



Thornden School Newsletter

5th June 2026



Welcome - Ms Lowing (Headteacher)



Dear Parents and Families,

I am writing to you to explain what we have decided to do with regards to smartphones at Thornden School.

As you may know, this is a topic that we have been engaged with for some time. We have hosted events at school highlighting the dangers of smartphone use for young people, advocating for change and we been having this “conversation” in school and with parents and students for many months.

As I have explained before, there is a great deal of external pressure to make various decisions, and we have tried to be as open, honest and consultative as possible throughout. The government currently has a bill ‘ping-ponging’ between the Commons and the Lords with an amendment to ban all smartphones but it also says that the implementation lies with the school. **Almost every secondary school in the area has decided on a full ban of smartphones.**

We have decided that we are going to use an app named LOQT to manage smartphones in school. We listened to parents and young people and we feel that banning smartphones on the way to and from school should not be a matter for the school. Parents and families have ultimate responsibility for their children outside of school and we want to respect that. You have told us that you value being able to contact your child and ensure their safety. Students also told us that they feel much safer on their commute with a phone, if they have one.

In addition, our early study with LOQT showed that smartphone use for our young people was **reduced even outside of school hours** because parents are able to extend the LOQT period (for example when their children are doing their homework) and students were much more aware of their smartphone use. Although these signs are in their early stages, we believe that this habit change is potentially very powerful.

How LOQT works: LOQT automatically pauses distracting apps on your child's smartphone during school hours. Social media and games are locked. When school ends, everything unlocks automatically. No hardware is needed and there is nothing to hand in.

Safety: LOQT uses Apple's Screen Time and Android's equivalent to lock apps at the operating

system level. It does not read messages, access contacts, or monitor device content. The company is ICO registered (ZC110979) and full privacy information is available at loqt.app.

Getting started: Download LOQT from the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#). Setup takes around five minutes and full guides are available at loqt.app. **Instructions for linking to Thornden will follow ahead of September.** For support, visit loqt.app or email contact@loqt.app.

I need to be clear with you – every parent at the school will need to download the LOQT app if they want their child to carry a smartphone to and from school. From September this will be a rule of the school that cannot be broken. Whilst this might seem like an overstep, we hope that you appreciate that we have listened to you and we hope that it is largely preferable to a total ban. We will have a stepped approach to this, **but we do insist that you download the app in time for September if your child wants to have their smartphone on the way to and from school.** If you would like support with this then please let us know via email at info@thornden.hants.sch.uk. You will get communication from LOQT well in advance of September of how to do this but, as I say, you can trial it now in the Summer term.

Please can you support the school with this by downloading the app in good time for the start of term? As you can imagine, this is a huge undertaking for a school our size. Every hour that we spend on managing this is an hour that we could be using to support our students in their learning. **There will be some children who will have no phone at all. This is perfectly acceptable and is a decision for you and your family. There is absolutely no requirement for students to have phones. They will not be used in lessons in any circumstances.**

With LOQT, parents are able to open their child’s phone during the school day as a failsafe. However, if parents do this during the school day we will receive an alert at school, a member of the senior team who is On Call will go to the child’s classroom and confiscate their phone. The child will then receive a sanction and parents will have to collect the phone from reception. If you need to contact your child in the case of an emergency then you must call reception, who will get that message to them quickly. This may seem harsh but we cannot allow anything that undermines the rules, especially as it is probably going to be enshrined by law. In addition to this, we are going to change our sanctions to reinforce our expectations. Broadly, this will be the outcome for infractions (although we do always take context into account when making decisions)

Behaviour	Behaviour type / Consequence
Phone/air pods seen or heard during the school day. Student complies and hands item to the member of staff. Phone/air pods collected from reception at the end of the school day by the student.	Logged on Arbor as ‘Mobile phone/air pods - seen or heard’. 1 st offence = ½ day reflection room 2 nd offence = Extended day in reflection room 3 rd offence = cross school inclusion (1 day in Toynbee’s reflection room) 4 th offence = External suspension
Phone/air pods seen or heard during the school day.	Logged on Arbor as ‘Refusal to hand over mobile phone/air pods’.

