the event.





Year 10 Duke of Edinburgh-Mrs Nesbit (Teacher of Maths and DofE Coordinator)



We're excited to launch the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award for Year 10 students.

This is a fantastic opportunity for your child to develop valuable life skills, build confidence, and take part in rewarding experiences outside the classroom.

Applications are now open to students via this [form](#).

Places are limited and the deadline for applications is **Sunday 2nd November at 17:00**. After this time the link will no longer work.

Dates for 2025/26 cohort are:

- Practice Walk Saturday 18th April
- Overnight Assessed Expedition 15th to 16th May



The cost for DofE this year is £135. We have rucksacks, roll mats, and tents available to borrow. Students will need their own sleeping bag and a pair of suitable hiking boots.

If your child has any questions, then they are welcome to come and speak to me in M9.

We encourage all interested students to apply and begin their exciting DofE journey.

Mrs Nesbitt

Artist of the week

Elizabeth B - 9FGHE for a fantastic photograph in the style of photographer Vanessa McKeown.





Junior Chef Graduation-Mrs Coles (Head of Technology)

On Tuesday 14th October Chen & Mo (Year 10) graduated from the 6-week Junior Chef course at Eastleigh College. This programme is set up to give young people an opportunity to work in professional kitchens. It helps develop confidence, communication and cookery skills as well as encouraging students to use their creative flair.

On the final week the students produced a graduation dinner, a three-course dinner for their families. It was fabulous - congratulations to both students.

If any other Year 9-11 students would like to take part in the course, please see the link below.

[Junior Chefs Programme \(for Year 9 to 11 students\) - SHCG | South Hampshire College Group](#)



Friends of Thornden - FOTS

Thornden's Parent
Teacher Association



Changing lives in Thornden

Supporting: Sports



***“When I wear it, I feel part of the team
and a lot more professional at the
athletic events - its not just about
school it's real.”***

Logan Year 8

Your school, your PTA!

FOTS- your PTA supports the school in a huge range of ways! They help keep after-school clubs free while providing water fountains and books, benches, sports kits, trampolines & 3D printers... plus many pastoral and support groups for young carers, bereaved students and others.

Don't forget, **without our donation scheme, none of this would be possible!** As one year group moves on, we lose their donations, so ***now is the time to take action*** and **SIGN UP TO DONATE** - it only takes a few minutes. Even the mere price of a coffee, once a month, makes a real difference!

Please [contact FOTS here](#) with any questions, ideas or feedback or, if you prefer email us: fots@thornden.hants.sch.uk



Careers – Miss Stickland (BTEC Enterprise and Careers Lead) & Miss Quinn (Careers Coordinator)

Click [here](#) for all the latest careers news, events and opportunities.

Sparsholt College - Chelsea FC Post 16 College Programme - Year 11

Chelsea FC Post 16 College Programme will be running an open training session at Sparsholt College in October. Please see flyer for full details.



Chelsea FC Post-16 College Programme will be running an open training session at Sparsholt College in October this year. This will be open to all prospective male players to attend for the 2026/27 year.

The day will include an Introduction and overview of our Post-16 Programme and include a training session focusing on the technical and tactical aspects of the game. To confirm attendance please book online by using the QR code or the below website and course code provided.

Chelsea FC Post-16 College Programme will be running an open training session at Sparsholt College in October this year. This will be open to all prospective female players to attend for the 2026/27 year.

The day will include an Introduction and overview of our Post-16 Programme and include a training session focusing on the technical and tactical aspects of the game. To confirm attendance please book online by using the QR code or the below website and course code provided.

Course Code	Venue	Date
PO16-SPA-H-5	Sparsholt College SO21 2NF	Wednesday 29th October
Timings	Age	Pitch Surface
09.00-12.00pm	School Year 11-12	Grass

Course Code	Venue	Date
PO16-SPA-H-6	Sparsholt College SO21 2NF	Wednesday 29th October
Timings	Age	Pitch Surface
09.00-12.00pm	School Year 11-12	Grass

A&O Shearman

A&O Shearman are excited to invite you to an exclusive opportunity with one of the most prestigious law firms in the world. If you are a Year 11 student with an interest in commercial law, this event is for you.

Event Details:

Date: Tuesday 4th November

Time: 5:00pm - 6:30pm

Location: Virtual via Zoom (link will be provided upon registration)

To book click [here](#)



Department Spotlight- Each newsletter we will shine a spotlight on the work of one of our fantastic departments.

