

THE PALMER ACADEMY

Autumn 1 Celebration Letter 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of this vibrant half term, I want to take a moment to celebrate the incredible learning and growth that has taken place across The Palmer Academy. Our classrooms and corridors have been filled with curiosity, creativity, and collaboration — a true reflection of our Palmer Powers in action. Here are some highlights.

In Nursery, our youngest learners have been joyfully exploring mark making and building with purpose, using rich mathematical language to describe shapes, sizes, and positions — laying the foundations for confident communication and early numeracy.

Year 1 have been captivated by the wonders of seasonal change in Science, observing the world around them with awe and beginning to understand how nature transforms with time. Their enthusiasm for outdoor learning has been infectious!

In Year 3, children have journeyed back in time to the Stone Age, bringing history to life through immersive reading and storytelling. Their ability to connect past and present has sparked thoughtful discussions.

Year 5 have shown incredible creativity in Art, exploring typography and how design can communicate meaning. Alongside this, they've delved into the fascinating world of the Tudors, uncovering stories of monarchs, power, and change.

And in Year 6, we've seen resilience, teamwork, and joy as pupils returned from their residential trip, eager to share their experiences. Their reflections have been heartfelt and inspiring, showing how much they've grown both personally and socially.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, supportive families, and of course, our brilliant children for making this half term so special. Wishing you all a restful and well-deserved break — we look forward to welcoming everyone back for another exciting chapter.

Kind regards,



Miss A Higginbotham
Headteacher

Nursery

We have had a very busy half term in Nursery, making new friends and enjoying lots of different learning experiences.

Our topic has been 'All About Me' and we have been talking about similarities and differences between us and our friends and members of our families. We have learned about the different parts of the body and had lots of fun exploring our senses!



In Maths we have been looking at shapes and noticing if they have flat or curved faces. We then built our own models with them – large and small.

We've tried mark making in all forms, using paint, chalk, water, pencil and pens using the techniques of painting, printing and drawing.



After half term we are looking forward to learning about the different family celebrations observed by the children in Nursery!

Reception

The children in Reception have settled into the first term of school. We have spent a long time learning how we

behavior and play with our friends in school. It is lovely to see the children smiling, running and skipping into school!

We have now started to learn our phonics and we are beginning to blend the sounds together to read words and segment the sounds to be able to write words. The children are showing great attitudes towards learning and are persisting when they have found the learning tough!

In Maths this term the children have been learning to represent number on their fingers and on paper as well as using key words like more, fewer, bigger, smaller, heavier and lighter. The children have been applying the learning to our challenges and in everyday conversations.

This term we have started our Explore and Learn sessions with the children. We have practiced our Golden Rules, been on a hunt for the different colours of the rainbow and have been out looking for the signs of Autumn.





Last week we also enjoyed a visit to Rushall farm, where the children were able to feed spinach leaves to the chickens, stroke Will I am the lamb, see the cows, go on a trailer ride, dig for worms and go for a walk in the woods.

The children have defiantly deserve a well earned rest during half term.



Year 1



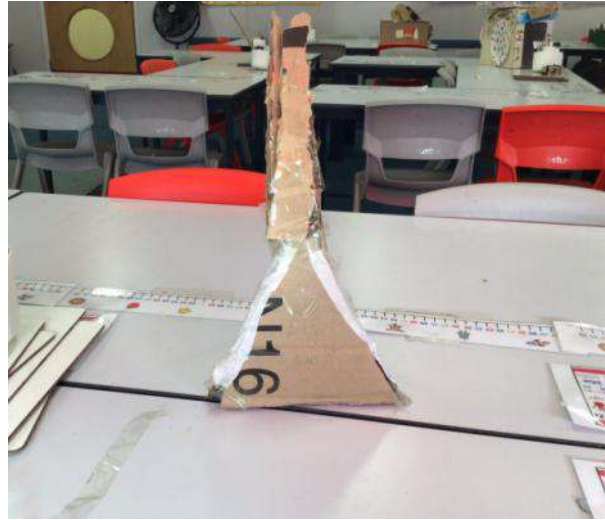
Year 1 has had a great start to the academic year! They have settled in well with their new rules and routines and have become independent learners. We have loved writing descriptive, and statement sentences about different type of animals in our English lessons. We explored the text “Coming to England” in our Reading lessons and became more fluent by using our phonics. We loved learning about the seasonal changes in science which included identifying different weather and about shadows as we discover what day and night looks like, as well as making our own windsocks and rain gauges. We have also found out all about temperature. We have also been enjoying our Math lessons as we have learnt how to count, identify numerals and match them to their words, and learned greater than, less than and equal to when comparing numbers. In P.E we learnt how to create our own dance while mirroring our friends. In PSHE we have been finding out how to be a good class member. We have been learning about the family tree and identifying who the oldest and youngest family members are in our own family, as well as exploring the past and present life of King Charles III in our History lessons. In Music we have been learning about pulse and marching, clapping or using the instruments to create a rhythm pattern to the beat of the music. Finally, in Art we learnt how to create spirals and made lots of spiral creations!