<p>Student fails to hand the item to the member of the staff.</p> <p>Phone/air pods collected from reception at the end of the school day by the student.</p>	<p>1st offence = cross school inclusion (1 day in Toynbee's reflection room)</p> <p>2nd offence = External suspension</p>
<p>LOQT notifies Thornden that the app has been unlocked</p> <p>Student complies</p> <p>Student fails to hand the item to the member of the staff</p>	<p>On-call go to remove the phone, parent contacted to collect from reception</p> <p>As above</p> <p>As above</p>

NB: We are NOT banning smartwatches because they will not be able to access the internet if phones have the LOQT app on and working. If we suspect that this is not the case, we reserve the right to confiscate smartwatches. Whilst a smartwatch can be used to tell the time, there is no legitimate reason for having air pods in school.

There will be a **very small number of exemptions** to this, but these will be for medical needs only (e.g. for our diabetic students who need their smartphones to monitor their levels). These students already have a mobile phone exemption card and work closely with our medical team. **If you are the parent of a new Year 7 student who you feel this applies to, please get in touch with us at info@thornden.hants.sch.uk**

Thank you for your understanding and patience with this. I know that this decision will not be universally popular, but I hope that you understand how we have reached it. Thornden is doing something very different from other schools. There is risk with this, and we go into the decision with some trepidation. However, as a school, Thornden has never been afraid to be different and neither have I! We sincerely hope that we can lead the way on this important issue and that we can be proud of the values-led decision that we have made.

I know that this solution would not work in all schools, but we have such switched on and supportive parents and as well as thoughtful and reflective students so I know that we can work together to make this a success.

Please do get in touch if you have any questions or concerns,

Caroline

As a school we are aware of the recent unrest in Southampton relating to the tragic murder of Henry Nowak.

This is complex and changing situation and we remain in contact with Southampton City Council and the police regarding this.

We do want to say that communities need to pull together, especially in turbulent times. Whilst we wholly condemn the horrendous murder of this young man, we also want all members of our community, including those within the Sikh community, to feel safe and supported. If you have any concerns or questions then please get in touch.

Caroline

Dates for you Diary

Event	Date	Information
Year 8 Belong Event	12/06/2026	
St Catherines Hill trips	Wk.15/06/2026	Year 7 only
Year 6 Parents Intake Evening	18/06/2026	Parents only
Year 9 Belong Event	19/06/2026	
RS Sikh Gurdwara trip Year 8	25/06/2026	Year 8 only
Japan trip	26/06/2026-05/07/2026	Year 10 only

Inset Days 2025-2026

30/06/2026

08/07/2026

Non-uniform days 2025-2026

Thursday 16th July – Dress to Express-can be cultural clothing, colourful clothing or just own clothes that you feel comfortable in and reflect your identity. No hair dye please and no clothing that could cause offence.



School Barrier Implementation-Monday 8th June

The barrier be implemented on Monday 8th June. Please do not attempt to enter the site during these times, unless you have been given prior permission. If you are dropping your child off in the neighbourhood, please can you be mindful of our neighbours? Please do not park over driveways or damage any lawns or verges.

Extracurricular Timetables and Updates

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

New club alert!

Crochet-learn to crochet every Wednesday and Friday lunchtime in L5!



Head of Year Updates for September 2026

As we prepare for the new academic year, we would like to share a few important staffing updates within our pastoral team.

Miss Harman will be taking on a temporary role as Head of Year 8 from September. We are confident that Miss Harman will provide excellent support and continuity for our Year 8 students throughout this period.

In addition, Miss McGreal will be commencing her maternity leave from September. We wish her all the very best at this exciting time. Stepping into the role of Head of Year 10 will be Mr Tully, who will lead and support our Year 10 cohort during Miss McGreal's absence.

We thank both Ms Georgiou and Miss McGreal for their dedication and commitment, and we look forward to welcoming them back in due course. We are equally pleased to have Miss Harman and Mr Tully taking on these important roles and supporting our students in the months ahead.

