

Friday 3rd October 2025

THE PALMER ACADEMY WEEKLY ROUND-UP

Dear Parents and Carers,

Our school currently does not have a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) — and we'd love to change that!

A PTA can bring wonderful benefits to our school community, including:

- Organising fun events for children and families
- Raising funds to support school projects and resources
- Creating stronger connections between staff, parents, and carers
- Giving families a voice in shaping school life

To make this happen, we need your help. If you're interested in volunteering to support the school in setting up a PTA — whether you can offer time, ideas, or enthusiasm — we'd love to hear from you!

Please contact the school office to express your interest or ask any questions.

Together, we can build something special for our children and our community.

Kind Regards



A Higginbotham

Miss A Higginbotham

Headteacher

Dates to Remember

October

1st October	Black History Month 2025
6th -10th October	No Clubbly clubs this week
7th October	Parents Evening
8th October	Parents Evening
9th October	World Mental Health Day – Wear Yellow for Young Minds 2025
13th October	Arts week
15th – 17th October	PGL Year 6 trip
22nd October	Timestable Rockstar Day
23rd October	Second hand Uniform sale
	Reception 2026 entrance school tour
	Children break for half term
24th October	INSET DAY
27th – 31st October	Half-Term

November

3rd November	Children return to school
5th November	School Photographer
12th November	Phonics workshop for Parents Year 1 & 2
13th November	Reception 2026 entrance school tour
14th November	Children in Need

In This Issue

- Attendance
- Information

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.

Holidays in term time

This is a reminder that we will not be authorising any leaves of absence in term time unless for exceptional circumstances. This academic year we have already issued 20 fixed penalty notices (fines) to families taking holidays or leaves of absence in term time. Missing large periods of education consecutively has a large impact on children's understanding of key concepts and can lead to large gaps in learning. Thanks for your understanding and cooperation on this matter.

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

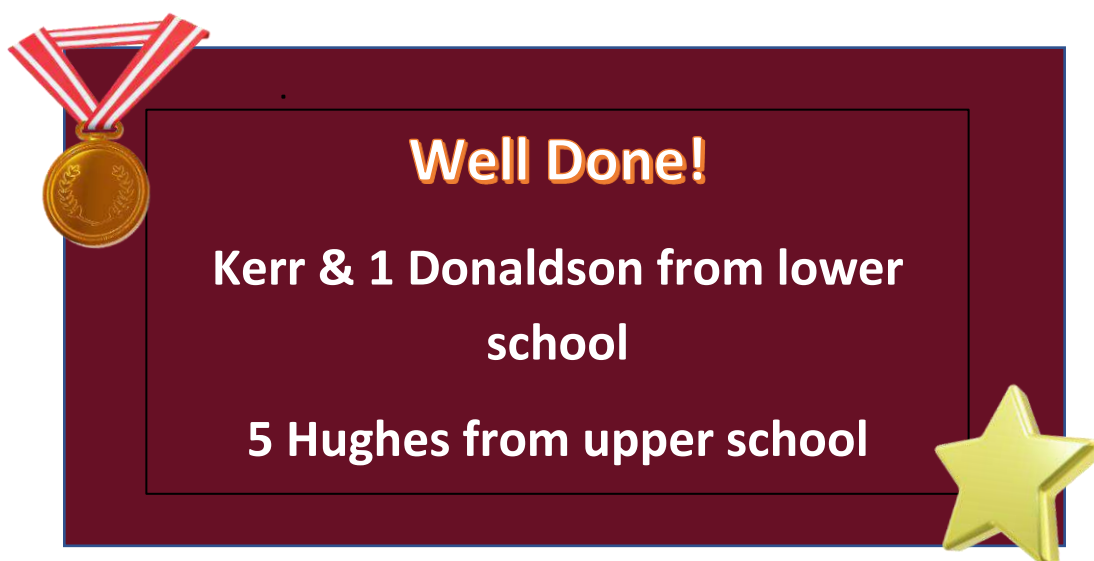


Nursery		Reception		Year 1		Year 2	
am	pm	Kerr	Rosen	Cole	Donaldson	Ahlberg	Butterworth
92 %	88.9%	97.0%	93.3%	96.7%	97%	92.5%	96%
Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6	
Benjamin	King-Smith	Binch	Pullman	Hughes	Morpurgo	Horowitz	Lewis
94.8%	94.9%	97%	95.4%	98.8%	87.4%	94.2%	93.7%

Attendance for The Whole School Year Is Currently 94.3%

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!