Well Done Year 1, we can't wait to see what next term will have in store for us!



Year 2

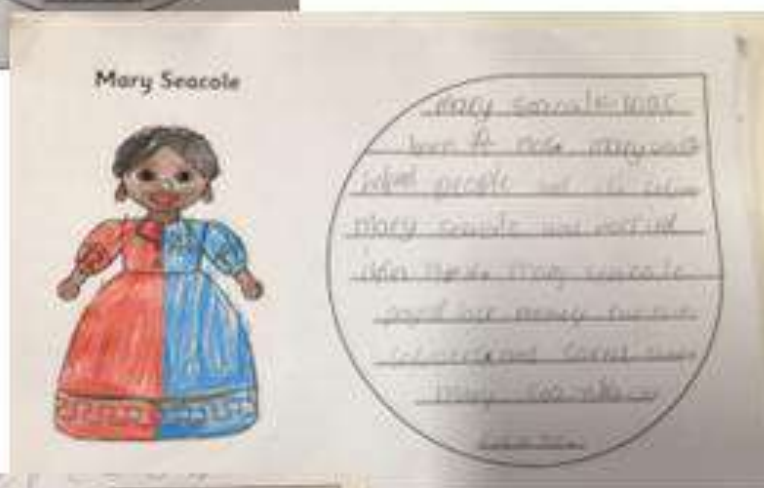
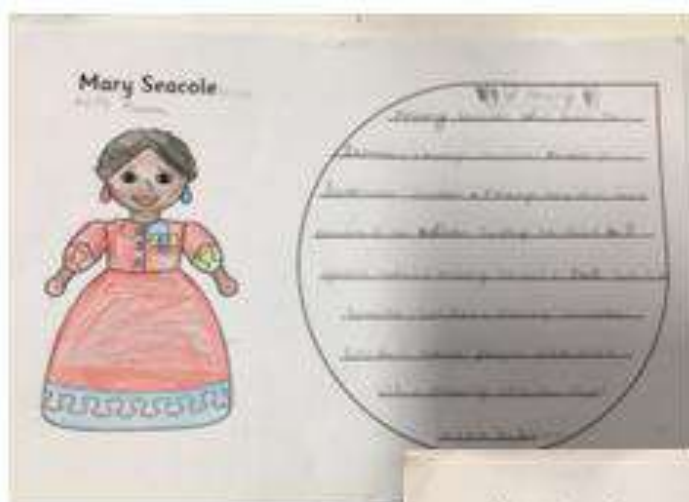
During our first term we have had an exciting unit in DT about towers. The children explored existing towers and what makes them stable, before designing and building their own.



In Geography we learnt all about using an atlas and the children explore the continent of Europe, including some of the countries within it.



We also celebrated Black History Month this term. Year 2 were given Mary Seacole to learn about. They learnt about why she was significant in history and wrote some lovely facts about her life.



Year 3

What a fantastic start to Year 3 we've had! The children have settled in brilliantly and have shown great enthusiasm across all subjects.

In Reading, we've been diving into *The Stolen Spear*, a gripping Stone Age adventure that has captured everyone's imagination. The children have loved exploring the characters and plot twists, and it's sparked some brilliant discussions. Building on this, we've used the book as inspiration in our Writing lessons, where pupils have been crafting their own sentences using exclamations and statements to express ideas clearly and creatively.

