Woodend Farm school
Kindness comes in many forms

Newsletter

October 2026

Message from our Executive Headteacher:

What a wonderful half term it has been. It has been a joy to watch everyone settle into the new academic year and to see the positive relationships between pupils and staff continue to develop and flourish.

I feel incredibly privileged to lead a school filled with such dedicated, caring and talented practitioners who work tirelessly every day to help our children thrive. Their commitment to supporting each pupil's individual journey is truly inspiring.

This half term has been full of exciting opportunities and memorable experiences. Pupils have enjoyed swimming sessions, Forest School activities and trips into the local community, all of which have helped to build confidence, develop independence and create lasting memories. We were also delighted to welcome the Fire Brigade into school to speak to pupils about fire safety and staying safe around fireworks as we approach the autumn celebrations.

One of the greatest pleasures of my role is seeing our school values come to life each day through the interactions between pupils, staff and families. Witnessing kindness, belonging, believing and achieving in action is both heartwarming and reassuring. It reminds us that our pupils are growing not only academically, but also socially and emotionally, developing the skills and confidence they need for the future.

Thank you to all our families for your continued support throughout this busy and successful half term. We wish you a restful and enjoyable break and look forward to welcoming everyone back next half term for another exciting chapter in our school journey.









Message from our Pastoral Leads

As we reach the end of the half term, we would like to celebrate the achievements of our students across both school sites.

This term, our pastoral focus has been on accountability and teamwork. It has been fantastic to see students taking responsibility for their actions, supporting one another, and working together to overcome challenges. Their resilience, determination, and positive attitudes have been evident throughout the term.

The final week of half term included a range of seasonal activities, providing students with opportunities to have fun, be creative, and enjoy time together. We were also pleased to welcome the Bonfire Safety Team, who delivered an informative assembly to help students stay safe during the bonfire season.

Thank you for your continued support throughout the term. We wish all our students and families a restful and enjoyable half-term break and look forward to welcoming everyone back for another successful term.

Have a wonderful half-term break.

Miss Kinsville & Miss Steadman

admin@woodendfarm.school

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Reminder

As the weather becomes colder, please ensure students bring a suitable coat and appropriate footwear to school each day. This will help keep them warm and comfortable during breaktimes, lunchtimes, and outdoor activities.

Please remember to label all coats with your child's name.

Attendance Matters

Regular attendance is extremely important, not only for children's academic progress but also for their social and emotional wellbeing. Attending school consistently helps children build friendships, develop routines, increase confidence, and maintain a sense of belonging within their school community.

We would also like to remind parents and carers that, in line with school policy, absence request forms must be completed and submitted for consideration before any term-time leave is taken. If you have any questions regarding attendance or planned absences, please contact the school office for advice.

Important Communication Reminder

Many of you will already be familiar with Arbor, which we have been using for attendance and recording other important information. We are now increasingly using Arbor as our primary communication system for parents and carers.

Newsletters, letters, permission forms, event information, and other important communications will be sent through Arbor. Please keep an eye on your emails and notifications and remember to check your junk or spam folders, as messages may initially be redirected there. It is also important that the school is informed of any changes to your contact details to ensure you continue to receive communications promptly.

School Term Dates



Non Pupil Day: 2nd Nov 26

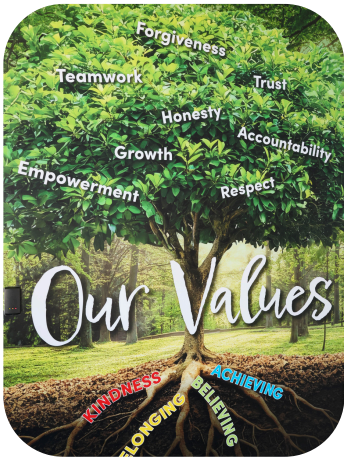
Autumn Term 2: 3rd Nov 26 to 18th Dec 26

Christmas Break: 21st Dec 26 to 1st Jan 27

Non Pupil Day: 4th Jan 27

Spring Term 1: 5th Jan 27 to 12th Feb 27

February Half Term Break: 15th Feb 26 to 19th Feb 27



School Council



This week, the School Council are leading a Halloween Values Project across the school. Each day, School Council representatives will ask their classmates where they have seen our school values being demonstrated. These examples will be written on pumpkin templates and displayed on classroom doors, helping us celebrate the positive actions, kindness and achievements happening throughout the school. We look forward to seeing our pumpkins fill up with examples of our school values in action!