Mrs Gale, Head of Music

This half term has been busy in the Music Department as we prepare for another year of music making and concerts.

We started this academic year by celebrating the class of 2025's GCSE Music results. Over 70% of last year's cohort achieved a grade 7 or higher for GCSE Music which is a fantastic achievement and well deserved as they worked very hard to achieve this. Two new groups of students in our current Year 10 started their GCSE Music course this half term and we look forward to working with them over the next two years. We are delighted with how many students opted to take GCSE Music in Year 10 this year as our numbers are well above the national average.



All our extra-curricular groups and instrumental and vocal lessons are up and running. We currently have over 200 students receiving instrumental lessons from our visiting music teachers and 13 different music ensembles are rehearsing weekly. These groups will all be performing in our Christmas concert at the end of term. Please follow the [link](#) to see the schedule of which days each group rehearses are on. We are always happy to welcome new members to these groups and so please do get in touch if you would like your child to get involved.

We are also pleased to continue our Year 7 Instrumental Project which we are delivering in partnership with Hampshire Music Service. 11 students in Year 7 have taken up the opportunity to learn an instrument for the first time – 6 clarinet students and 5 brass students. They have been given an instrument to learn on for free and are receiving weekly tuition in a small group from a specialist teacher from Hampshire Music Service. We look forward to hearing them perform in the Rising Stars Concert later in the year.



Music Tech Club is also running again this year on Tuesdays after school. We are currently offering beginner classes to students in Year 9 who have not done the club before. However, due to demand, we are hoping to offer a more advanced class after Christmas for those students in Year 9 who have done this club before and wish to return. Year 8 students will be offered places in the summer term.

Please do get in touch if you have any questions about music lessons or ensembles at m.gale@thornden.hants.sch.uk Please follow this link to see our [list](#) of extracurricular activities on offer.

Please also make a note of our concert dates for the upcoming year:

Tuesday 16 th December 2025	Christmas Concert (All ensembles performing)
Tuesday 24 th March 2026	Spring Concert (All ensembles performing)
Tuesday 23 rd June 2026	Rising Stars Concert (Years 7,8 & 9 solos/duets).

All performances will start at 7.00 pm in Thornden Hall. Tickets for each concert will be available from Thornden Hall Box Office.



Thornden Sport- Miss Hall (2nd in PE)

Miss Hall 2nd in PE Sports Results

Date	Team	Gender	Sport		Opposition	Fixture Type	Result	Player of the match
08/10/2025	U13	Boys	Rugby	vs	John Hanson	Hampshire Cup	Lost 20-25	Ethan
08/10/2025	U14	Girls	Football	vs	Wyvern	League	Won 2-1	Tuula
13/10/2025	U12A	Girls	Netball	vs	Toynbee	League	Won	Edie & Izzy
13/10/2025	U13A	Girls	Netball	vs	Toynbee	League	Won	Ella, Amelie, Bethany
13/10/2025	U14B	Boys	Football	vs	Multiple	Tournament	Won 2, Drew 1, Lost 2	
13/10/2025	U15	Boys	Rugby	vs	Mountbatten	National Bowl	Won 19-12	Jackson
14/10/2025	U15	Boys	Football	vs	Kings	League	Won 4 - 1	
14/10/2025	U14A	Girls	Netball	vs	Toynbee	League	Won 19-10	Laycie & Chloe
14/10/2025	U16A	Girls	Netball	vs	Toynbee	League	Lost 11-18	Hera
14/10/2025	U12	Boys	Football	vs	Crestwood	League	Drew 4-4	
15/10.2025	U13	Boys	Hockey	vs	Perins	Friendly	Won 2-0	
15/10/2025	U13A	Girls	Netball	vs	Priestlands	Friendly	Won 29-12	Kitty/Beth
15/10/2025	U13B	Girls	Netball	vs	Priestlands	Friendly	Won	Eva
16/10/2025	U16	Boys	Rugby	vs	Perins	County Cup	Lost 12 - 38	George
17/10/2025	U16	Girls	Football	vs	Woodlands	County Cup	Won 5-0	Caitlin
20/10/2025	U16	Boys	Football	vs	Henry Beaufort	League	Won 4-3	
21/10/2025	U16A	Girls	Netball	vs	Priestlands	Friendly	Lost 16-23	Cerys
21/10/2025	U16B	Girls	Netball	vs	Priestlands	Friendly	Lost 7-12	Elena

Achievements

Taekwondo

Well done to Radu and Elliot, Year 11, and Diana, Year 8 who recently competed in the British Taekwondo National Championships held in Sheffield.