Our History lessons have been equally exciting, as we've been learning all about the Stone Age. The children have really engaged with this topic, especially when they had the chance to examine real artefacts from the time period—an unforgettable experience that brought history to life!





In PE, we've been exploring dance, using characters from *Matilda* to inspire movement sequences. The children have worked collaboratively to create expressive routines and have shown great creativity and confidence.

In RE, we've been learning about Sikhism. A highlight was our first Year 3 trip to the Sikh Centre, where we deepened our understanding of the religion and were warmly welcomed. The children asked thoughtful questions and showed great respect throughout the visit.

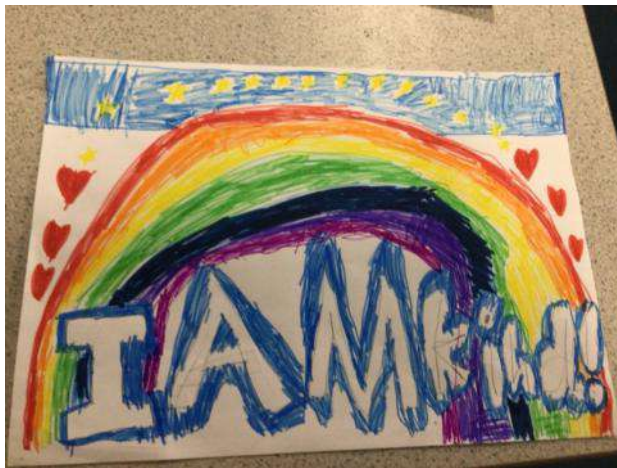
We're so proud of how Year 3 have started the year and can't wait to see what the next half term brings!

Year 4

Year 4 have had a brilliant start to the year, showing curiosity, creativity and teamwork across all subjects.

In Maths, we've been focusing on **place value**, using lots of **Dienes blocks and counters** to help us understand the value of each digit. The children have enjoyed using practical resources to build numbers and compare them.

In Writing, we've been learning how to use **main and subordinate clauses**, connected by **conjunctions**. Pupils have worked hard to improve their sentence structure and have produced some fantastic pieces of writing.





In Reading, we've been enjoying **Matilda** by Roald Dahl. The children have loved getting to know the characters and discussing the story's themes of bravery and cleverness.

In RE, we've been learning about **Judaism**, exploring key beliefs, traditions and celebrations. The children have asked thoughtful questions and shown great respect for different faiths.

In PSHE, we've been discussing **equality** and learning how to **value ourselves and others**. Pupils have reflected on what makes them unique and how we can all help create a kind and inclusive classroom.

We're so proud of Year 4's efforts this half term and look forward to more exciting learning after the break!

Year 5

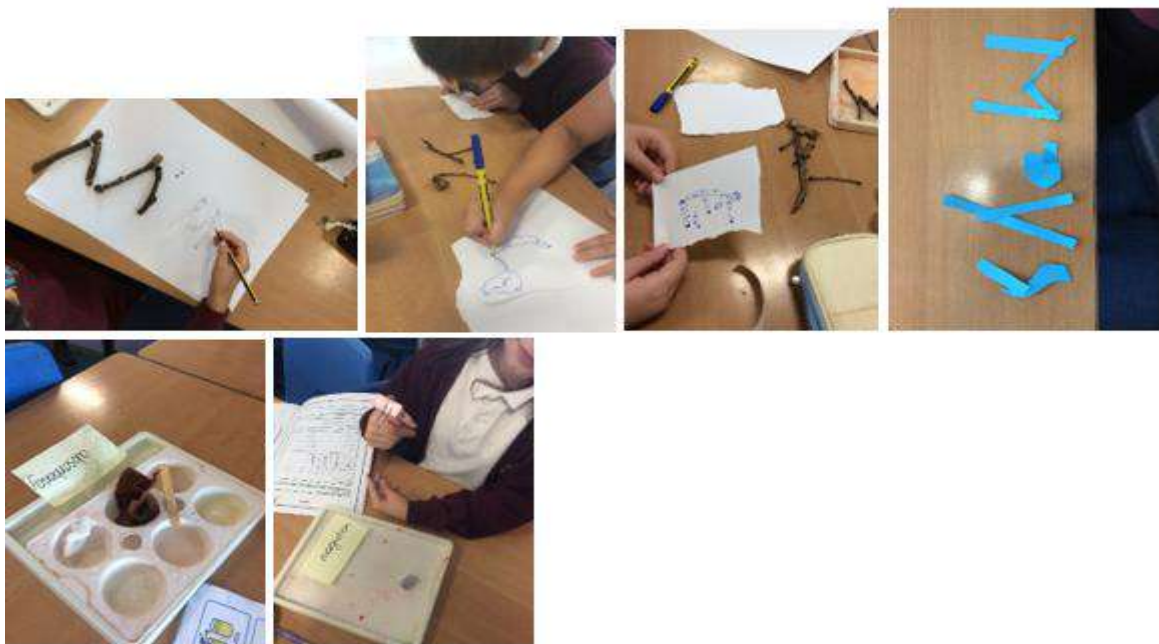
Year 5 have had an action-packed start to the year! We are very excited to share some of the wonderful work that has been created this term across all subjects, the children have really focused on producing high-quality and creative pieces and should be very proud of their achievements so far!

