

HEATHLANDS SCHOOL

SUMMER TERM 2026 NEWSLETTER

A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-HEADTEACHERS



As we reach the end of our anniversary year which has been so rewarding in many ways, we would like to take a moment to reflect on all that has been achieved and to thank every member of our school community for the part they have played in making this year so special.

Over the past fifty years, Heathlands has grown and evolved and so have our pupils and school community. Sign language was tentatively accepted back in the day but is widely embraced today. We have seen a growth in deaf staff who are also positive role models and also in the fact that all of our staff team can sign, meaning Heathlands is a fully inclusive environment. As Co-Headteachers, we are proud of the quality of the staff we have who work hard daily to ensure your child is nurtured, stretched and challenged to become the best they can be and it's always at the end of a school year when that development is really acknowledged.

As we look ahead, we are reminded that success is not simply measured by results or achievements, but by the growth, confidence and character developed along the way. Every pupil leaves this year having learned something new, overcome a challenge, and taken a step forward on their own unique journey. They too are shaping Heathlands' history.

This term we say goodbye and good luck to staff who are leaving us for their next adventure. Leaving us are Mrs Fenner, Mr Kissaun, Ms Richards and Ms Randall. Thank you all for your time and commitment to Heathlands, we all wish you well!

For now, we encourage everyone to enjoy a well-earned break, spend time with family and friends, and return refreshed and ready for the exciting opportunities and possibilities that lie ahead.



Our Lower School **Sports Day** took place this month in warm, dry weather and was a wonderful celebration of teamwork, determination and House spirit. After a very close competition,

Shakespeare claimed first place, finishing just one point ahead of Matlin in second. Westbury secured third place. Congratulations to all pupils for their fantastic effort and sportsmanship throughout the day.



The children in **Otter class** have been learning about Motte and Bailey castles ready for their trip to Berkhamsted Castle. They have been working together to build their own castles using different resources.



Fox and Otters went to Berkhamsted Castle to see the old ruins of a real castle from 1066. Although much of the castle is no longer there, our guide had photos of what it used to look like so students could imagine what it would like many, many years ago. It was a fantastic trip!

The children in **Red Squirrel class** really enjoyed Purim day (Jewish celebration). They learnt about the Jewish victory over an ancient ruler and why it is celebrated. They all showed their outfits, made biscuits, created masks and boxes for their biscuits. The children chose a name of a peer to give their biscuit too as a gesture of kindness. They also retold the story in lower school assembly.



For Science week **Lynx class** had the opportunity to meet different animals. They shared their previous scientific knowledge about the different group names of animals (amphibian, reptile etc) and were able to discuss vertebrate and invertebrate animals.



Ahoy! **Hedgehog Class** had great fun making their own sandwiches for the 'Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch'.



Seals class made Egyptian honey cakes linked to their History topic on Ancient Egypt.



The children in **Seal Class** thoroughly enjoyed their Easter party. They had great fun taking part in an Easter egg hunt and a bunny-themed scavenger hunt, making it a joyful and memorable celebration for everyone involved.



LOWER SCHOOL

Badger Class enjoyed making their own cakes and running a cake sale in the classroom. Other classes visited to buy

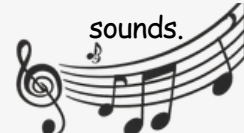


the cakes, and the children practised their maths skills by calculating costs and working out the correct change to give. This fun activity linked to our learning about money and weight in Maths.

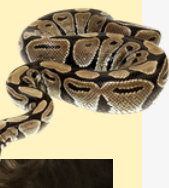
Pine Martens have been learning about life cycles of insects and have adopted some caterpillars to follow their metamorphosis to becoming butterflies!



Rachel our music teacher came into the **Moles class** to show us her Bassoon instrument and she played it. The pupils enjoyed watching and listened to the sounds.



Students in Red Squirrels and Weasel class were extremely brave with handling animals such as pythons, tarantulas, stick insects and lizards



Pine Martins released their butterflies which they have observed growing from caterpillars! Maybe they are coming to a garden near you!



LOWER SCHOOL

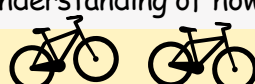
Congratulations to the Heathlands teams who came first AND second at the National Deaf Primary School swimming gala held at the London Aquatic Centre. Our teams had a very small margin between them and every pupil won their races.