Mr Tully



Miss Harman



Artist of the week

This week's Artist of the week is Rosebell, Year 7, for her amazing clay tile.

Rosebell has used a variety of modelling techniques and textures to create a design based on a coral reef. She has also learnt the skills of rolling a slab and scoring and slip to attach pieces together.

Well done Rosebell!





Fiddle Toys- Mrs Little (SENCO and Teacher)

Many of our students are now accessing fiddle tools. Fiddle tools can be good aids for students with ADHD/ASC and sensory needs, as a way to keep the brain engaged. They also support students with higher levels of anxiety, as the sensory input can be soothing. In addition, fiddle tools can aid with listening - if they are used in the correct way!

Here is some guidance about best practice with fiddle tools:

- Fiddle tools should be **quiet and discreet**
- They are **a tool - not a toy**. (Small cars, skateboards and giant dragons are not fiddle tools.)
- The best kind of fiddle toys **require pressure on the fingers** - so blue tac, putty, a stress ball or a marble in mesh
- Students only need **one fiddle tool at a time**.
- If a fiddle tool is becoming a distraction rather than a support, **staff can remove it for the lesson**. In cases where students have explicit permission to use one on their SEN profile, it will be replaced with something more appropriate.

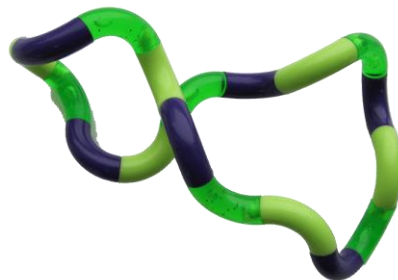
Examples of effective fiddle tools

- Stress balls
- Putty or therapy dough
- Tangle toys
- Smooth stones or textured rings
- Small fabric or elastic resistance loops

Things that are not fiddle toys:

- Mini skateboards
- Cars
- Tennis balls
- 3D printed dragons
- Gel filled squiggies

We have an increasing number of students bringing fluid filled fiddle tools into school, that then leak in lessons and make a mess. Please avoid allowing your child to bring in this type of tool and opt for something on the list above.



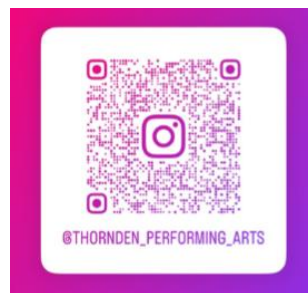


Department Spotlight- Each newsletter we will shine a spotlight on the work of one of our fantastic departments.

Mrs Smith – Head of Performing Arts

Our busy department is currently in full swing for rehearsals of our forthcoming production of *Little Shop of Horrors*. Tickets for 16th, 17th & 18th July are likely to sell out, so get yours while they are still available! Tickets can be purchased via our website [here](#). Rehearsals are going extremely well – we are very proud of our cast who are picking up the choreography, blocking and vocals quickly. The songs are so catchy; we are sure that you’ll come away from the production with an earworm or two! Costume lists will be emailed to parents/carers shortly.

Don’t forget to follow us on Instagram for more Performing Arts updates during the year.



Drama News

The GCSE Drama exam was one of the first in the series, so the department waved goodbye to their Year 11s a few weeks ago. This was a notably hard-working and creative cohort who will be missed by their teachers. Meanwhile, the fun never stops in Drama; our fantastic Year 10 GCSE cohort are about to embark on their first set of (real!) practical exams next week. Students have been solidly working on these devising pieces over the past couple of months – actors and technicians collaborate to create an original piece of theatre based on the stimuli of ‘control’. Exam week will be a treat for Mrs Smith & Mrs McGreal, who are looking forward to watching a wide range of thematic concepts ranging from ghost stories and the paranormal to an exploration of human diversity. Good luck, Year 10!