Turning - Blue is the winning house. - Congratulations!



Do I need to keep my child off school?

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

Please could we request if you have changed any of your Contact details /mobile number/ or email address kindly please update the school office thank you

Parking

A friendly reminder to please refrain from parking on double yellow lines or zig zag markings. Doing so poses a danger to our children as they enter and leave the school premises. Additionally, we kindly ask that disabled badge holders avoid parking in these restricted areas.

If you hold a disabled badge and require proximity to the school for accessibility reasons, please reach out to our office. We're here to support you in finding suitable parking arrangements.

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.

Please remember we are a nut free school (this includes no chocolate spread as this contains nuts) – Please provide your child with healthy snacks for break times.

Keeping Children Safe Outside of School

As children take part in activities beyond the classroom—whether it's sports clubs, tuition, or community groups—it's vital that parents and carers feel confident about their safety. The UK Government provides guidance to help you understand what safeguarding measures should be in place in out-of-school settings, including checks on staff, clear procedures for raising concerns, and safe environments for learning and play. The NSPCC also offers practical advice for choosing safe sports clubs, such as ensuring there is a welfare officer, safeguarding-trained staff, and appropriate supervision. Don't hesitate to ask questions—organisations should welcome your interest in your child's wellbeing. For more information, visit the [Government guidance](#) 1 and the [NSPCC's Keeping Your Child Safe in Sport page](#)2.

New Reading Books for Home!

We're excited to share that we have new reading books available for children to take home and enjoy. As part of helping children develop a love for reading, we also want to teach them how to care for books responsibly. To ensure every child has access to these resources, we kindly ask that books are returned in good condition. If a book is not returned or is damaged beyond use, we will request a £5 contribution to help replace it. Thank you for your support in looking after our reading book collection.

Roblox and Parental Controls - South West Grid for Learning

Roblox, the popular Minecraft 'style' game has announced a new raft of parental controls. The website which ranks among the most popular games for children in the e-space, has previously been accused of possessing weak child protection tools. Their new raft of adaptations is important due to the game's position

among school aged children. The new features have been adopted to allow parents to take control of their children's game time in a more comprehensive manner.

Parents will now be able to block individuals who communicate with their children, as well as have more detailed oversight over their usage of the programme. Real-time awareness measures have been increased and these changes represent a big step forward in making popular multiplayer games more secure for underaged users.

If interested, the South-West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) has produced a comprehensive run down of these changes. Please follow the link below for more:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/roblox-launches-new-parental-controls/>

Sent on behalf of Brighter Futures for Children



[Reading Family Hubs - Brighter Futures For Children](#)

In Reading, we are working together to support children, young people and families

Our aim is to make sure everyone gets the right help at the right time, so that children can thrive and reach their potential.

We want this support to be available as close to home as possible. That's why we are developing **Best Start in Life Family Hubs** across Reading.

Family Hubs will offer information, advice and support for different stages of family life:

- from pregnancy and early years
- through childhood
- and into the teenage years, up to age 19 (or 25 for young adults with special educational needs or disabilities).

Hub co-design

We are designing the hubs together with our partners in health, employment, training, housing and the voluntary sector. Most importantly, we are listening to what children, young people and caregivers tell us they need.

We'd love to hear your ideas.

Please share your views through our online surveys

Children and young people – take part in the survey [here](#)

Are you aged up 19 (or up to 25 if you have additional needs) and living in Reading? Please tell us what kind of support you would like to receive that would mean you feel happy, safe, and well in your community.