PE

Recently in PE we have been focusing on our balance and co-ordination through creating obstacle courses, using teamwork and positive communication. Using different equipment like hurdles, ropes and stepping stones allowed the students to explore their bodies and understand different techniques that help them to find their balance. All of the students have continued attending sports club at lunch time, taking part in team competitive sports like football and hockey.

Forest School



This month in Forest School, learners have continued to explore the outdoor world through child-led learning, play, and adventure. We have investigated water, weather, and plant life cycles through hands-on activities such as making water filters and wormeries, helping learners develop a deeper understanding of the natural world.

Favourite activities have included den building, creating obstacle courses with loose parts, and, of course, wheelbarrow rides! Learners have also built confidence in tool use, including fire lighting, digging, and rope work, while developing outdoor cooking skills from food preparation and hygiene through to cooking over the campfire.

Overall, it has been a fun-filled term of exploration, skill-building, outdoor adventure, and meaningful hands-on learning.





Role Models of the Month

Harley

We as a school cannot put into words how proud we are of Harley. He has been outstanding recently, showing a real ability to take accountability for his actions, listen to adults, and talk through any issues or concerns in a mature and respectful way.

Harley has engaged positively in all aspects of school life, always wearing a big smile and encouraging others to make the right choices. It has been wonderful to see him so happy, confident, and willing to participate. His positive attitude has had a great impact on those around him.

We are incredibly proud of the progress Harley has made and cannot wait to watch him continue to grow and achieve even more. He has shown resilience, kindness, and maturity, making him an excellent role model for others.

Well done, Harley. This award is thoroughly deserved, and you should be very proud of yourself!

Melody

You are a kind and caring person who always thinks about others. You have worked hard to learn Makaton and have used it to communicate with Maple Class, helping everyone feel included.

You always invite others to join in your games and show kindness to your friends every day. You understand our school values and do a fantastic job of showing them through your actions. You also help others to make good choices and follow the values too. You have come so far, and we are all so proud of the amazing person you are becoming.

Keep being kind, confident, and supportive of those around you. Well done, Melody!

Kaydence

Since joining Beech Class, Kaydence has truly found her place and become a valued member of Beech class. Her kindness shines through in everything she does, and her wonderful sense of humour brings smiles to those around her. She is a bright, hardworking girl who is always eager to learn and help others.

From sharing her love of gymnastics with her friends to representing her classmates as a School Council Rep, Kaydence has grown in confidence and continues to flourish every day.

She treats everyone with kindness and positivity, making her a truly deserving choice for Role Model of the Month.

October at Witham

This month, pupils at our Witham site have enjoyed a wide range of engaging learning experiences designed to develop communication, independence, wellbeing and confidence across all areas of learning. Through our Brilliant Bodies theme, pupils explored their identities, relationships and body awareness. They learned about trusted adults, positive relationships and personal safety, while developing a greater understanding of themselves and the important people in their lives.

Creative activities, including self-portraits and body-themed artwork, encouraged pupils to express their individuality while experimenting with different materials, textures and colours. Communication continued to be a key focus, with pupils practising greetings, responding to familiar questions, making choices and communicating their wants and needs. Through personalised learning, play-based activities and social opportunities, pupils developed turn-taking, interaction skills and sustained engagement with others.

Pupils have also developed their thinking and problem-solving skills by identifying body parts, investigating how everyday objects work and exploring different ways to complete practical challenges. Literacy learning has included the use of imperative (bossy) verbs to write instructions, while pupils also began learning about interoception, helping them to recognise and understand the signals their bodies provide. Practical life skills remained an important part of the curriculum. Some of our pupils have enjoyed cooking sessions, developing independence and confidence while following instructions and preparing food.

