

Friday 13th March 2026

THE PALMER ACADEMY WEEKLY ROUND-UP

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are looking to recruit volunteers to join our governing body following a recent vacancy. Due to ongoing commitments, Emma Steer, our current chair of governors, is stepping down from her role. She has been a governor at the school for several years and has supported the school's strategic direction. Last academic year Emma was nominated as chair of governors - leading the team and working in partnership with me to support the children and families at Palmer. We are hugely appreciative of the commitment Emma has given to the school. I'm sure you will join me in thanking her for time as a parent governor.

As a parent or carer, you naturally take a keen interest in your child's education. Now here's your chance to influence the key decisions affecting all children at our school and to make a real contribution to the local community. Governors make strategic decisions about the running of the school, including the curriculum, target-setting for pupils and staff, how the school should improve, the budget, staffing, health and safety and the management of the premises.

We want people who can bring energy, ideas and experience of life to support school staff in the organisation and management of schools. We want people who will act as ambassadors for the school and be visible to other parents.

You don't need formal qualifications or particular skills. Everyone has something to offer. In addition, being a Governor provides opportunities to develop new skills as well as practice existing ones

Wishing you all a restful weekend.

Kind Regards



A Higginbotham

Miss A Higginbotham

Headteacher

Dates to Remember

March

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| 16 th March | Year 4 Trip to Living Rainforest |
| 20 th March | Red Nose Day – £1 donation (wear red or red nose) |
| 23 rd March | Rocksteady Concert 14.30 |
| 24 th March | Reception Vision Screening Programme |
| 26 th March | Second hand Uniform Sale |
| 27 th March | Lower School Awards Assembly (10.00 am) Upper School Awards Assembly (10.30 am) Children finish for Easter |

April

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| 13 th April | Children return to school |
| 20 th April | Earth Week – Litter Picking |
| 22 nd April | Earth Week – Walk to School Day Reception trip to Brooklands Museum |
| 23 rd April | Y4 Swimming |
| 24 th April | Earth Week |
| 30 th April | Y4 Swimming |

May

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 4 th May | May Bank Holiday |
| 5 th May | Reception National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) |
| 7 th May | Polling Day – School closed |
| 21 st May | Y4 Swimming Children break for half term |
| 22 nd May | Inset Day |

June

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1 st June | Children return to school |
| 3 rd June | Reception trip to Blue Reef Aquarium Portsmouth |
| 4 th June | Y4 Swimming |

“Red Nose Day

On **Friday 20th March** we will be marking Red Nose Day. Children will be invited to come to school in non-uniform wearing one red item or a red nose. All children will need to bring **£1** to raise money for the charity.”

Go Beans

Following Reading Council’s Food Hygiene Inspector’s visit to Go Beans on **Tuesday 10 March 2026**, we are happy to say the club has been awarded a **5 Star (Very Good)** rating for food hygiene.

Thank you to the children for demonstrating to the Inspector how they maintain good food hygiene practice too (washing their hands on arrival to the club; using their named/personalised place mats when sitting down to eat; keeping their tables clean etc). The new rating certificate is proudly displayed on the window in the Go Beans Club room.



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/>

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.

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](#)

Dogs on School Premises

For the safety and comfort of all our pupils, staff, and visitors, we kindly remind you:

- Dogs are not permitted on school grounds.
- All dogs must remain outside the school boundary at drop-off, pick-up, and during any school events.
- Service dogs are welcome and are exempt from this restriction.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and welcoming environment for everyone

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 |
| 92.4% | 92% | 98.1% | 95.6% | 95.4% | 82.4% | 99.2% | 97% |
| Year 3 | | Year 4 | | Year 5 | | Year 6 | |
| Benjamin | King-Smith | Binch | Pullman | Hughes | Morpurgo | Horowitz | Lewis |
| 94.8% | 96.8% | 96.8% | 92.1% | 95.8% | 97.1% | 92.3% | 98.1% |

Attendance for The Whole School Year Is Currently 94.7%

Attendance Raffle

You must 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!