Parents and carers – take part in the survey [here](#)

We're inviting input from parents and carers across Reading to help us make sure our new hubs offer the right services for you and your family.

ROCKSTEADY MUSIC

If you are interested in your child joining the Rocksteady music club which is during school hours on Mondays, please can you use the link below to sign up.

The link for the parents to sign up is [Home - Rocksteady Music School](#).



We have created an October half term holiday activities page on the Family Information Service (FIS) website. We will continue to update this page, so keep checking until 31st October.

Please use the following link to view [Reading Directory | Activities in Reading for October Half Term 2025](#)

General Holiday Activities can be found on the following search list - [Search Results | Reading Services Guide](#)

Childcare for parent carers who need information on childcare including holiday clubs, childminders etc for the school holiday - www.readingfis.org/childcare

Please like our [Facebook](#) page to be kept informed of new events, activities and more...

As you may know, the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) run regular termly virtual parent workshops, aimed at primary school aged children, on **helping your child with fears and worries**. These are always very well received by parents and, as such, we are offering further dates (see below). The aim of the workshop is to teach parents cognitive behavioural strategies so they can use them with their children to overcome their anxiety. It is based on the book: 'Overcoming your child's worries and fears' by Cathy Cresswell and Lucy Willetts. The group is a 2.5 hour online workshop – a “whistle stop tour” of key principles for parents.

In addition, in response to increasing demand for **support for children with autism and anxiety**, the EPS delivers a further parental workshop, aimed at parents of children who have been recognised as autistic, who have autism “traits” or who are awaiting a diagnosis, and are experiencing anxiety. The aim of this workshop to understand some of the differences in

thinking styles of children with autism and why this can make them more prone to anxiety - in particular, intolerance of uncertainty. It pulls together information from a range of sources and offers practical strategies for support. The group is a 2.5 hour online workshop – a “whistle stop tour” of key principles for parents.

We would like you to think about whether these workshops will be useful for any of the families in your schools. Please read the below criteria carefully and share these with parents who may benefit.

Helping your child with fears and worries parent workshop	Autism and anxiety parent workshop
• Child is aged 5-12 years. • Anxiety is the primary presenting concern in the child and the anxiety presents at home. • The degree of anxiety is mild/moderate (not severe) – it is having an impact on the child’s life - for example the child is starting to avoid situations that lead to anxiety, like social situations. • The approaches in the workshop are designed to help with “irrational” fears, for example, specific phobias (dogs, school phobia etc...), separation anxiety, generalised anxiety. • It is not designed for children whose anxiety is due to trauma (eg: domestic violence), PTSD, bereavement, sensory overload. • Parent or child is not currently receiving any other kind of support for their anxiety (eg: at CAMHS or the AnDY clinic). • The programme is not targeted at children with a diagnosis of autism or those with autism traits. • The programme is not suitable for children who are non-verbal.	• Child is aged 6 – 16 years. • The child has been recognised as autistic, has autism “traits” or is awaiting a diagnosis, and are experiencing anxiety. • The degree of anxiety is mild/moderate (not severe) – it is having an impact on the child’s life - for example the child is starting to avoid situations that lead to anxiety, like social situations. • The approaches in the workshop are designed to help with intolerance of uncertainty and to developing coping strategies to better manage worries about the unknown. • It is not designed for children whose anxiety is due to trauma (eg: domestic violence), PTSD or bereavement. • Parent or child is not currently receiving any other kind of support for their anxiety (eg: at CAMHS or the AnDY clinic). • The programme is not suitable for children who are non-verbal.

We are planning to run each of these workshops every term (6 workshops in total).

Here are the session dates planned for the year. All sessions are 9:30 – 12:00:

“Helping your child with fears and worries” workshop

- 27.11.25.
- 04.02.26.
- 09.07.26.

“Autism and anxiety” workshop

- 19.11.25.
- 17.03.26.
- 17.06.26.

