



This Half Term at Broomgrove

As we approach the end of this half term, we want to take a moment to celebrate the incredible effort and dedication our children have shown. From tackling challenging new concepts in maths to producing wonderful creative work in art, every pupil at Broomgrove has worked tremendously hard. Our teachers have been equally impressed by the resilience and positive attitudes displayed across all year groups.

It has been a busy but rewarding few weeks, and the children should feel very proud of all they've achieved. Thank you for your continued support in helping them succeed. Have a wonderful half-term break!

ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

All absence must be reported on the first day. If we do not have a reason for absence your child will receive an unauthorised absence mark. This data is monitored by The Department for Education on a regular basis.

Attendance Percentages for this academic year:

Class 1	95.8%
Class 2	96.4%
Class 3	95.3%
Class 4	94.8%
Class 5	95.7%
Class 6	95.3%
Class 7	96.1%
Class 8	94.6%
Whole school	95.5%

KEY DATES

- *Monday 9th - Friday 13th Feb: Children's Mental Health Week
Friday 13th February - Non-Uniform day
- *Tuesday 10th Feb: Safer Internet Day
- *Thursday 12th Feb: Individual Photos
- *Monday 16th Feb - Friday 20th Feb: Half term holidays
- *Monday 23rd Feb: Back to school!
- *Tuesday 24th Feb: Olympic Athlete Visit
- *Wednesday 4th March: Night Owls visiting
- *Thursday 5th March: World Book Day
- *Friday 6th - 13th March: British Science Week
- *Monday 16th - 20th March: Year 6 Residential
- *Monday 16th-20th March: Neurodiversity Week
- *Tuesday 24th March: Parents Evening 3:45pm-6:45pm
- *Thursday 26th March: Parents Evening 3:45pm - 5:45pm

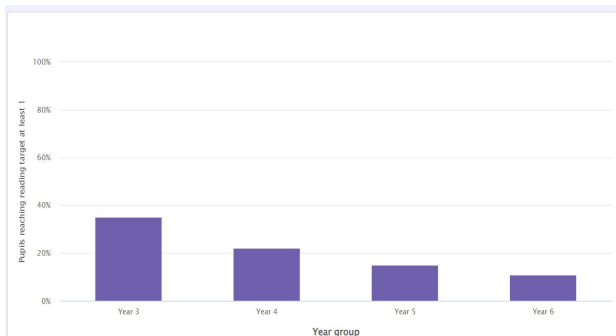
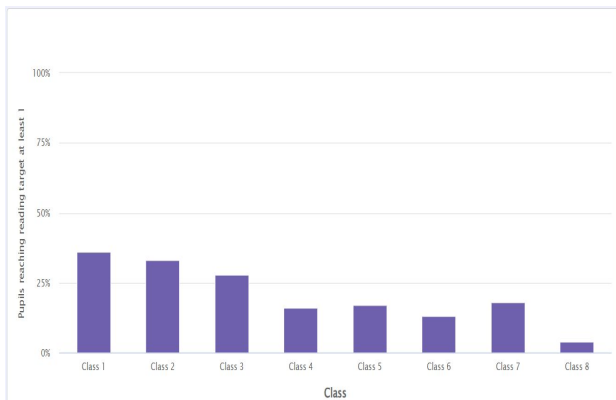
Children's Mental Health Week by Ms van der Wolf

Next week it is the Children's Mental Health Week 2026: a great opportunity to raise children's awareness about the importance of understanding what mental health means and what we can do to take care of our mental health and wellbeing.

Throughout the week, we will be doing activities around mental health and wellbeing. Friday will be an off-curriculum and non-uniform day, dedicated to a morning of a variety of 20-minute wellbeing activities run by different teachers, as well as a sponsored 'Walk & Talk' activity in the afternoon to raise money for the Tendings Families First Charity. This charity provides all our Counselling, Family Support, Art and Play therapy, and many more services that are so valuable to our children and their families.

Learning with Parents - Reading Record by Mr Hawkins

This week I have been looking at the percentage of pupils who have met the weekly reading target at least once this academic year. Well done to Year 3 who are leading the way with their fantastic reading. Please remember that the target is to read five times a week and this can be completed in so many ways including reading on a kindle app.



Daily reading offers significant benefits for KS2 pupils. Reading supports mental wellbeing by helping children develop language to articulate their emotions and understand the normal range of feelings they experience. It also provides opportunities for self-care and helps combat isolation and loneliness, which can affect children's wellbeing. Regular reading dramatically expands vocabulary development, exposing children to new words in context and strengthening their language skills across all subjects. Additionally, reading stimulates creativity and imagination, allowing children to explore different worlds, perspectives and ideas. This creative engagement helps develop problem-solving skills and encourages innovative thinking. The benefits of hobbies and interests, including reading, contribute positively to both physical health and mental wellbeing.

Character Virtue conversation prompts

At Broomgrove we have Character Virtues that we look for in the children each week. Each newsletter we will look at two of these virtues. The Character Focus in this newsletter: Resilience & Collaboration.

Talk to your child:

- "What was the hardest thing you did today? How did you stick with it?"
- "Who did you work with this week? How did working together help you achieve something?"

Guidance for Parents of Broomgrove Infant and Junior Schools

In matters related to adverse weather conditions, we will **keep the school open** whenever possible, provided the safety of children and staff can be maintained. However there may be occasions for where, due to the health and safety of children and staff, we have to close the school. The importance of clear communication is essential and this letter outlines our procedure in such circumstances.