Lower School pupils have been learning about **deafblindness** during assembly. They were introduced to hand-over-hand signing and had the opportunity to practise this technique with one another, developing both their communication skills and their understanding of how to support others.



UK END TO END CYCLING



Four inspiring dads visited the school to share details of their incredible challenge - cycling the length of the country to raise funds for our new sports hall. Their determination and commitment were truly motivating, capturing the imagination of both students and staff. We were all enormously proud to support them and enjoyed cheering them on every mile of the way. Inspired by their efforts, pupils took part in our own in-school static bike challenge, where we worked together to match the impressive distance they cover on their journey. Thank you for this incredible achievement in raising funds for our new sports hall - please keep donating!



Peer Champions hosted a Question and Answer session for Year 6 to answer all their Questions about life in Upper School.



Children in Hare Class were delighted to receive books generously provided by the charities **BookTrust** and **Hertfordshire Libraries**. They thoroughly enjoyed exploring the stories together, sharing their ideas, and discussing the illustrations. It was wonderful to see their enthusiasm for reading and their engagement with the books.

We were delighted to welcome visitors from **Rwanda**, who came to see how students learn at Heathlands. During their visit, they observed lessons in both the lower and upper school.

They also spoke with our French students, sharing information about the Rwandan school and discussing the sign language used there, which provided a valuable and engaging learning experience for all involved.



The children in **Badger class** have been learning about William Morris in Art and have used watercolours and printing techniques to create artwork inspired by his style.



Beavers Class have been exploring the artwork of Vincent van Gogh. Inspired by *The Starry Night*, each pupil created a unique piece that came together to form a stunning collaborative class masterpiece. The children demonstrated excellent focus and determination, carefully selecting colours and expressing their individual ideas and creativity through their work.



As part of their 'Window on the World' topic, **Weasels Class** enjoyed making nachos, a dish that originates from Mexico. The activity was a fantastic way to explore different cultures while developing their cooking skills.



Class News Pages - Parents/Guardians will receive access information for their child's new class in September. Our Class News blogs are regularly updated with photos, activities, achievements, and highlights from across the Lower School, giving families an insight into life and learning at Heathlands.

Year 6 PGL residential Year 6 had a fantastic time on their PGL residential, building teamwork and confidence through exciting activities including abseiling, the giant trapeze and canoeing. A staff-versus-pupils water fight and aero ball games added to the fun, making it a memorable experience for all.



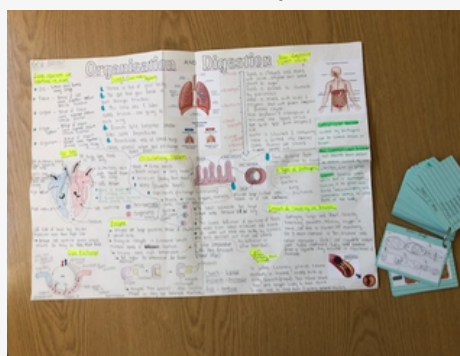
YOUNG enterprise Year 6 recently launched their very own **Young Enterprise** project, supported by a start-up loan from **#VirginMoney**. After careful planning, the pupils decided to run an ice cream business, which proved to be a huge success. Through their hard work and teamwork, the pupils generated over £390 in sales and achieved an impressive profit of more than £350. They are now excited to use part of their earnings to celebrate the end of Year 6 with a special trip and a well-deserved pizza party. Demonstrating their generosity and community spirit, the children have also chosen to donate the remaining profit towards the new sports hall project. Well done to Year 6 for their entrepreneurial spirit and fantastic achievement! **MONEY**

Year 10 students attended a live seminar with Martin Lewis CBE, where he shared **practical financial advice** to help prepare them for life after school. Students gained valuable insights and developed a stronger understanding of managing their finances.



We are grateful to the Young People's Advisors from **SignHealth**, who delivered engaging workshops for Year 8 on healthy relationships. Students had valuable opportunities to reflect and develop their understanding through discussions, videos, group work, and role-play activities.

A-Level Chemistry students have been performing an electrochemical practical activity.



One Year 9 student has shown exceptional dedication by working diligently on their independent study notes as they begin preparing for their **Biology** mock examination.

UPPER SCHOOL



Sailing We are delighted to have welcomed a new Stage 1 group, while our more experienced sailors are completing Stage 2 and beginning to progress towards Stage 3.



In **Science Y7** investigated the law of reflection using light ray boxes



Battle of the Books 2026!