The children have loved our reading book – Kensuke's Kingdom – this term and have demonstrated great understanding of the themes and characters in the exciting book by Michael Morpurgo.

In Writing, Year 5 have looked at a range of grammar features: participles, adverbs, relative clauses and appositives; producing detailed and imaginative ideas based on our reading book - Kensuke's Kingdom.

Math – place value, addition and subtraction – has been tackled head on and the children have shown a good understanding of working with numbers up to 1 million! They have challenged themselves with word-problems and become experts at column method.

In Science there have been an array of experiments to explore the properties and changes of materials. The children have enjoyed testing how some materials can change while other changes are irreversible; also testing different methods of separating materials with a range of equipment.





In Music, the children have enjoyed practicing their songs for the Junior Music Festival. They had a wonderful experience coming together with other schools in the area to rehearse with the conductor of the performance and are on their way to becoming incredible performers!

History took Year 5 back to Tudor times this term, studying the life of the notorious Henry VIII (and his 6 wives!) as well as Elizabeth I and Henry VII. Artifacts from the local museums were a massive hit with both classes, they were used to help the children research the day to day lives of people in Tudor times.

In Art, we have explored both typography (lettering) and map making looking at a variety of artists who are leading their fields. The final projects produced were maps that reflected the children's identity. We were blown away by the freedom and creativity that the children had shown throughout the project.

Well done to all of the students for their commitment to learning so far for year progresses.

Year 6

What a fantastic half term it's been! Our learners have been busy across the curriculum, showing creativity, resilience, and a real enthusiasm for learning.

In English, our budding writers have been exploring a range of sentence structures, including relative clauses and expanded noun phrases, to add depth to their writing. They've also practiced using split speech, embedding reporting clauses to enhance their storytelling. We've immersed ourselves in the powerful story *Rose Blanche*, building rich word and phrase banks to support our writing. The children are now planning their own alternative endings, experimenting with different styles and descriptive techniques — it's been wonderful to see their creativity and confidence grow.

In Maths, we began the term by revisiting place value to strengthen our understanding before moving on to written methods for addition and subtraction. The children have made great progress and are now tackling multiplication and division. We've noticed that fluency with times tables is key to success in these areas, so regular practice at home is encouraged to help free up working memory. Through varied fluency tasks, pupils have been consolidating their skills before applying them to reasoning and problem-solving activities.

In Reading, we've been diving into *Letters from the Lighthouse* by Emma Carroll. The children have been developing key comprehension skills, becoming more confident in scanning texts for key information and constructing thoughtful responses. We continue to focus on reading fluency and encourage daily reading at home to build stamina and expand vocabulary — both essential for success across all subjects.

In Science, our topic *Light* has sparked curiosity and wonder. We've explored how light travels in straight lines, how shadows are formed, and how we see objects through light reflection. A highlight was investigating anaglyph images while learning about filters — a fun and engaging way to see science in action!



In Geography, our unit *Our Green Planet* has taken us on a global adventure through a variety of biomes — including rainforests, woodlands, tundra, deserts, grasslands, and savannahs. The children explored each biome's location, climate, flora, fauna, threats, and adaptations. They've enjoyed presenting their learning in creative formats such as non-chronological reports, fact files, leaflets, and even radio scripts.