Radu had an outstanding performance, winning his way through two matches to get to the semi-finals and taking home a bronze medal. Elliot also performed brilliantly, reaching the semi-finals and earning a bronze medal.

Diana fought in a large category and held her own against some tough opponents and gave it 100%.

Well done to all three students!

Golf

A big congratulations to Georgia, Year 10, who recently competed in the U16/U18 Hampshire Schools Golf Championships and won, for the 3rd consecutive year! An Amazing achievement, well done!



Swimming

Another Year 10 student with a great sporting achievement is Aariana!

Aariana competes with Team Kenya and was recently at the Africa Aquatics. Aariana had some brilliant performances and achieved 6 personal bests and also took home one gold and two bronze medals. Fantastic achievement Aariana, well done!

Sporting Success

We are always keen to hear about success stories from our students outside of school, so please do get in touch if there is news we can share.

For any sporting successes, please email Mr Hall, Head of PE: b.hall@thornden.hants.sch.uk

Social Media

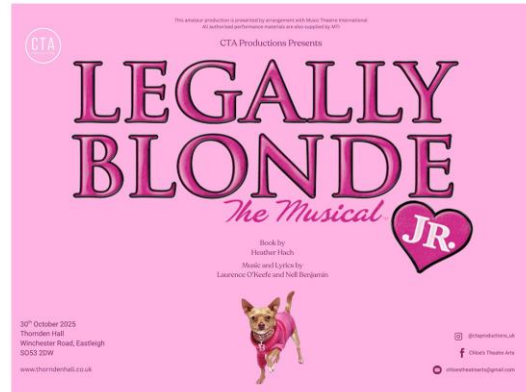
We are now up and running with our Instagram page, which serves as a platform to enhance communication and celebrate achievements. This page highlights the dedication, success, and spirit of our students. We warmly invite parents to follow us: [Thornden Sport Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/thornden_sport).



Thornden Hall



**** 'Staunton and Bessie Carter make a wonderful double act' Financial Times



The highly-commended musical theatre production company are back with their next show



UK Tour of Noel Coward's timely comedy of manners



Get ready for the ultimate rock experience as Bat Out of Hell roars onto the big screen



I could be Wrong, I could be Right



Young friends and lovers navigate the joy and struggle of bohemian life



Thornden Hall is located at the back of Thornden School and serves both the school and the wider community
A high-quality performing arts centre, hosting a variety of events including:

Live theatre performances

Concerts

Cinema screenings

Community and professional productions

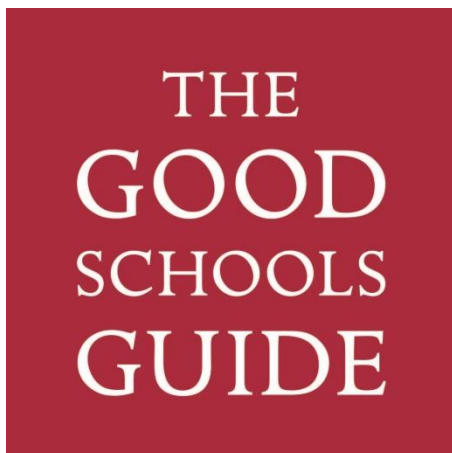
The venue is well-equipped and designed to support a wide range of artistic and cultural activities.

More information can be found at www.thorndenhall.co.uk

General Contact

If you need to contact the school, please use either of the email addresses below.
In an emergency, please contact the school during office hours on 023 8026 9722.

info@thornden.hants.sch.uk/reception@thornden.hants.sch.uk



"A big school with a big heart, exceptional leadership and a culture where it's cool to want to do well. Delivers academic excellence without compromising on wellbeing or personal development. Families feel very lucky to have this school on their doorstep." [Good Schools Guide 2025](#).

SCHOOL EXPERIENCE DAYS

Join an in-person school experience day to observe real classroom learning, meet pupils and staff, and explore what modern teaching looks like. It's a great way to discover if teaching is right for you - and boost your application.

To attend a school experience day at one of our partnership schools, scan the QR code below and visit our website.



>> inspiringfutureteachers.org/hisp <<

