# Newsletter 6 – 16th October 2026

**Headteacher: Mrs Tina Bourne  Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Helen Ford**

Dear Parents and Carers

What a busy week we had in school! Flu immunisations, two parents' evenings and a morning of photography with smartest hair and broadest smiles.

We also had a visit from our Essex County Council Attendance Specialist to help us with ideas for supporting families with Persistent Absence (below 90%). For many parents that received attendance letters last week, the holiday taken in Sept/Oct or a couple of bouts of illness will be evened out with 100% attendance between now and Christmas – meaning that the next round of attendance letters will not be necessary for you. However, schools are asked to track attendance fortnightly, remind parents of their legal obligations in ensuring their child attends school and hold School Attendance Meetings with parents to discuss what support is needed and identify any underlying issues.

Wishing you a happy and positive weekend.

*Tina Bourne*

## AUTUMN TERM DATES

Autumn Term 1
03/09/26 – 23/10/26
*Half Term: 26-30 October*
Autumn Term 2
03/11/26 – 18/12/26
Non-Pupil Days for the year:
2nd Nov, 4th Jan, 21st July

- Tue 20 Oct, OHSA AGM in school, 6pm
- Fri 23 Oct, OHSA Pumpkin Carving competition
- Fri 23 Oct, OHSA Halloween Disco
- 8 & 9 Dec, EY/KS1 Nativity 2pm
- 11 Dec, OHSA Elfridges in school
- 15 Dec, KS2 Carol Concert, 5pm in St Barnabas Church

**Many of the fun and educational activities enjoyed by your children are funded by the OHSA. And they need your help to keep doing this, so please come along at 6pm this Tuesday 20th for the OHSA Annual General Meeting.**

**New members and new ideas welcome!**




## Parents' Evening Feedback

Thank you to parents and carers who attended appointments with class teachers this week to discuss your child's learning and areas for development. I hope you enjoyed looking at their books. 93% of children had a parent or carer who attended, or had an earlier One Plan meeting with the class teacher. Our target is 100% of parents – so I will be following up to book parents in for conversations with teachers after/before school in the next couple of weeks.

Research shows that active two-way collaboration between families and schools, supporting children's learning, leads to significant academic gains – link here https://eschools.co.uk/2026/07/01/what-is-parental-engagement-and-why-it-matters/ We are keen to build in more opportunities for parents to share in children's progress through Open Mornings, Parent Workshops and tips for helping your child with spellings, maths, reading and writing … so watch this space for info!

Our Catering Team did a great job on Wednesday and Thursday staying on to cook new meals for children and adults to sample. It looked like the Katsu Curry, Chilli Con Carne, Red Velvet Brownies and Apple & Raisin Flapjack Bites went down well – and so did the Salad Bar.







*Please do book a lunch for your child, especially if they are entitled to Free School Meal, from our new menu after half term. If you are unsure whether they would like a particular item, send them in with a light pack up lunch as back up. We will provide allergen free alternatives for each meal.*

## News In Brief

- To highlight Anaphylaxis Awareness Week, pupils had an assembly covering the symptoms of an allergic reaction and what they should do to be an Allergy Ally. On Thursday KS2 pupils had another assembly where they were shown the school Anaphalaxis Kit and learned that all teaching and non-teaching staff had been trained to administer adrenaline via auto-injector pens. The theme of the 2026 campaign is 'A Sense of Belonging' – more details here https://anaphylaxis.org.uk/anaphylaxis-awareness-week-2026/
- The EY/KS1 Nativity plays are set for Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th December at 2pm. Children will start rehearsing after half term.
- The KS2 Carol Concert will take place in St Barnabas Church this year at 5pm on Tuesday 15th December.



## Year 6 Residential

We have thought long and hard about pricing for residentials. Appreciative of the fact that rising fuel costs are driving up coach hire, plus staffing costs in the residential centres have also increased, this makes affordable residentials tricky.

Year 6 parents have received a survey this week to ascertain the interest in a four day residential with all the activities expected, plus coach travel. We really want to take all Year 6 on this trip during the summer term, so please do respond to the survey. We have kept the cost under £300 with a hefty subsidy from the school budget.

Going forward, the school will offer one residential in Year 6, then parents can prepare for a longer trip during the school week, with an advance payment plan.

## Pumpkins and Friday Disco




Don't forget to bring your carved pumpkin in on the morning of Friday 23rd, there will be tables on the playground for you to register your pumpkin.

Disco for EY/KS1 is 4.45–6pm, for KS2 is 6.15-7.45pm. Please take coats with you as this saves much time at the end of the disco. Mrs Bourne, Mrs Ford and other teachers will be attending the disco. Pizza is served halfway through the disco, with allergen free alternatives.

REMINDER – please save the costumes for the disco, not the last day of school. Many children are quite anxious around Halloween costumes, so nothing scary on the playground please!




## Half Term Activities

Colchester City Council are operating a Swap Screen Time for Active Time Challenge this half term, Screen Time Swap Challenge

There are also plenty of ideas for free activities in and around Colchester here Free Days Out

Firstsite are offering creative events, Firstsite Half Term Activities

No need to stay in and scroll !







## WEEKLY AWARDS

***Week ending 9 October***

### GOLDEN AWARDS

EY – Lydia
Year 1 – Jack
Year 2 – Reuben
Year 3 – Vincent
Year 4 – Lacey
Year 5 – Elijah
Year 6 – Alfie

### OLD HEATH HEART AWARD

EY & KS1 – Jude – EY
KS2 – William – Y5

## BEST ATTENDANCE

*Week ending 9 Oct*

**YEAR 4**

**96.7%**

TELL THE TRUTH & SHOW RESPECT
THINK OF OTHERS AND TRY OUR BEST