2 Ahlberg from lower school

6 Lewis from upper school



Johnson – Red 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 | TUESDAY and THURSDAY |
| YEAR 4 | MONDAY and THURSDAY |
| YEAR 5 | WEDNESDAY and FRIDAY |
| YEAR 6 | TUESDAY and FRIDAY |

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.

REAch2 Academy Trust and The Palmer Academy

Mobile Phone Statement

This statement outlines the Trust's position on mobile phone use by children to ensure a safe, focused and respectful learning environment. It supports safeguarding, reduces distractions, and promotes positive social interaction.

Scope

This statement applies to all children enrolled at a REAch2 school. It does not apply to staff or visitors, who are expected to follow separate guidance on appropriate mobile phone use.

Statement

Mobile phones are not permitted to be used by children during the school day, including during lessons, break times and lunch periods in any REAch2 school. This includes smartwatches and other connected devices with communication capabilities.

Rationale

- Safeguarding: Mobile phones can be used to access inappropriate content, take unauthorised photos or videos, or engage in cyberbullying.
- Learning focus: Phones are a distraction and can disrupt lessons and concentration.
- Social development: Encouraging face-to-face interaction support emotional and social growth.
- Equity: Reduces pressure on families to provide expensive devices.

Implementation

Before and After School:

- Children who need a phone for safety reasons (e.g. walking home alone), must hand their mobile phone into the school office upon arrival and collect it at the end of the day.
- Phones must be switched off and stored securely by staff during school hours.

During School hours:

- Children are not permitted to use or access mobile phones.
- Any phone seen or heard during the school day will be confiscated and will need to be collected by a parent. *(Schools have the power to confiscate mobile phones or similar devices as a disciplinary penalty. The law protects staff from liability in any proceedings brought against them for any loss or damage to items they have confiscated as a sanction, providing they have acted lawfully. Staff should consider whether the confiscation is proportionate and consider any special circumstances relevant to the case)*

Communication with Parents

- This statement will be shared with parents/carers via the school's newsletter, the school website and when a child starts at the school.
- Parents are asked to support the Trust's position by not contacting children directly during the school day.

Medical Exceptions

- We recognise that there are exceptional circumstances where access to a mobile device is necessary for health and safety reasons.
- Children with documented medical conditions that require the use of a mobile phone e.g. to monitor blood glucose levels, manage asthma, or communicate with healthcare providers, may be exempt from this policy. In such cases, parent or guardians should provide appropriate medical documentation and work with school staff to develop an agreed-upon plan.

Monitoring and Review

This statement will be reviewed every 2 years by the Trust's Head of IT and updated as necessary to reflect changes in technology, safeguarding guidance or Trust/school needs.

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.

Sent on behalf of Short Breaks, Reading Borough Council

Dear Parent carers

Please see below short breaks available during the Christmas holidays. If you would like to book a place for you child/ren young person, please contact the short breaks provider directly. Thank you.



Reading Play [SEND](#) December Holiday Short Break Sessions: 29th December 2025 - Session one 10am – 12pm Age 5 to 7 years; Session two 2pm to 4pm – Age 8 to 12 years. Please use the following link for more details, use the link to find out more [Reading Directory | SEND December Holiday Short Breaks Sessions - Reading Play](#)



Chance to Dance

SEND Short Breaks -Chance to Dance Stars CIC - Dance and Multi Activity Program (includes half terms & holidays) for more details on dates and times please use the following link, use the link to find out more [Reading Directory | SEND Short Breaks -Chance to Dance Stars CIC - Dance and Multi Activity Program \(includes half terms & holidays\)](#)



Make Sense Theatre - December [SEND](#) Short Breaks Holiday Clubs

SEND specific holiday clubs rooted in creativity and play. Session on 22nd December 23rd December, 2nd January 2026

Use the link to find out more [Reading Directory | Make Sense Theatre - December SEND Short Breaks Holiday Clubs](#)