Sessions will be via Teams. We have capacity for around 4 – 10 participants each session.

If you think that a parent would benefit from a space, please forward them this email and ask them to look through the guidance to see whether they would like to sign up.

If parents are interested, they should email Wilma Williams and include: their name, email and phone number (for contact – they will be emailed a Teams link) and their child's age and school. Please also state which of the dates for the course they are able to make, and whether you have a preferred date – so we can allocate spaces.

Wilma.Williams@reading.gov.uk

Please see below **October half term short breaks**. If you would like to book a place for your child/young person, please contact the provider directly. Thank you.

SEND Short Breaks -Chance to Dance Stars CIC - Dance and Multi Activity Program (includes half terms & holidays)

Chance to Dance Stars CIC - [SEND](#) Dance Classes – Update We have 2 spaces left over the whole week. Tuesday and Thursday 1 space. NOTE- Children & Young People would need to be known to us as we wouldn't have time to offer a trial and assessment.



Chance to Dance

Reading, Coley Park Classes 4 years to adult

The classes are held at Coley Park Community Centre, 140 Wensley Road, Reading, RG1 6DW

Short breaks are available for Reading children aged 4 years to 18 years old.

[Reading Directory | SEND Short Breaks -Chance to Dance Stars CIC - Dance and Multi Activity Program \(includes half terms & holidays\)](#)

SEND Short Breaks - Reading Play - October 2025 Half Term – Update, spaces still available, please make contact to book a place



The Reading Educational Play and Support Team welcomes you to The Ranger Station as one of your [SEND](#) short break providers, we will be holding four sessions.

[SEND Short Breaks - Reading Play - October 2025 Half Term](#)

SEND Short Breaks -Make Sense Theatre Holiday Clubs - October Half Term



SEND specific holiday clubs that are rooted in creativity and fun for children and teenagers aged 4-17.

October half term - Make Sense Theatre SEND Holiday Clubs

SEND Short Breaks - October Half Term Holidays - Reading FC SEND Sports Camp



The camp is run by qualified coaches and support staff with experience in working with young people with disabilities. The coaches will use fun activities and specific games to cater for each child. Reading FC Community Trust work with local sports companies to plan detailed sport sessions for the children. [Reading Directory | SEND Short Breaks - October Half Term Holidays - Reading FC SEND Sports Camp](#)

SEND Short Breaks - October Half Term Holidays - Reading FC SEND Play Camp



SEND play camp at The Avenue School from 10:00-13:00. This course is for young people with disabilities only. The camp is run by qualified coaches and support staff with experience in working with young people with disabilities. [Reading Directory | SEND Short Breaks - October Half Term Holidays - Reading FC SEND Play Camp](#)

Short breaks information can be found on Reading's SEND Local Offer - [Reading Directory | SEND Short Breaks \(all ability activities\)](#)

THE PALMER ACADEMY

SALE!

School Uniform Sale

We will be selling secondhand uniform on Thursday 23rd October after school in the playground Cash only.

Prices

Shorts £2

Trousers £2

Jumpers £2

Dresses £2

Skirts £2

Black hoodies £2

Black trousers £2

White tops £1

PE t-shirts £1



Cash only!!!!

Discounted Family Fun upto half price off

Ninja Warrior

Flip Out

Donutting

Soft Play

Cinema trips



High Score Arcade

Bowling

Clip N Climb

Paddle Boarding

Days Out including Chessington, Legoland
4 Kingdoms and more

AND MORE...

Gold membership is £7.50 per person per year which gives activities at upto 50% off and then our charity funds the difference.

For more details please visit our website

www.spotlightuk.org or email activities@spotlightuk.org

Come and join us at
Hexham Rd Community Centre for...

STAY, PLAY AND STORIES



A FREE playgroup
for local
parents/carers
with little ones
aged 0-4.

A fun, supportive space;
learn together through
stories and free play.
Snacks, drinks and FREE
BOOK provided once a
month.

