



Checkendon Church of England (A) Primary School

Respect Integrity Compassion Courage Hope

Email: office.3801@Checkendon.oxon.sch.uk

September 2025 Newsletter 84

Meet the team (part 1)

Behind every great school is a team of dedicated, passionate professionals who make learning engaging, supportive, and fun. In this series, we'll introduce you to the people who help make our school such a special place – from teachers and teaching assistants to office staff and beyond. Get ready to meet the faces who inspire, guide, and care for our students every day!

Oak Class (Years 1 and 2)



Mrs Wortley, Oak Class teacher, has been teaching since 2002 across a wide range of schools and year groups. She loves the creativity and flexibility of the classroom, where no two days are ever the same. Originally from St Asaph in North Wales, she now lives locally with her husband, two daughters, five ducks, and a few chickens. Outside school, she enjoys open-water swimming, trail running, reading, the occasional triathlon, and a well-deserved afternoon tea. Her favourite book is *Persuasion* by Jane Austen, and her dream superpower would be teleportation to explore the world. Fun fact: she still hasn't decided what she wants to be when she grows up!

Mrs Thomas, Oak Class TA and PE Coordinator, has nearly 10 years in education and 15 years as a nanny. She loves building relationships with all children through PE, tournaments, and lunchtimes. She is proud to have helped Checkendon achieve the Platinum Award for Sport. At home, Mrs Thomas enjoys a busy and adventurous life with her husband, their two children, and a lively collection of pets. She loves running, boot camp, baking, snowboarding, and travelling, including a memorable holiday in Indonesia where her family had to be evacuated after two earthquakes! Her motto is: "Everything is hard before it gets easy."



New to Oak Class, **Ms Todd** brings over 20 years of experience in nurseries, nannying, and running a playgroup. She thrives on the challenge of something new and has had fascinating experiences outside school, including volunteering on ambulances in Gozo, Malta, and bottle-feeding over 200 kittens! Originally from Checkendon, she spent 13 years living in Gozo before returning home with her fiancé and young son. Fun fact: she attended Checkendon school herself, making it extra special to now support the next generation. Her favourite motto is: "Life's challenges are not supposed to paralyze you, they're supposed to help you discover who you are."

Willow Class (Years 3 and 4)

Mrs Lunn, Willow Class teacher, teaches a mixed Year 3 and 4 class, helping children build on Key Stage 1 skills while developing confidence and independence for Years 5 and 6. This year marks her twentieth in primary education, having taught almost every year group. She has been at Checkendon for six years. Before joining us, she spent 14 years as Literacy Coordinator at her previous school and also worked as a Year 2 SATs moderator, visiting schools across Reading and gathering ideas to bring back to her classroom. Outside school, she enjoys countryside walks and agility training with her dog.



Mrs Adamson, Willow Class TA, also teaches Italian and other teaching "bits and bobs." She has over 20 years' experience in education, including work as a guidance counsellor specialising in safeguarding and SEN. She retrained as a primary teacher in 2020 while raising two children. Mrs Adamson loves Checkendon's family feel, where every child is truly known. Her proudest achievements are the "little things that make a difference to one child," which add up to a big impact. Fun fact: she once worked as a falconer and had a pet owl who thought he was human! She is a keen reader, especially of children's picture books, and loves all things Italian. Her favourite quote is George Eliot's: "It's never too late to be what you might have been."

Miss Hasker, works as a Teaching Assistant in Willow Class on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Before joining here, she worked at Benson School as a lunchtime supervisor and in a 1:1 support role, as well as being a Nanny since 2019. Outside of work she enjoys spending time with friends and family, cheering on her brother's rugby team in Reading, and spending time in the kitchen, loving baking – a

gift from her Mum. She's a big fan of TV dramas (re-watching Grey's Anatomy more times than she'd like to admit!) and a good detective series. Her dream superpower would be time travel, to experience life in different eras and to relive special memories. Her favourite quote is: "Ohana means family, and family means nobody gets left behind or forgotten."