Music News

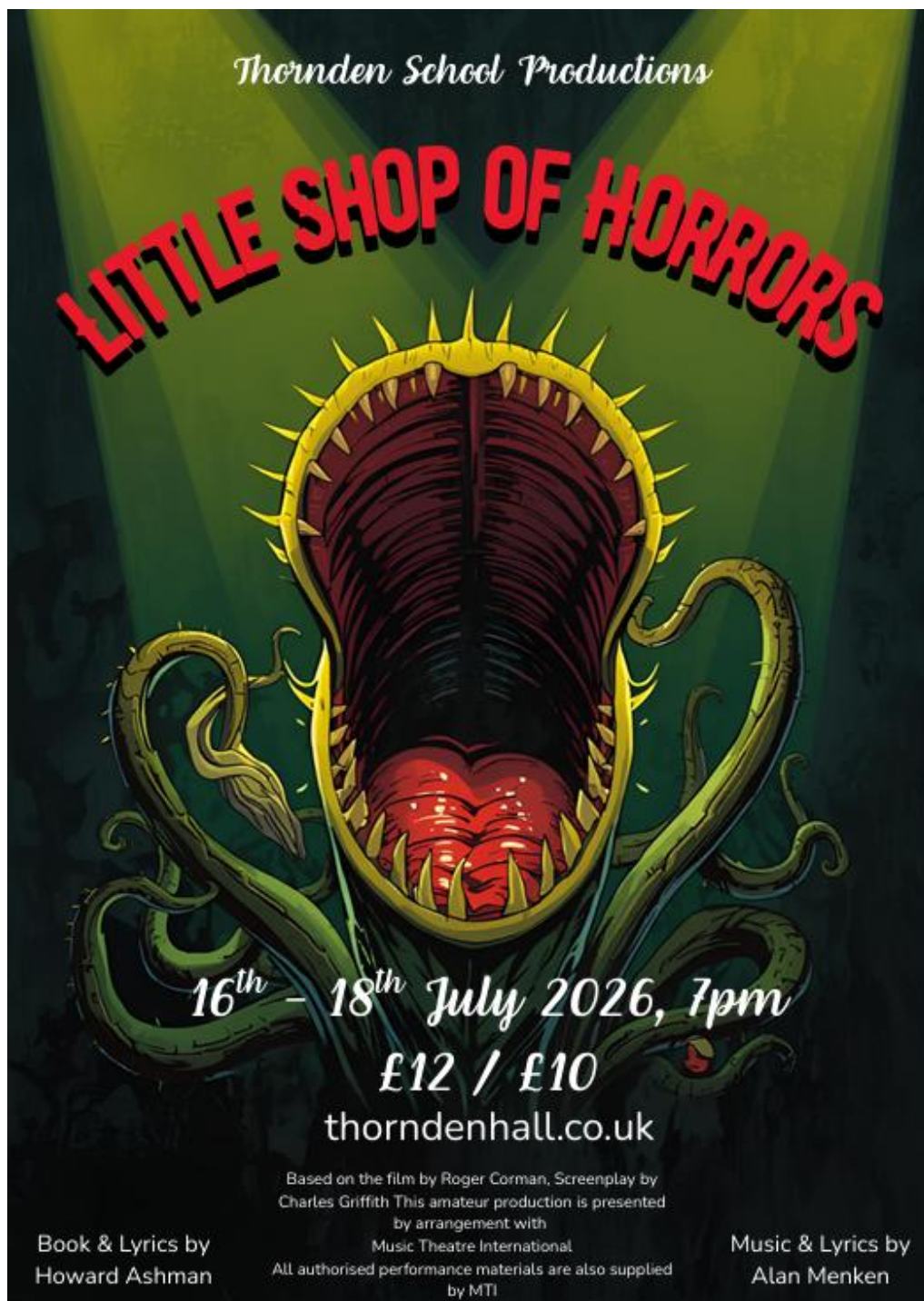
The Music Department have recently been awarded with Music Mark status. This fantastic award has been given by Hampshire Music Service in recognition of our strength in Music. KS3 students are now busily working towards the *Rising Stars* concert on 23rd June. This is always a highlight in our Performing Arts calendar and an opportunity for students in Years 7, 8 and 9 to showcase their musical talents in Thornden Hall. Tickets for this event can be purchased via our Thornden Hall [website](#). If there are any students who wish to take up either instrumental or vocal lessons in school in September, please contact Mrs Gale: m.gale@thornden.hants.sch.uk. Finally, with the GCSE Music exam this week, we’d like to take this opportunity to wish Year 11 the best of luck with their final written Music exam!