We meet 3 out of 4 Fridays each month,
10-11:30am (during term time)

Our Autumn Term dates:

12th and 26th September

3rd, 10th and 24th October

7th, 14th and 28th November

5th and 12th December



For more info, contact:
e.walker@reading.ac.uk





**Brighter
Futures for
Children**

Incredible Toddler Parenting Programme



Thursday 11 Sept 2025 - Thursday 27 Nov 2025



12.30-2.30pm



Southcote Children's Centre, 85 Coronation Square, Reading RG30 3QP

- ★ Is your child aged 1-3 years old?
- ★ Are they showing some unwanted behaviours?
- ★ Do you need some help to manage their behaviour?

The group aims to give you simple but effective techniques to strengthen your toddler's emotional and social competence. You'll learn how to use play, language, positive discipline strategies and more to build a good relationship with your toddler.

This 12-week programme also has a free Ofsted-registered creche available on-site for children under five years old.

To enquire or book your place, please contact:

reading.childrencentres@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

or sue.blackwood@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

or call **07921 403349**

**The
Incredible
Years**



Parents, teachers, and children
training series

Mellow Mums and Babies

Are you a new mum? Welcoming a new baby is an exciting and magical time, but it is also completely normal to face worries and challenges.

This 14-session group will help you manage the challenges of parenting and to learn and grow as a parent while also focusing on looking after yourself. There will be opportunities to talk with other mums in similar positions as you, and reflect on your journey so far.

Getting together with other new mums and sharing ideas and experiences can be reassuring. They may know how you are feeling and you can support each other.

This group is for mums with babies aged from 12 weeks to 18 months.

Our next Mellow Mums and Babies course:

- ★ Tuesday 9 September - Tuesday 9 Dec 2025
- ★ 9.30am-2.30pm
- ★ Ranikhet Children's Centre, Thurso Close Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4YH

For more information and to book your place, please contact Sue Blackwood or Alison Hanks:

- ★ sue.blackwood@brighterfuturesforchildren.org | 07921 403 349
- ★ alison.hanks@brighterfuturesforchildren.org | 07890 899 032



Dads-to-be antenatal group

Are you about to be a new dad? Is this a whole new experience for you?

Meet other dads-to-be at a friendly **FREE** session led by a midwife and children's centre staff.

You'll get to learn or practice practical baby care skills and understand the importance of your role as a supportive partner during pregnancy and labour, and as a father when your baby is home.

Please note, you will need to attend both sessions.



East Reading Children's Centre
Sun Street, Reading RG1 3JX
(car park on site)



Thursday 25 September, 6.30-9.30pm
and



Thursday 2 October, 6.30-9.30pm

For more information and to book, contact:

Sue on 07921 403349

sue.blackwood@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

or Alison on 07890 899032

alison.hanks@brighterfuturesforchildren.org



@BFFC_Child 

Reading Children's Centres 

Brighter Futures for Children 



Family Science Roadshow

A fun, interactive workshop for Adults, Carers, Grandparents and their children aged 4 – 12 years

Carry out fun, scientific experiments, including :-

- ❖ DNA extraction
- ❖ Senses/flavours – how your senses can trick your brain.
- ❖ Microscopy
- ❖ How NOT to spread germs

This workshop will be led by a team of scientists from Reading Scientific Services Ltd, including STEM ambassadors (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

All equipment and protective clothing will be provided.

**CHOOSE A MORNING OR
AFTERNOON SESSION**

Due to funding restrictions this workshop is open to residents of RG1, RG2, RG4, RG6 and RG41



**Thursday
30th October 2025**

10:00am – 12:30pm
(Registration at 9.45am)

OR

2.00pm – 4.30pm
(Registration 1.45pm)

**Booking Essential
Fee £20 per family**
(maximum 2 children per adult)



Information and Booking:

The Earley Crescent Resource Centre · Warbler Drive, Lower Earley, Reading RG6 4HB