Independence lessons also focused on self-care routines such as handwashing, recognising personal care items and building everyday life skills. Alongside classroom learning, pupils benefited from a range of enriching experiences including swimming, Forest School and regular community visits. These opportunities helped to develop water confidence, communication, social interaction, independence and an understanding of the wider world. Outdoor learning encouraged exploration through the senses and provided valuable opportunities for curiosity, investigation and teamwork. We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, resilience and progress shown by our Primary pupils this month. Through a broad and engaging curriculum, they continue to grow in confidence, independence and readiness for future learning.





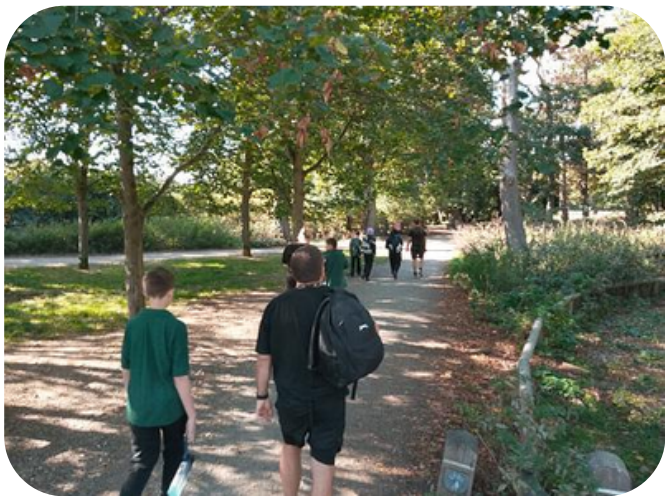
October at Baddow

Throughout the month, pupils have shown fantastic collaboration and teamwork, building positive relationships and supporting one another with kindness, patience and encouragement. Across a wide range of activities, they have demonstrated excellent communication skills, worked collaboratively with their peers and celebrated one another's achievements.

A key focus this month has been the continued exploration of new beginnings, helping pupils to develop confidence, independence and a stronger understanding of themselves as learners and individuals. They have worked hard to identify their strengths, interests and personal goals, while developing resilience and pride in their achievements. Learning has extended beyond the classroom through a variety of enriching experiences. Pupils have enjoyed visits within the local community, helping them to develop independence, life skills and real-world experiences. Regular sessions in Forest School have encouraged curiosity, problem-solving and teamwork, while Food Technology has enabled pupils to develop practical skills and confidence in preparing food. Music lessons have provided opportunities for creativity and self-expression, and fencing sessions have supported physical development, focus and perseverance.

Many pupils have also demonstrated exceptional engagement in their individual projects, exploring personal interests such as Pokémon, basketball and other areas of enthusiasm. These projects have encouraged creativity, research skills, independence and a sense of ownership over their learning.

Most importantly, pupils have enjoyed their time in school, embracing opportunities with enthusiasm and developing strong connections with both staff and peers. It has been wonderful to see them grow in confidence, develop new skills and become valued members of the Woodend Farm School community. Their positive attitudes, willingness to try new experiences and support for one another have made this a highly successful and rewarding month.





Thrive

This half term, Thrive sessions across both Witham and Baddow sites have focused on helping pupils develop a greater understanding of themselves, their emotions, and the strategies they can use to support their wellbeing. Through individual sessions, children have been given opportunities to reflect on their experiences, celebrate their successes, and explore any challenges they may be facing both in and out of school.
A key area of focus has been supporting pupils to identify and communicate their feelings in a safe and nurturing environment. Through a range of tailored activities, conversations, games, creative tasks, and practical experiences, children have continued to build emotional literacy, confidence, and self-awareness while strengthening their ability to recognise and regulate their emotions.

Throughout the half term, we have also worked closely alongside pupils to develop resilience, problem-solving skills, and positive coping strategies. By providing consistent support and opportunities for reflection, pupils have been encouraged to recognise their strengths, build confidence in their abilities, and develop a more positive sense of self.

It has been wonderful to see the progress many children have made in their Thrive sessions. From increased confidence in expressing their thoughts and feelings to improved engagement and emotional awareness, pupils have continued to demonstrate growth in a variety of ways. We look forward to continuing this work next half term and supporting our young people as they continue to develop, achieve, and thrive.



