



Autumn issue 3 - 16/10/2026



Autumn Days

As we approach the end of what has been a busy and productive half term, I wanted to share some important updates with you. We're looking forward to welcoming you to parents' evenings next week. These meetings are a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's progress, celebrate their achievements, and talk about how we can work together to support their continued development. If you haven't already booked your appointment, please do so as soon as possible to secure your preferred time slot. Your child's teacher will share how they've settled into this academic year, their progress across the curriculum, and next steps for learning.

It's hard to believe we're already approaching the October half term! The children have worked incredibly hard and have earned a well-deserved break. We hope they enjoy some time to rest, recharge, and spend quality time with family.

We're also excited to remind you about the Broomgrove Fireworks Display taking place straight after half term. This is always a wonderful community event, and we hope to see many of you there for an evening of fun and festivities. Thank you for your continued support this term.

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	93.0%
Class 2	94.2%
Class 3	98.1%
Class 4	94.2%
Class 5	97.1%
Class 6	98.0%
Class 7	97.1%
Class 8	95.2%
Whole school	95.8%

KEY DATES

- *Tuesday 20th Oct: Parents' Evening (3:45-6.45pm)
- *Thursday 22nd Oct: Parents' Evening (3:45-5.45pm)
- *Friday 23rd Oct: Last day of half term
- *Monday 2nd Nov: Back to school!
- *Tuesday 3rd Nov: BOOMgrove!
- *Wednesday 4th Nov: Flu Clinic
- *Friday 13th Nov: Children in Need
- *Mon 16th Nov-Fri 20th Nov: Anti-bullying week
- *Fri 27th Nov: Non-Pupil Day
- *Tue 1st Dec: Year 4 visit to Colchester Castle
- *Thursday 10th Dec: Christmas Dinner/Jumper day

Dinner Menu Changes

We're delighted to announce some exciting changes to our school dinner menus, which will take effect after the half-term break.

The Department for Education has consulted on updated food standards to help improve children's health, with proposed changes including banning deep-fried food from school menus, eliminating daily unhealthy 'grab and go' options such as sausage rolls and pizza, and replacing high-sugar food with fruit for the majority of the school week. While we're awaiting the final guidance, we're taking proactive steps now to ensure our pupils benefit from healthier, more nutritious meals.

We're genuinely excited about these changes because they will support your child's health, concentration and energy levels throughout the school day.

After half term, you'll notice:

Healthier alternatives replacing certain foods – We're removing some less nutritious options and introducing fresh, wholesome alternatives that still taste great

More variety and colour on the plate – Our new menus will feature a wider range of vegetables, fruits and whole grains to ensure balanced nutrition

The same great value – These improvements won't affect the cost of school meals

Your child will continue to enjoy delicious, satisfying meals that they look forward to. Our catering team has been working hard to develop recipes that are both nutritious and appealing to young taste buds.

The new menus will help ensure your child:

- Gets the energy they need to concentrate and learn
- Develops healthy eating habits that will benefit them throughout their lives
- Experiences a variety of nutritious foods in an enjoyable way

We'll be sharing the updated menus on our website and via ParentMail before the end of half term, so you can see exactly what's on offer and discuss the options with your child.

If your child has any dietary requirements or allergies, please rest assured that we'll continue to cater for their individual needs as we always have.

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: Courage and Resilience.

Talk to your child:

- "What's something new you tried this week that took courage?"
- "What was the hardest thing you did today? How did you stick with it?"
- "Tell me about a time this week when something didn't go as planned. What did you do next?"

C = Courage, Confidence, Collaboration

A = Ambition

R = Respect, Resilience, Responsibility

E = Empathy

Allergy Awareness

Allergy Awareness and Keeping Children Safe

The safety and wellbeing of all our pupils is our highest priority. In line with the Department for Education's new statutory guidance, Allergy Safety in Schools, we continue to strengthen our procedures to support children with allergies and reduce the risk of allergic reactions in school. Allergies can be serious and, in some cases, life-threatening. We ask all families to work with us to create a safe environment for every child.

How parents can help:

- Inform the school immediately of any diagnosed allergies or changes to your child's medical needs.
- Ensure that any prescribed medication, including adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs), is in date and provided to school as required.
- Keep your child's healthcare information up to date and work with us to review Individual Healthcare Plans where needed.
- Remind children not to share food, drinks, utensils, or lunchbox contents with others.
- Check carefully before sending food into school for celebrations or special events.

What school is doing

We have procedures in place to:

- Identify and support pupils with allergies through Individual Healthcare Plans.
- Provide allergy awareness training for staff.
- Maintain clear systems for recognising and responding to allergic reactions.
- Promote good hygiene practices, including hand washing before and after eating.
- Learn from incidents and near misses to continually improve safety.

A shared responsibility

By working together, we can help ensure that every child is safe, included and able to participate fully in school life. If you have any questions about allergies or your child's medical needs, please contact the school office.

HALLOWEEN HOLIDAY TECH CAMPS

BRIGHT
MINDS
BRIGHTER
FUTURES

TECH
SKILLS
CREATIVE KIDS
HAPPIER HOLIDAYS

LEARN
CREATE
PLAY
BELONG

SAME
KIDS
BRIGHTER
TOMORROWS

Four spooky days of Minecraft, coding and LEGO fun!

 Holmwood House School
Chitts Hill, Lexden, Colchester, CO3 9ST

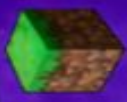
 09:00-13:00

 Please bring a drink and
snack for break time.

EXPLORE
MAKE
IMAGINE
TOGETHER



Tue 27 Oct
Minecraft Spooky Survival



Wed 28 Oct
Ghostbusters:
A micro:bit Halloween
Adventure



Thu 29 Oct
LEGO Halloween Builds
Spooky LEGO WeDo 2.0
builds that move!



Fri 30 Oct
Minecraft Spooky Build Challenges



FUN
FRIENDLY
INSPIRING

Different activities every day – book one or join us for several!
Places are limited, so early booking is recommended.

ComputerXplorers
Computing for a brighter tomorrow

PUMPKIN TRAIL

24th - 31st
October

Can you find all the pumpkins hiding
around the garden? Track them down
to win a prize!

And once you've completed your hunt,
make sure to visit our pumpkin throne
for the perfect autumn photo!

KIDS GO FREE!
ADULTS - USUAL GARDEN ADMISSION APPLIES



Book admission online

Essex County Council School Term and Holiday Dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools - Academic Year 2026-2027

September 2026							October 2026							November 2026							December 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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28	29	30												30													
January 2027							February 2027							March 2027							April 2027						
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May 2027							June 2027							July 2027							August 2027						
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31																					30	31					

	= Schooldays		= School holidays		= Bank holidays
	= Weekends				

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

Autumn Term:	Tuesday 1 September 2026 – Friday 18 December 2026 <i>Half Term 26 October – 30 October</i>	74 days
Spring Term:	Monday 4 January 2027 – Thursday 25 March 2027 <i>Half Term 15 February - 19 February</i>	54 days
Summer Term:	Monday 12 April 2027 – Wednesday 21 July 2027 <i>Half Term 31 May – 4 June, and May Bank Holiday - 3 May</i>	67 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.

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 in September 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'.