In Art, we've been inspired by Lubaina Himid in our project *2D Drawing to 3D Making*. The children scaled up animal silhouettes and used Dickens-inspired illustrations to create collages. They practiced hatching and cross-hatching to add tonal value, then cut out their designs and constructed stands to transform their 2D work into striking 3D pieces. It's been a wonderfully hands-on and creative experience.

In Music, our topic Making Waves has helped us explore sound and expression. The children have worked collaboratively to discuss orchestral pieces using varied musical vocabulary. They've learned to identify and change pitch and dynamics, taken on the role of conductor, and experimented with texture through group improvisation. They even created graphic scores to represent sound — a brilliant way to visualize music!



Our residential trip to PGL Liddington was a huge success! The children were a credit to our school their behavior was exemplary, and their teamwork and enthusiasm were inspiring. They had great fun taking part in adventurous activities, supporting one another, and stepping outside their comfort zones. We're incredibly proud of all they achieved.



Back at school, those who didn't attend the residential had a brilliant time too! They worked on passion projects, designed their own board games, and created stunning oil pastel artwork. It was a joy to see their confidence grow as they presented their projects with clarity and pride. A few days filled with creativity, collaboration, and success!



Attendance Information

Attendance is a key priority for our school this term. We want to ensure that all children's attendance percentages are in line or above national average of 97%. Children with an attendance of 97% above are more likely to be happier attending school, make better progress and eventually achieve better in formal exams. Please see below how even missing a few days of school can lead to many hours of learning missed.

Yearly Attendance	Days Missed	Hours Missed
100%	0	0
97%	6	30
95%	10	50
90%	20	100
80%	40	200

Nursery		Reception		Year 1		Year 2	
am	pm	Kerr	Rosen	Cole	Donaldson	Ahlberg	Butterworth
95.5%	95.8%	92.9 %	78.3%	93.7 %	94.8%	96.6%	95.5%
Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6	
Benjamin	King-Smith	Binch	Pullman	Hughes	Morpurgo	Horowitz	Lewis
90.8%	91.5%	94.2%	90.6%	93.7%	85.3%	90.7%	90.9%



Attendance for The Whole School Year Is Currently 91.6%

Attendance Raffle

You have to be in it to win it! If you attend school every day you will automatically be put into our attendance raffle which will be drawn on a Friday afternoon. A winner from each class will be selected and win a special prize. We are also now holding a half term raffle for those children who have 100 percent attendance where they can win prizes such as amazon vouchers, Roblox points, art kits and pencil cases. All the children have to do to be in with a chance of winning is to be in school every day!



Well Done!

**Ahlberg from lower school
4 Binch from upper school**



Hawking - Green is the winning house. - Congratulations!



Do I need to keep my child off school?

HSC Public Health Agency

Chicken Pox Until all spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 48 hours from last episode	Glandular Fever No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Hand, foot & mouth No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Impetigo Until lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
Measles or German Measles 4 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	Scabies Until after first treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Slapped Cheek No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Whooping Cough 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
Flu Until recovered	Head Lice No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Threadworms No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Tonsillitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed		

Reminders and Information for Parents

PE DAYS	
CLASS	DAYS
RECEPTION	MONDAY
YEAR 1	MONDAY and WEDNESDAY
YEAR 2	TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY
YEAR 3	MONDAY and THURSDAY
YEAR 4	TUESDAY and THURSDAY
YEAR 5	WEDNESDAY and FRIDAY
YEAR 6	TUESDAY and THURSDAY

Diary Dates

3 rd November	Children return to school
	Arts week
5 th November	School Photographer
6 th November	Hot Chocolate story time (Nursery – Year 2)
7 th November	Junior Music Festival Rehearsal at The Ridgeway
10 th November	Armistice Day
	Anti-Bullying Week
12 th November	Phonics workshop for Parents Year 1 & 2
13 th November	Reception 2026 entrance school tour
14 th November	Children in Need
20 th November	Junior Music Festival at The Hexagon
25 th – 28 th November	Book Fair

Parents reminders

Uniform

Could we please ask Parents/Carers to make sure all uniforms are clearly labelled.

Nearly all the uniform emptied from the lost property bins is unnamed, making it impossible to return to the rightful owners.