Ooh! So close! Only one point in it! Well done to California, Riverside who go onto the semi finals against Texas!

Battle of the Books has been an amazing experience for our young team, we hope to be back again next year! #guyouthprogram

Upper School Sports Day was a fantastic success, bringing together students from across all year groups to take part in a wide variety of activities. Throughout the day, pupils demonstrated outstanding determination, resilience, and enthusiasm, giving their all in every event. It was particularly inspiring



to see the strong sense of teamwork and sportsmanship on display, with students encouraging and supporting one another. The competition was closely contested, with Westbury finishing in third place, Matlin taking second, and Shakespeare securing a well-deserved first place. Congratulations to all who took part.



Our Co-Headteacher delivered a presentation on Deaf Education, Deaf Leadership and English Creativity at Heathlands School at the 10th Educational Seminar of ANEPL – **Association of Deaf Teachers and Czech Sign Language Lecturers in Prague.**

signwow

A huge thank you to #SignWow for generously sponsoring our Heathlands team at the Battle of the Books. Your support made this experience possible, and we are incredibly grateful for your contribution!



Alfie Watts, a content creator from St Albans, visited Heathlands and delivered two inspiring assemblies for our Lower and Upper School students. Alfie spoke about his recent fundraising adventure, travelling by tuk-tuk from London to the North Cape in Norway in support of **YoungMinds**, a charity dedicated to young people's mental health. He also shared stories from his time on **Race Across the World** two years ago, giving students a fascinating insight into the challenges and

experiences he encountered along the way. Throughout his presentations, Alfie encouraged students to embrace a positive mindset, step outside their comfort zones, and recognise the importance of maintaining good mental health. His inspiring stories and valuable messages were enjoyed by all and left a lasting impression on our students.



Upper School students have been enjoying **golf lessons**. Special thanks to Rose Trust for financing equipment for the participants and for Rowena from Herts Golf for organising all the finance and being on hand to present the bag and clubs. There are certainly some promising young golfers emerging!



AIRBUS

Our Year 10 and Year 11 students visited **Airbus** in Stevenage. We learnt how rovers and satellites are made, and it was a fantastic day exploring the different roles available there and the pathways into their apprenticeship scheme. The students asked excellent questions throughout.



Year 10 students focussed and applied themselves with **First Aid training**.



Our **GCSE students** recently carried out a practical to make copper sulfate crystals by reacting copper oxide with sulfuric acid.



Before half term, our Year 13 students visited our **partner school, Marlborough**, for their Leavers' Assembly. It was a wonderful occasion, made even more special by the reflections shared by staff who have taught and supported our students throughout their journey. They spoke warmly about what a positive and rewarding experience it has been working with this cohort.



UPPER SCHOOL



To end off their **BSL module**, 8P are playing a dramatic social game based on trust, treachery, and boardroom backstabbing. Players use all of their wits to sniff out enemies and exclude them from key financial decisions. The employees want a pay raise, but the shareholders will do everything within their power to increase their dividend payouts!

ART COMPETITION

In May, we held an Art competition to design the cover of our 2026–2027 student planners. We received many fantastic entries, making it a difficult decision! Congratulations to our Year 7 winner, whose brilliant design will feature on the planner cover from September. All entries are now on display for students to enjoy.



Year 9 Geography Fieldtrip On a beautiful sunny day at Walton-on-Naze, Year 9 students collected data for their investigation into the effectiveness of the sea defences.

Working in groups, they also confidently interviewed visitors about their experiences, demonstrating excellent teamwork and communication skills.



WE SAID GOODBYE TO OUR YEAR 11'S & YEAR 13'S

An emotional but celebratory afternoon in May, as we said an official goodbye to the Class of '26, our Year 11 and Year 13s! Followed by the traditional staff v students football match (staff won with a slight bit of extra help!) and rounders (students stormed to victory!) Many of our leavers have been here from a very young age and we are equally proud of them all for 'becoming the best they can be'!



Congratulations!

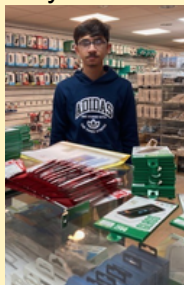
WINNERS OF THE
HEATHLANDS CUP

WINNER OF THE THE
MICHAEL WILSON CUP



Our Year 13s and staff went out for their **leavers' dinner** in St Albans. It was great to find out what they have been doing since finishing their exams: some have already started jobs; as well as hearing about their exciting summer plans.

