

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

# THE PALMER ACADEMY

# WEEKLY ROUND-UP

Dear Parents and Carers,

We would like to share some very positive feedback following our recent visit from the Local Authority. The review recognised the hard work of our staff and pupils and highlighted many strengths across the school.

The feedback commented positively on the inclusive classroom environments, noting that learning spaces are welcoming, calm, and supportive for all pupils. They also praised the consistent and effective use of visual timetables, which help children to understand routines, feel secure, and engage confidently with their learning throughout the day.

In addition, the Local Authority recognised the strong focus on foundational writing skills, observing that these were taught effectively across the school. This reflects our commitment to ensuring all children develop the essential building blocks they need for future success.

We strongly believe that secure foundational skills are key to every child's learning journey. Skills such as:

- Handwriting – developing fine motor control, letter formation, and fluency
- Early number skills – including number bonds, counting, and understanding number relationships
- Times tables – building recall and confidence to support higher level maths
- Phonics – developing strong decoding skills to support reading and writing

These foundations underpin progress across the curriculum. When children are confident in the basics, they are better able to focus on reasoning, creativity, problem solving, and deeper learning. Our staff work hard to ensure these skills are taught explicitly, revisited regularly, and supported in a way that meets the needs of all learners.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming you into school for Parents' Evenings next week. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity to celebrate your child's achievements, discuss next steps, and continue our strong partnership between home and school.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Kind Regards



*dhigginbotham*

**Miss A Higginbotham**

**Headteacher**

# Dates to Remember

## January

<b>20<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Parents Evening</b>
<b>21<sup>st</sup> January</b>	<b>Parents Evening</b>
<b>29<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Year 3 Stone Age Day</b>

## February

<b>13<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<b>Children finish for end of term</b>
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> February</b>	<b>Children return to school</b>

## March

<b>5<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>World Book Day</b>
<b>9<sup>th</sup> 013<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Bikeability Year 5 Level 1 &amp; 2</b>
<b>16<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Year 4 Trip to Living Rainforest</b>
<b>26<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Lower School Awards Assembly (10.00 am)</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Upper School Awards Assembly (10.30 am)</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Children finish for Easter</b>

## April

<b>13<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Children return to school</b>
<b>20<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Earth Week – Litter Picking</b>
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> April</b>	<b>Earth Week – Walk to School Day</b>
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> April</b>	<b>Y4 Swimming</b>
<b>30<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Y4 Swimming</b>

## May

<b>7<sup>th</sup> May</b>	<b>Polling Day</b>
<b>21<sup>st</sup> May</b>	<b>Y4 Swimming</b>
	<b>Children break for half term</b>
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> May</b>	<b>Inset Day</b>

## June

<b>1<sup>st</sup> June</b>	<b>Children return to school</b>
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## 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

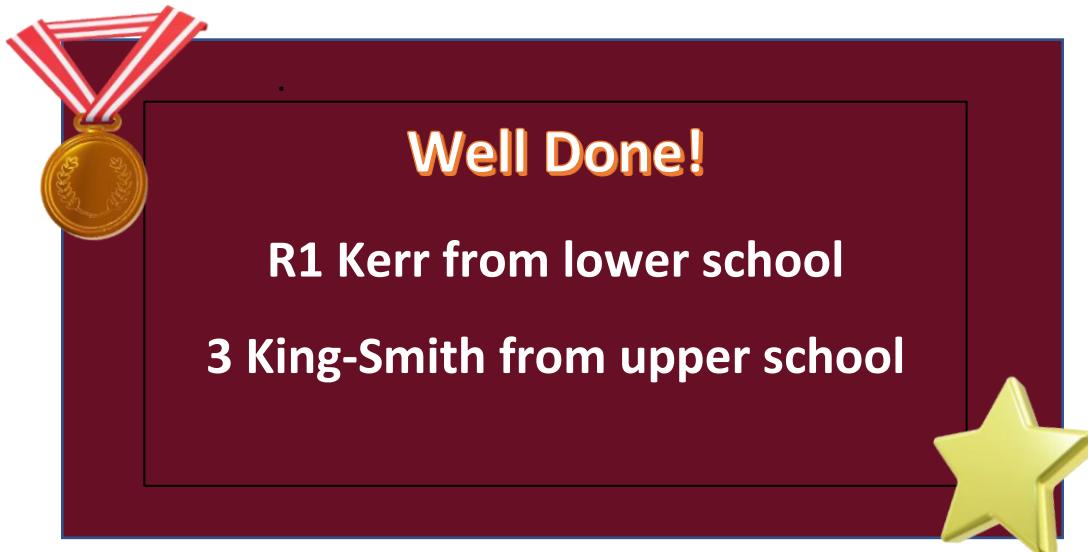


Nursery		Reception		Year 1		Year 2	
am	pm	Kerr	Rosen	Cole	Donaldson	Ahlberg	Butterworth
86.5%	88.2%	99.3%	92.3%	93.1%	98.9%	95.3%	95.6%
Year 3		Year 4		Year 5		Year 6	
Benjamin	King-Smith	Binch	Pullman	Hughes	Morpurgo	Horowitz	Lewis
94.1%	97.9%	94.1%	92.9%	95.2%	96.4%	90.1%	94.7%

**Attendance for The Whole School Year Is Currently 94.5%**

### 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!



**Hawking - Green is the winning house. - Congratulations!**



# Do I need to keep my child off school?



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

## **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](#).

## Cold Weather Safety Reminder

As the weather becomes colder, we kindly remind all parents, carers, and visitors to take extra care when entering the school grounds.

- The school will endeavour to grit and de-ice pathways where possible.
- Despite these efforts, surfaces may still be slippery, so please walk carefully.
- Your caution helps keep everyone safe during the winter months.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding

## 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

## [\*\*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.

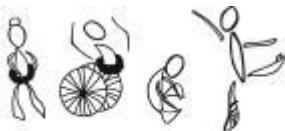
# Sent on behalf of Short Breaks, Reading Borough Council

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 22<sup>nd</sup> December 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026

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