School lunches

Parents are now able to cancel and book school dinners up to 9am in the morning. Please remember to order for your child before this time and cancel any meals not required should your child be absent for the day, you will still be charged if meals aren't cancelled. Meals should only be ordered by the school office on the rare occasion that you may have forgotten to order. Please note the office are now only able to order jacket potato with beans and fresh fruit for pudding. We are still experiencing a high number of pupils every day that have no school dinner ordered – if this continues, we will phone parents to bring in a packed lunch so could you ensure you have booked for the week ahead. Please speak to the school office if you need a reminder of how to order through Parent Pay.



October half-term

27 – 31 October 2025

There are lots of fun activities and support groups running over the autumn break. Have a look at what's happening in our children's centres across Reading.



Reading
Children's
Centres

Monday

Stay & Play
Sun Street CC
10-11am
Under 5s

Sing & Play
Ranikhet
10-11am
Under 5s

Portage (invite only)
Whitley CC
1-2.30pm

Virtual sessions

- Toilet training
- Intro to family foods

Tuesday

Bumps & Babes
Whitley CC
10-11am
Bumps to 1 year

Stay & Play
Whitley CC
1-2pm
Under 5s

Wednesday

Stay & Play
Southcote CC
10-11am
Under 5s

Sing & Play
Sun Street CC
10-11am
Under 5s

Bumps & Babes
Sun Street CC
1-2pm
Bumps to 1 year

Bumps & Babes
Southcote CC
1-2pm
Bumps to 1 year

Thursday

Portage (invite only)
Sun Street CC
10-11am

Sing & Play
Southcote CC
10-11am
Under 5s

Bumps & Babes
Ranikhet CC
1-2pm
Bumps to 1 year

Sing & Play
Whitley CC
1-2pm
Under 5s

Friday

Stay & Play
Ranikhet CC
10-11am
Under 5s

Self-weigh baby scales
All centres
9am-4pm
Monday to Friday
For babies 16 weeks +

Scan for more
info & link to our
Parents' Portal



For any queries, please email: Reading.childrencentres@reading.gov.uk

www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org

More information on our free October half-term sessions

Bumps & Babes

Join our friendly and welcoming group and meet other expectant parents and babies aged under 12 months.

Stay & Play

Our stay and play session will have an autumn theme and children are welcome to come dressed in Halloween outfits.

Sing & Play

Join us for a joyful Sing & Play session designed especially for families with children under five.

A fun-filled session where you can explore toys, make friends, and enjoy a singalong to end the session with smiles.



No booking required for half-term activities

You must be registered with Reading Children's Centres. Register via our [parent portal](#) or attend your local children's centre for support.



Reading Children's Centres



Find us at:

Southcote Children's Centre

85 Coronation Square, Reading, RG30 3QP

Whitley Children's Centre

252 Northumberland Avenue, RG2 7QA

Ranikhet Children's Centre

Thurso Close, RG30 4YH

Sun Street Children's Centre

Sun Street, RG1 3JX





SCAN HERE

Reading

FREE!



Sport In Mind

Registered Charity 1161323

Youth Activities **for** **Mental Wellbeing**

Sport in Mind provides **free sport** and **physical activity** opportunities for children and young people to help build confidence and self esteem, meet new people and support low mood and other mental health challenges.

Reading Sessions (Autumn term)

Day	Time	Activity	Age	Venue
Mon	5:30 - 6:30pm	Football	10-14 years	Palmer Park 3G pitch
Tue	5:00 - 6:00pm	Sport & games	10-14 years	Bulmershe leisure centre
Tue	3:30 - 4:30pm	Sport & games	9-14 years	South Reading Leisure Centre
Tue	5:00 - 6:00pm	Tennis & games	10-14 years	Meadway Sports Centre (inside)
Wed	4:00 - 5:00pm	Football	10-14 years	Prospect Park 3G pitch
Fri	4:30-5:30pm	Sport & Games	9-13 years	Morgan Centre, Queen Anne's School

**Starts
October**

Sessions restart from Monday 8th September and run weekly excluding school holidays

@sportinmind

youth@sportinmind.org

www.sportinmind.org

0300 102 1400

Working in partnership with



Berkshire Healthcare
Children, Young People and
Families services