Essex County Council (ECC) has created a new online notification system to keep parents up-to-date about unplanned school closures. The system has been introduced by ECC to allow parents and guardians to access information about school closures faster and more effectively via the internet.

All Essex schools will be able to complete a simple reporting process either on the day of the closure or the day before. A notification will then be added to a live feed on the emergency school closures page on the council's website <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Emergency-School-Closures.aspx>

This feed will continue to update as notifications of school closures are received. The page will refresh at 6pm each evening and closure lists for the next day will then go live.

Essex radio stations have always been extremely helpful in not only listing school closures online, but also using their airtime to keep people informed. They will continue to support ECC in getting vital school closure messages out in as many ways as possible, including signposting listeners to the school closures page on the council's website.

The decision to stay open or close the school is made by **7.00a.m.** This will be based on;

- the ability of staff to get into school
- the safety /conditions in the building, given the weather
- the likelihood of weather becoming even worse during the day.

As well as the council's new notification system, schools have been asked to provide information to parents about other ways they will communicate closures. We will communicate with you as parents / staff through:

Infant School: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Website – scrolling on the homepage• Tapestry• Microsoft Teams	Junior School: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Website – We will endeavour to update the school website as soon as a decision has been made.• Class Dojo• Parentmail
BOTH SCHOOLS Essex website as above Approved radio stations – Heart FM & BBC Radio Essex Parent Mail	

Once this decision has been made to close the school it will not be reversed, even if weather conditions improve. Please accept our apologies in advance if the decision turns out to be the wrong one but we have to decide on the basis of the information we have at the time and with enough notice to allow parents to make childcare arrangements.

Breakfast Club and Out of School Club:

On any snowy day, there is a strong possibility that we may be unable to open Breakfast Club on time or at all. If we announce a late opening, or complete closure, then it should be assumed that on that day Breakfast Club will not open at all. You should therefore always bring your child to the door to check that there is someone there. Similarly, we cannot guarantee that Out of Hours Club will open on snowy days and if there has been a heavy snowfall during the day, you should expect that Out of Hours Club will not open. **All other clubs will be cancelled in the event of snow.**

Advice to Parents and Carers for extreme weather conditions

- **IF IT HAS SNOWED PLEASE DO NOT SEND CHILDREN TO SCHOOL BY THEMSELVES, AS YOU MAY NEED TO TAKE THEM HOME, IF MESSAGES HAVE NOT GOT THROUGH TO YOU THAT THE SCHOOL HAS HAD TO CLOSE.**
- The decision to close the school will be a joint one between the Infant and Juniors Schools.
- If the school has to close because of extreme conditions during school hours, the school will ParentMail/call you to collect your child.
- If conditions are bad the following morning and our school remains closed, please check our website for updates and a ParentMail, Tapestry, Teams or Class Dojo message from us.
- The school will provide work for the children at home through our remote learning platforms on every day that the school is closed due to snow. The Infants will upload work to Microsoft Teams/Tapestry and the Junior School through Google Classroom
- No snowballing on the school site. This is in the best interests of health and safety for all pupils, staff and visitors. The children **will** get the chance, if they wish to, to throw snowballs at playtime, if they appropriate outside clothing and footwear for the conditions, subject to school's discretion.

**Essex County Council School Term and Holiday Dates
for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools -
Academic Year 2025-2026**

September 2025							October 2025							November 2025							December 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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29	30																										

January 2026							February 2026							March 2026							April 2026						
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26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				
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May 2026							June 2026							July 2026							August 2026							
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	
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- = Schooldays
- = School holidays
- = Bank holidays
- = Weekends
- = Non-pupil days

In addition, schools allocate five non-pupil days out of the school days indicated, or the equivalent in disaggregated twilight sessions.

Autumn Term:	Monday 1 September 2025 – Friday 19 December 2025 <i>Half Term 27 October – 31 October</i>	75 days
Spring Term:	Monday 5 January 2026 – Friday 27 March 2026 <i>Half Term 16 February - 20 February</i>	55 days
Summer Term:	Monday 13 April 2026 – Monday 20 July 2026 <i>Half Term 25 May – 29 May, and May Bank Holiday - 4 May</i>	65 days
		<u>195 days</u>

Please note:

The above dates may vary for individual schools, especially Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies.

You are strongly advised to check with your child's school before making any holiday or other commitments.

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell. The NHS has provided this guidance for parents and carers:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/#:~:text=If%20your%20child%20has%20mild,they%20can%20go%20to%20school>

Holiday Requests

The school has been receiving an increasing number of holiday requests in term time. I have included the term dates for the academic year for your information within this school newsletter.

Holidays in term time are always taken as an unauthorised leave of absence. Parents who take these periods of absence do so with the full knowledge that the school may issue a penalty notice. There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday.

At Broomgrove Junior School 'exceptional circumstances' **will be interpreted as:** ... being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the headteacher). The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are **"rare, significant, unavoidable and short"**. By **'unavoidable'** we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time.

Examples of 'exceptional' events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short" may include but are not limited to: a parent or carer being a member of the armed forces and has been on active duty so could not reasonably schedule the absence for another time, the death of a close family member, the attendance at the funeral and the attendance at the wedding of a close family member.

Furthermore, we will not consider applications for leave during term time:

- at any time in September. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new class at the start of the academic year as quickly as possible.
- during assessment and test periods in the school's calendar affecting your child.
- when a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence or they have already been granted authorised leave within that academic year.



Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools **after 19th August 2024**.

Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence, including the U code (late after registers have closed).

For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Second Offence

(within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent (who allowed the holiday), per child, payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.