Year 10 Work Experience Success! Our Year 10 students successfully completed their Work Experience Week, demonstrating independence, professionalism and adaptability in a range of roles. From teaching BSL and supporting administration to repairing mobile phones, solving workplace challenges and delivering presentations. A huge thank you to **Warren Primary School, Network Rail, Red Bee Media, Watford Workshop, Phone Mania LTD, Frank Barnes School, Blanche Neville and Vanstone Garden Centre** for providing such valuable opportunities and supporting our students. We are incredibly proud of our Year 10s for being outstanding ambassadors for our school.



UPPER SCHOOL

Year 6 pupils were recently welcomed for an exciting **Transition Day**, giving them a valuable insight into life at Heathlands Upper School. During the day, they participated in a range of typical upper school lessons, try on uniform & explored the school site. They also enjoyed asking questions to staff and meeting their future classmates, helping to build confidence and familiarity ahead of the new academic year.

SUMMER REWARDS TRIPS

Sunshine, Smiles and End of Term Fun!

Roller Disco



DJ



Volleyball



Bravo to our talented Upper School students, who captivated their audience during Heathlands' **Shakespeare Cabaret**, bringing Shakespeare's works to life through a series of entertaining performances.

UPPER SCHOOL

Check out the **Heathlands School website** 'Parents page' for current term dates, forms, school uniform, school meals, key documents and news!



A sweet reminder! Sweets, nuts and chewing gum are not allowed in school. Thank you for helping us keep our school a safe, healthy and tidy place for everyone.



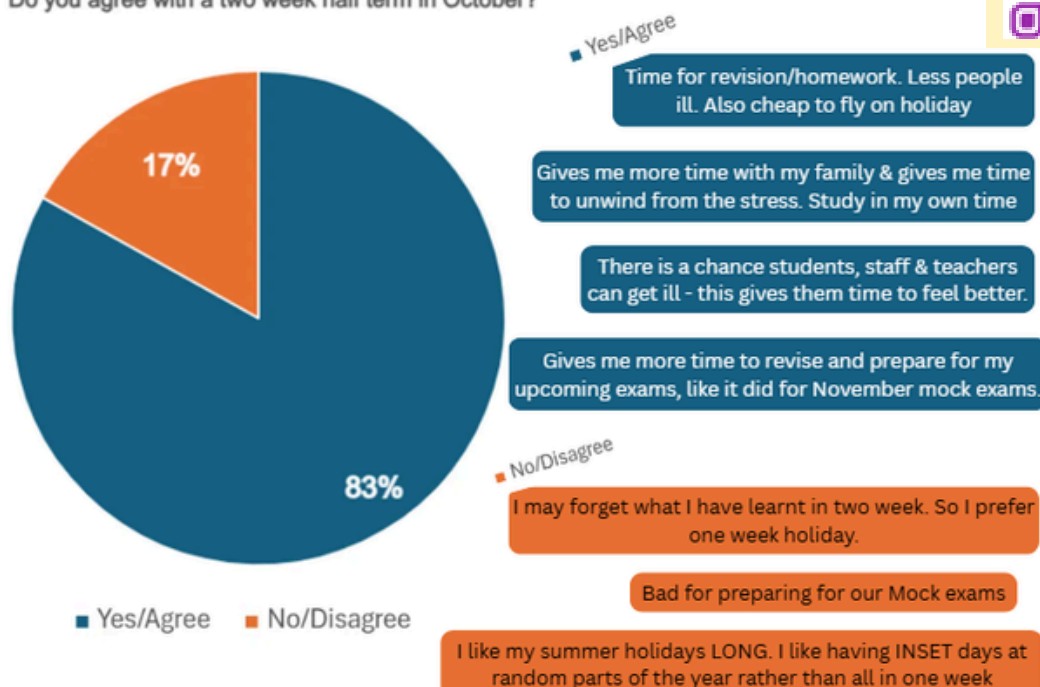
Want to see more of the amazing things happening at Heathlands?

Scan the QR code and 'like' our **Facebook page** for fantastic photos, videos, and school news!



Pupil Survey, Summer Term 2026

Do you agree with a two week half term in October?



We recently invited Year 6 and Upper School students to share their views on the structure of the **October half term**. Students were asked whether they would prefer a two-week break, using INSET days that are currently spread across the year, or to keep a one-week holiday with INSET days remaining throughout the school calendar. We are grateful for the thoughtful and considered feedback provided. The results of this consultation are shown and will help inform our future planning.