Bus Route 21 from Reading – Beech Lane



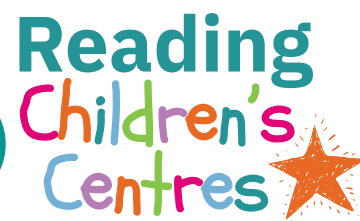
0118 9210555 · www.earleycrescent.org

training@earleycrescent.org



www.facebook.com/earleycrescent/

Charity No. 1092607 Company No. 4383491



Mellow Bumps

Are you a mum-to-be? It's natural to worry about your baby when you're pregnant, or when they're newborn. You might worry if your baby will be healthy, or if you will be able to do all you need to look after them.

It can be especially hard if you have had challenges in your own childhood or you are under stress or experiencing health or social problems during your pregnancy.

Getting together with other mums-to-be and sharing ideas and experiences can be reassuring. They may know how you are feeling and you can support each other.

This antenatal parenting course is for pregnant mums and does not include partners.

Join us on our next Mellow Bumps course:

- ★ **Thurs 18 September - Thurs 23 October 2025**
- ★ **10am-12.30pm**
- ★ **East Reading Childrens Centre, Sun Street, Reading RG1 3JX**



For more information and to book your place, please contact Sue Blackwood or Alison Hanks:

- ★ sue.blackwood@brighterfuturesforchildren.org | 07921 403 349
- ★ alison.hanks@brighterfuturesforchildren.org | 07890 899 032

@BFfC_Child



Reading Children's Centres



Brighter Futures for Children



NEWSLETTER COPY FOR SCHOOLS.

Copy and paste from this document into your school's newsletter.

Existing Schools (use just after you've had your workshop day)

Rock and pop band lessons with Rocksteady

Did you know, we partner with Rocksteady Music School to deliver fun and inclusive rock and pop band lessons, right here at {SCHOOL NAME}! These weekly music lessons take place in school and are led by professional musicians who make learning music fun.

It's the perfect way for children to learn new musical skills, make friends and have a great time – all at school! Rocksteady lessons are also shown to amplify confidence, wellbeing and social skills.

Here's what else you need to know:

- *There's no experience necessary and all instruments for lessons are provided.*
- *Watch as your child performs in their end of term concerts, showing just how far they have come.*
- *Children learn up to 300 instrument, band, and performance skills, whilst playing songs they love.*
- *Children can achieve an Ofqual-regulated Music qualification, accredited by Trinity College London, without having to take a single exam.*
- *You'll receive regular progress updates, including photos and videos.*

There's a money-back guarantee for the first month and you can cancel at any time. Places are offered on a first come, first served basis.

Sign your child up for band lessons online at rocksteadymusicschool.com/parents

If you have any questions about Rocksteady, call **0330 113 0330** (Mon-Thurs 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-6pm, local rate) or email info@rocksteadymusicschool.com.

NEWSLETTER COPY FOR SCHOOLS.

Copy and paste from this document into your school's newsletter.

New Schools (use to advertise the workshop day)

Coming soon! Rock and pop band lessons with Rocksteady

Exciting news! From {DATE}, we will be partnering Rocksteady Music School to deliver fun and inclusive rock and pop band lessons, right here at {SCHOOL NAME}! These weekly music lessons will take place in school and are led by professional musicians who make learning music fun.

It's the perfect way for children to learn new musical skills, make friends and have a great time – all at school! Rocksteady lessons are also shown to amplify confidence, wellbeing and social skills.

Here's what else you need to know:

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- *You'll receive regular progress updates, including photos and videos.*

There's a money-back guarantee for the first month and you can cancel at any time. Places are offered on a first come, first served basis.

Rocksteady workshop will take place on {DATE}

To introduce the children to Rocksteady, workshops will be held in school on {DATE}. These will be fun and interactive sessions giving children the chance to try out the instruments and learn all about being a musician in a band.

Please look out for a letter from Rocksteady, which your child will bring home with them after their workshop or visit rocksteadymusicschool.com/parents to sign up.