Dance News

Year 11 GCSE Dance students have been the most incredible group to work with. I have genuinely loved teaching this cohort. The passion, sweat and tears that has gone into every part of their learning has been inspirational. Good luck to them in their written exam next week. Year 10 students are now focusing on their first practical exam piece; *Infra* by *Wayne McGregor* and have also completed their first solo pieces inspired by either a haiku poem or a recipe. This

creative part of their coursework has given the students a taste of choreography; we have been so impressed with their creative approach to the work! It looks like they be holding up the incredible standard set by our current Year 11s!

It has been great to work with Dance Student Leaders. It is with sadness that I say goodbye to the Year 11 leaders who created work for and ran both Junior Dance Company and Senior Dance Company. But welcome to the next talented cohort of student leaders who have jumped in early to start work for the next year. Extra-curricular participation in Dance remains high this term with the Senior Dance Company preparing for a performance at Chichester University and Pulse preparing for our New Intake Evening for Year 6 parents. Wishing the very best of luck to all our students who are performing over the next few weeks!



Thornden School Productions

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS

16th – 18th July 2026, 7pm
£12 / £10
thorndenhall.co.uk

Based on the film by Roger Corman, Screenplay by Charles Griffith This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI

Book & Lyrics by Howard Ashman

Music & Lyrics by Alan Menken

FOTS

A Big Idea, a New Chapter & a Chance to Get Involved!

At our AGM in November, our Chair Nic Lansdowne reflected on everything FOTS has made possible over the years — from tablets and sewing machines to wellbeing dens and bereavement support. It's a genuinely remarkable record for a small volunteer group. But we think the best is yet to come.

The Big Idea is taking shape

Earlier this year we asked every student and staff member: what would make Thornden even better? Over 60 ideas came in. The answer? An **outdoor canopy** — a covered space that will benefit students every single day, whatever the weather. This is exactly the kind of lasting change that FOTS exists to make happen.

We need you to help make it real

Nic has given more than a decade to this school and will be stepping back next year. That means we need fresh faces and fresh energy to carry this project — and FOTS — forward. You don't need to chair meetings or organise events. Skills in fundraising, communications, or simply enthusiasm to be part of something meaningful are all equally welcome.

Come and meet us

Nic will be personally hosting our **end of year bids meeting and social on Tuesday 9th July** — a relaxed evening with drinks and snacks, a chance to hear about the canopy project and meet the team.

To register, email fots@thornden.hants.sch.uk — we'd love to see you there.





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

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

Sparsholt Open Event - Thursday 11th June - Year 10

Registrations are now open for Sparsholt College's next open event on Thursday 11 June 2026, 5pm – 7.30pm (depending on tour time booked). This is an on campus, in person, evening event. To attend, students will need to register for the event, and book a tour of the subject area that they wish to see as soon as possible by visiting [Experience Sparsholt - Sparsholt College Hampshire](#). It is not too late for Year 11 students to apply to Sparsholt College!

SHCG Summer Fair - Various dates depending on location - Eastleigh College Saturday 13th June, Southampton College Saturday 20th June, Fareham College Saturday 27th June

Eastleigh, Southampton and Fareham College will be hosting a summer fair where families are welcome to attend. Please see link for dates and to reserve a slot [Eastleigh College Summer Fair - Saturday 13 June 2026 Tickets, Saturday 13 June • 11 - 14 | Eventbrite](#)

University of Southampton Robotics Summer School 2026 - Year 11

Join us at the University of Southampton from 10th to 14th August 2026 to design, build and program a fully autonomous robot in the University's state-of-the-art lab facilities. You'll be supported by industry professionals and academics and will experience a taste of life as a university student, with lectures, lab tours and more. This is a non-residential summer school, and meals are not provided - though we provide drinks and snacks throughout each day. This event is free of charge. If you're interested, sign up at <https://rss.sro.bot>

King Edward VI Sixth Form Open Evening - Friday 26th June 6pm - 8pm

Please follow [link](#) for more information.