Parent questionnaire Heathlands School, Summer Term 2026

98% agree - My child makes good progress at Heathlands. *The school response to emails is very efficient.*

Comments: We are so happy with Heathlands! Very grateful for the community and support with every aspect of learning that our child receives.

Heathlands is a lovely small school for Deaf children. Every time I come to school, I sense warmth and welcoming environment, the staffs and pupils always look happy there.

An indoor sports hall would be useful for students to practice sports during rainy or frosty weather.

I think the standard of overall care for the child is extremely high. Teaching staff are highly skilled providing a nurturing environment, high level of specialist education with a safe and friendly location for children to reach their full potential.

Outstanding and inclusive school - couldn't ask for a best deaf school in UK.

Heathlands has been a positive experience for our child. He has grown in confidence and communication. Thank you to the staff for their support and care.

Access to BSL and good accessibility has had a positive impact on my child's learning and confidence. Clear guidance for next steps such as university, apprenticeships or employment. Ongoing focus on wellbeing during this key transition. Looking forward to seeing my child continue to grow in independence and prepare for future.

HEATH HOUSE

Heath House has enjoyed a wonderful and busy summer, with the warmer months bringing plenty of opportunities for fun, friendship, and making lasting memories. Our residents have taken part in a wide variety of activities, celebrations, and outings, ensuring there has been something for everyone to enjoy.



One of the highlights of the summer was our trip to the cinema to watch Toy Story 5. Residents enjoyed a wonderful afternoon together, with plenty of excitement as they settled in to watch the latest adventure from the much-loved Toy Story series. Of course, no trip to the cinema would be complete without popcorn and a few treats!

The outing was filled with laughter, nostalgia, and great conversation, with many residents sharing their favourite characters and memories of the earlier films. It was a fantastic opportunity to enjoy a day out together and experience the magic of the big screen.



The CYPs had great fun outdoors taking part in a water fight using refillable water balloons. They enjoyed running, laughing, and working together as they splashed their friends in the warm weather. The activity encouraged turn-taking, teamwork, and lots of imaginative play, while helping everyone stay cool and active. It was a fantastic way to make the most of the sunshine and create lots of happy memories together.

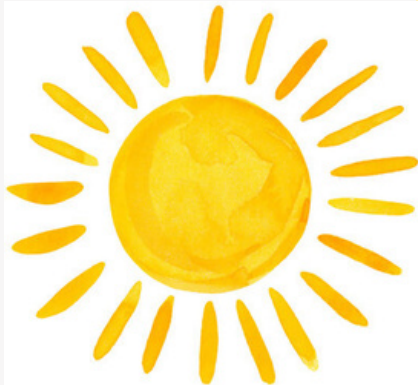


The CYPs have thoroughly enjoyed getting involved in the excitement of the World Cup by cheering on England and learning about the tournament. Each morning, we took the opportunity to watch the highlights from the previous day's matches, giving the children a chance to talk about their favourite teams, players, and memorable moments. This sparked lots of conversations, encouraged turn-taking as they shared their thoughts, and helped them develop an interest in sporting events from around the world. It has been wonderful to see their enthusiasm grow as they proudly supported England together.

Zorb Ball Fun

We also had a fantastic time when the zorb ball came to visit! Residents had the chance to climb inside the giant inflatable ball and experience the excitement of rolling and bumping gently into one another. There was plenty of laughter as everyone took turns and enjoyed something a little different and full of energy.

It was a brilliant activity that brought lots of smiles and a real sense of fun and adventure. Many residents enjoyed watching others have a go as much as taking part themselves, and it created a lively and memorable day for everyone involved.



We took advantage of the lovely weather with a trip to the park, where the CYPs had a fantastic time exploring the climbing equipment and playing outdoors. We also enjoyed some tasty sausage rolls together before heading back.



The CYPs had a fantastic time riding the bikes on the astro pitch. They enjoyed taking turns, steering around the space, and practising their balance and coordination. Cycling helped the CYPs build their confidence while encouraging them to stay active and have fun outdoors. It was wonderful to see them supporting and cheering each other on as they rode together.