Mrs Hillier as Headteacher, SENCo, DSL, and RE teacher, Mrs Hillier wears many hats at Checkendon! She began her career running a Family Links Course for parents before becoming a teaching assistant and later studying primary education. She has taught across the full primary age range, completed the NASENCo course, further studied special educational needs for her Master's and served as Assistant Head, before achieving her NPQH and taking on the role of Headteacher. What she loves most about her role is the difference a smile can make. Fun fact: despite appearances, she's technically only a teenager (a leap year baby!) She has a deep love of children's literature, nurtured during her university studies. Her dream superpower? To make hard work always bring success and progress. Every day is a school day and this summer Mrs Hillier has completed a Sensory Circuits course. Her favourite motto is the Maya Angelou quote: "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

SDP

This year, our focus is on building a confident, capable teaching team and ensuring every child thrives, starting with excellent attendance. We know that being in school is the first step to success, so we are working closely with families to support regular attendance and early intervention where needed. Alongside this, our teachers are developing their leadership skills to provide a rich, well-sequenced curriculum across all subjects, with a strong focus on maths and writing progress, cultural diversity, and opportunities for all children to excel. We are also expanding community links and enrichment activities, so learning extends beyond the classroom, and every child feels connected and inspired. Ultimately, our goal is a school where children attend consistently, achieve highly, enjoy a broad and engaging curriculum, and are supported by a strong, skilled team ready for any challenge.

Following your comments, our School improvement Partner, Whole School SEND review and Governor evaluation, we have written our new School Development Plan targets and will be keeping you up to date in what we have done to progress against these

Parent Evenings

Thank you to everyone who has attended parent evening this week. We hope you enjoyed this valuable time with your child's teacher. Do share feedback with us.

Lunchtime clubs

Dance Club (day to be confirmed)

More details to follow



Wednesday 12.30 Book Club

See Flo, Matilda and Wilf for more details

Thursday 12.30 Coding Club

Love playing with technology and creating your own games or animations? Join our Coding Club with Mrs O'Sullivan on Thursday lunchtimes and start building your coding skills while having fun!

Message from the PTA

Save the date - Friday 14th November Laser Show
This Friday – doughnut Friday

Harvest Festival

We will be donating tins and dried goods to the local food bank as part of our Harvest Festival. If you would like to contribute, please bring your donation in on **Wednesday**.



Term 1

Wednesday 1st October 2025 at 2.30 Harvest Festival in the church (all welcome)

Thursday 2nd October Swimming 3

Thursday 9th October Swimming 4

Thursday 16th October Swimming 5 (last one)

Friday 17th October 2025 9am Open Celebration Worship (all welcome)

Wednesday 22nd October 2025 at 3.20 term ends

Thursday 23rd October 2025 INSET – First Aid training for all staff

Friday 24th October 2025 INSET Day

October holiday Monday 27th October 2025 – Friday 31st October 2025

Term 2

Monday 3rd November 2025 Term starts

Wednesday 17th December 2025 2.30 Christmas Church Service (all welcome)

Friday 19th December 2025 9am Open Celebration Worship (all welcome)

Friday 19th December 2025 at 1 pm term ends

Christmas holiday Monday 22nd December 2025 – Friday 2nd January 2026

Term 3

Monday 5th January 2026 Term starts

Friday 13th February 2026 Open Celebration Worship (all welcome)

Friday 13th February 2026 at 3.20 Term ends

February holiday Monday 16th February 2026 – Friday 20th February 2026

Term 4

Monday 23rd February 2026 Term starts

Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 2pm Holy Communion Easter Service (all welcome)

Friday 27th March 2026 Open Celebration Worship and class cups (all welcome)

Friday 27th March 2026 at 1 pm Term ends

Easter holiday Monday 30th March 2026 – Friday 10th April 2026

Term 5

Monday 13th April 2026 Term starts

Monday 4th May 2026 Bank Holiday Monday (no school)

Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 1.30 Pentecost followed by Maypole and Country Dancing (all welcome)

Friday 22nd May 2026 Open Celebration Worship (all welcome)

Friday 22nd May 2026 at 3.20 Term ends

Late Spring holiday Monday 25th May 2026 – Friday 29th May 2026

Term 6

Monday 1st June 2026 INSET Day

Tuesday 2nd June 2026 Term starts

Wednesday 15th July 2026 at 2.30 Celebration Worship in church (all welcome)

Friday 17th July at 9am Open Celebration Worship and Class Cups (all welcome)

Friday 17th July 2026 at 1pm Term ends

Monday 20th July 2026 INSET Day