Youth Impact Programme - Year 11

Eastleigh dates - Monday 13th - Friday 17th July or Monday 17th August - Friday 21st August. Link to book [Sign Up | Youth Impact](#).

The 5-day programme running Monday to Friday, 10am–4pm, packed with interactive activities and challenges. There is a charge of £99, however the course is free for students who receive free school meals.

Year 11 Ocean & Earth Science Residential Taster at University of Southampton - Monday 20th - Tuesday 21st July - Year 11 (spaces still available)

This engaging residential course offers students the chance to explore the processes that drive the global Earth system. Combining elements of geology, geography, and oceanography, the programme also helps students develop a wide range of practical and transferable skills. The course will take place at the National Oceanography Centre Southampton (NOCS), one of the world's leading centres for ocean and earth science research. Meals are provided on-site, and accommodation is within walking distance.

Who is the course for?

- Year 11 and Year 12 students
- Students with a strong interest in Ocean and Earth Sciences

- Students studying (or planning to study) at least two of the following A levels (or equivalent): Maths, Biology, Physics, Geography, Chemistry, Environmental Science, or Geology
- Capacity: 30 students
- Cost: £270 (bursaries are available)
- Find out more and apply [here](#)

SETA Engineering Vacancies - Year 11

Please use link to view the weekly bulletin for Engineering Apprenticeship vacancies. As always all vacancies are advertised on SETA's [vacancy page on our website](#) with links out to the appropriate websites for students to apply. Pop back regularly to [SETA's website](#) to look for any new adverts, as well as the [Government Apprenticeship Website](#).

SETA's Workshop Taster Day - Year 10 & 11

SETA's Workshop Taster Day will be taking place on Saturday 7 November 2026. Arrival timeslots of 10am / 11am / 12pm & 1pm all [bookable on our website](#).

National Oceanography Centre Open Day - Sunday 14th June 9.30am - 5pm - All years

Explore ocean science and innovation at the National Oceanography Centre (NOC)'s open day on 14th June 2026.

NOC will be opening the doors to its Southampton-based centre, offering a unique opportunity to go behind the scenes at the UK's leading organisation for ocean research. NOC's open day is an opportunity to celebrate the people, projects and communities engaged in oceanography, inviting visitors to gain a new appreciation for our planet's most mysterious and vital ecosystem. Through interactive exhibits, hands-on demonstrations, family friendly activities and tours of our workshops, our team will share fascinating insights into how science is unlocking the ocean's secrets. Please use this link to book [Open Day | National Oceanography Centre](#)

Employability Skills: What skills you need to succeed with Pearson Webinar - Thursday 11th June 6-7pm

Please use this link to register [Employability Skills: what skills you need to succeed with Pearson - Pathway CTM](#).

Behind the Scenes of Big Projects virtual career session: Exploring the Rural Careers You Never Knew Existed - Tuesday, 23 June, 4:00 - 4.30pm - All years

Join leading consultancy firm, Dalcour Maclaren and find out what really happens on major utilities, infrastructure and land projects.

Discover the range of careers that support projects in rural environments. Hear live from professionals about how their roles shape the future of energy, transport and land use. Explore the pathways available for school leavers and put your questions to the team. Register here [Microsoft Virtual Events Powered by Teams](#)

Understanding Apprenticeships Webinar - Monday 29th June 6-7pm

Please register using this link [Looking Ahead: Understanding Apprenticeships - Harris Federation Apprenticeship Programme x Pathway CTM - Pathway CTM](#).