Some of the CYPs enjoyed a trip into town, where they had the opportunity to practise their road safety awareness by safely crossing roads and identifying potential hazards. They also developed their independence through free walking, learning to stay together as a group and follow simple safety instructions. During the visit, the children explored early money skills by looking at prices, making purchases, and understanding the value of coins. It was a wonderful opportunity to build confidence while learning important everyday life skills in the local community.



BSL

Summer has officially arrived, and with it comes the successful end of our current courses! It has been an incredible academic year, and the classrooms have been absolutely bursting with energy and dedication.



Our learners have now officially completed their exams and the waiting game for results begins. We are thrilled to report an outstanding pass rate for the results that have already dropped! We are keeping our fingers crossed for everyone still waiting—they have worked so hard.

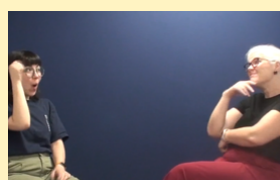
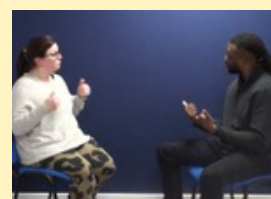


Looking ahead to the 2026/27 academic year, the demand from those wanting to start their BSL journey, as well as those continuing their signing path with us, has been astounding. Our BSL Level 1 and Level 2 courses are already **fully booked**! We also want to use this opportunity to set the record straight about the BSL Centre: we are absolutely NOT closing, we are simply offering fewer courses next year.



A massive thank you goes to the fantastic staff at the BSL Centre for all their hard work, passion, and dedication throughout the year.

Wishing you a wonderful, relaxing summer holiday!



PARENT PAGE



Summer Fete Brings the Community Together

Since the Easter break, FoH has been busy behind the scenes — and it all led up to our Summer Fete, one of the highlights of the year. Families, staff and friends filled the school grounds for an afternoon of stalls, games and, as always, plenty of laughter.

Sand art with a Deaf artist and our child-led activity stalls were firm favourites, and the coconut shy was such a hit that it's already earned its place back at the next fete. Top marks, though, go to our brave members of staff, who once again queued up to be 'sponged' by very enthusiastic pupils — a new Heathlands tradition!

Thank you to everyone who came along, ran a stall, donated prizes, or helped set up and pack away. It genuinely could not happen without you.



Where the Money Goes

It's been a brilliant year for fundraising. Thanks to the wonderful support of our community, we've raised around £12,000 over the past year. A huge credit to everyone who has fundraised, volunteered and donated.

We're now in the process of spending this on new equipment for the school. Keep an eye out for more news on that very soon!

Looking Ahead — And We Need You!

Our AGM will be held on Tuesday 15th September 2026, and we're looking for new committee members. Shana Weinbaum, our Chair, will be stepping down, along with Donna Taylor and David Hay. Jay Thomas-Morton is staying on, so this is a real chance to get involved.

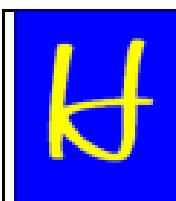
If you've ever thought about joining FoH, please do give it some thought — no experience is needed, just enthusiasm. Come along in September, or drop us a line beforehand to find out more. Get in touch: friends@heathlands.herts.sch.uk

The Friends of Heathlands PTA would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to one of our wonderful parents who recently completed the **London Marathon** in support of the school. Their dedication and commitment to fundraising are truly appreciated by the whole community.

To celebrate this fantastic achievement, the children formed a special guard of honour on the playground, creating a memorable and uplifting moment for everyone involved.



Stay in Touch In the meantime, catch all our updates on Facebook and Instagram: [@FriendsOfHeathlands](#)



HEATHLANDS

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Nursery, Primary & Secondary Provision, Day & Residential, BSL Training & Resource Centre

HOLIDAY DATES FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-2027

Autumn Term 2026

Inset Days	Tuesday 1 September 2026
Term Starts	Wednesday 2 September 2026
Half Term Holiday	Monday 19 October 2026 – Friday 30 October 2026
Term Ends	Friday 18 December 2026 at 12.30pm

Spring Term 2027

Term Starts	Monday 4 January 2027
Half Term Holiday	Monday 15 February 2027 – Friday 19 February 2027
Term Ends	Thursday 25 March 2027 at 12.30pm

Summer Term 2027

Term Starts	Monday 12 April 2027
Bank Holiday	Monday 3 May 2027
Half Term Holiday	Monday 31 May 2027 – Friday 4 June 2027
Term Ends	Thursday 22 July 2027 at 12.30pm