Thornden Sport- Miss Hall (2nd in PE)

Sports Results

Date	Team	Gender	Sport		Opposition	Fixture Type	Result
13/05/2026	U13	Girls	Cricket	vs	Testbourne		Lost
14/05/2026	U14	Girls	Rounders	vs	Romsey	Friendly	Won 7.5-3.5
14/05/2024	U15	Girls	Rounders	vs	Romsey	Friendly	Won 5.5-5
18/05/2026	U15	Girls	Track	vs	Various	Track KO Semi Final	3rd place - through to Finals
20/05/2026	U13	Boys	Cricket	vs	Bohunt	Hampshire State Schools Cup	Won
20/05/2026	U14	Girls	Rounders	vs	Kings	Friendly	Lost
20/05/2026	U15	Girls	Rounders	vs	Kings	Friendly	Lost
21/05/2026	U13	Boys	Tennis	vs	KES	League	Won 8-4
21/05/2026	U15	Boys	Tenns	vs	KES	League	Lost on a tiebreak
22/05/2026	U13	Girls	Track	vs	Various	Track KO Semi Final	1st place - through to Finals
22/05/2026	U13	Boys	Track	vs	Various	Track KO Semi Final	4th place

Achievements

Gymnastics

A massive well done and congratulations to Max, in Year 11, who has been selected to represent Great Britain at the European Championships due to be held in Finland this October. Max will have finished his time at Thornden when he competes, but we wish him luck and look forward to hearing how he gets on nonetheless!

Taekwondo

Diana, Year 8, competed in the prestigious Wales International Taekwondo Championships in Cardiff on May 24th and brought home a gold medal! Competing against top talent, Diana demonstrated incredible skill, focus, and determination to secure the top spot on the podium. Her hard work and dedication to training have truly paid off. An incredible achievement Diana, well done!



Golf

Georgia, in Year 10, is no stranger to the newsletter, and she has once again given us something to celebrate, adding another fantastic achievement to her ever-growing list of accomplishments! Georgia recently placed 2nd in the ESGA (English Schools Golf Association) U15 Girls National Championship on Monday 18th May at Stoke Rochford GC, representing Thornden School. Right after winning the Hampshire Ladies County Championships held between 15th-17th May! Handicap: +0.4! Amazing Georgia, 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



Final lecture from Arts Society for the 25/26 season



25th Anniversary Concert



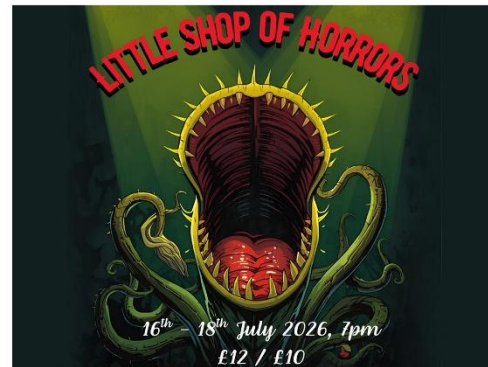
Lower school concert showcasing the talents of pupils in Years 7-9



An exciting evening of wind band music with acclaimed tube virtuoso Les Neish



Filmed live on stage. A thrilling game of love, lies and social warfare.



Packed with toe-tapping songs, quirky characters and dark humour



Thornden Hall is a high quality performing arts centre, located at the back of Thornden Hall
Serving both the school and the wider community 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

Job Vacancies

Here are the latest job vacancies. Please click on the links for further details.

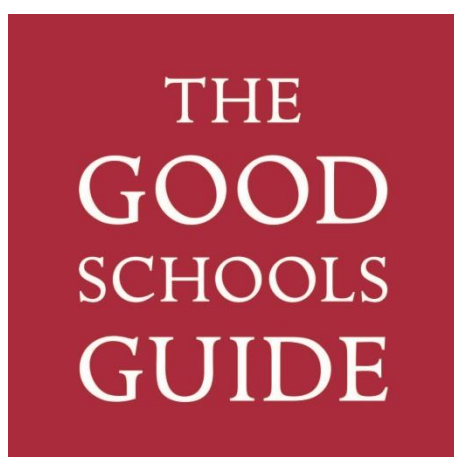
Assistant SENCO (non-teaching) - closing date 14/06/2026 - [HISP Multi Academy Trust - Vacancies](#)

For all HISP Trust wide vacancies, please click on [HISP Multi Academy Trust - Vacancies](#)

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](#)