House Teams

Congratulations to Bravery House, our House Champions for this month!

We are delighted to announce that Bravery House finished the month at the top of the leaderboard, earning the highest number of positive points across the school.

This achievement reflects the kindness, teamwork and accountability shown by pupils throughout the month. Members of Bravery House have consistently made positive choices, supported their peers, demonstrated respect, and taken responsibility for their learning and behaviour.

Their positive attitude and commitment to our school values have made a valuable contribution to our school community and earned them this well-deserved recognition.

A huge well done to everyone in Bravery House.

Primary Homework
Brilliant Bodies



This half term our Primary pupils are exploring **Brilliant Bodies**.
Choose some of the activities below to continue the learning at home.

1 My Brilliant Body



Draw a person or make a model of the human body. Can you name or label different body parts?

2 Healthy Chef



Help to prepare a healthy snack or meal. Talk about the ingredients you use and how they help our bodies.

3 Get Moving!



Walk, dance, cycle, play outside or choose another favourite activity. What happens to your breathing and heartbeat when you exercise?

4 Super Senses



Go on a sensory hunt. Find something you can see, hear, smell, touch and, where appropriate, taste.

5 My Amazing Heart



Find your heartbeat before and after some exercise. Is it faster or slower? Can you count your pulse for 30 seconds?

6 Food Rainbow Challenge



How many different coloured fruits and vegetables can you find? Can you create a rainbow using them?

7 Bedtime Detective



Talk about why our bodies need sleep. Create a simple bedtime routine using pictures, symbols, words or a checklist.

8 Skeleton Challenge



Can you find out the name of some of the bones in your body? You could draw one, make one using craft materials or build one from pasta!

9 Keeping Clean



Practise an important hygiene routine such as washing your hands, brushing your teeth or getting ready for the day. Can you remember the steps in the correct order?

10 Brilliant Bodies Fact Finder



Find out one amazing fact about the human body. You could tell your class, draw it, write it down or ask an adult to help you record a short video.

You do not need to complete them all – choose the activities that your child will enjoy and that work best for them.



We would love to see what you get up to!

Please upload photos, videos or comments about your homework activities to your child's ClassDojo portfolio.



Kindness, belonging, believing, achieving

Secondary Homework
New Beginnings

This half term our Secondary students are exploring New Beginnings.
Choose some of the activities below to continue the learning at home.

1 Try Something New



Learn a new skill or try an activity you haven't done before. This could be cooking, a sport, a craft, a game or a practical skill.

2 My Independence Challenge



Take responsibility for a task at home. You could prepare a snack, organise your belongings, make your bed, sort some washing or get everything ready for the next day.

3 Plan a Meal



Choose a meal you would like to eat. Make an ingredients list and find out approximately how much it would cost. You could even help to make it!

4 My Local Community



Take a walk or journey in your local area. Identify useful places and services such as shops, libraries, leisure facilities or transport links.

5 Journey Planner



Choose somewhere you would like to visit and work out how you could get there. You might walk, drive or use public transport. Can you work out approximately how long the journey would take?

6 Money Challenge



Imagine you have £10 to spend. Look online or in a shop and decide what you could buy without going over your budget. Can you work out how much change you would receive?

7 My Strengths



Identify three things you are good at or have improved at recently. You could write them, draw them, make a poster or discuss them with someone at home.

8 Jobs Around Me



Notice different jobs when you are out and about or watching television. Choose one and find out what the person does and what skills they might need.

9 Looking Forward



Choose something you would like to achieve this year. Think about the small steps you could take to help you reach your goal.

10 New Beginnings Playlist



Choose songs that make you feel positive, motivated or ready for something new. Create a playlist and explain why you chose one of the songs.

11 Cook Independently



Prepare a simple snack or dish as independently as you safely can. Think about hygiene, equipment, following instructions and clearing up afterwards.

12 Make a Difference



Do something helpful for somebody else or for your community. This could be helping at home, looking after an animal, picking up litter or helping a family member.



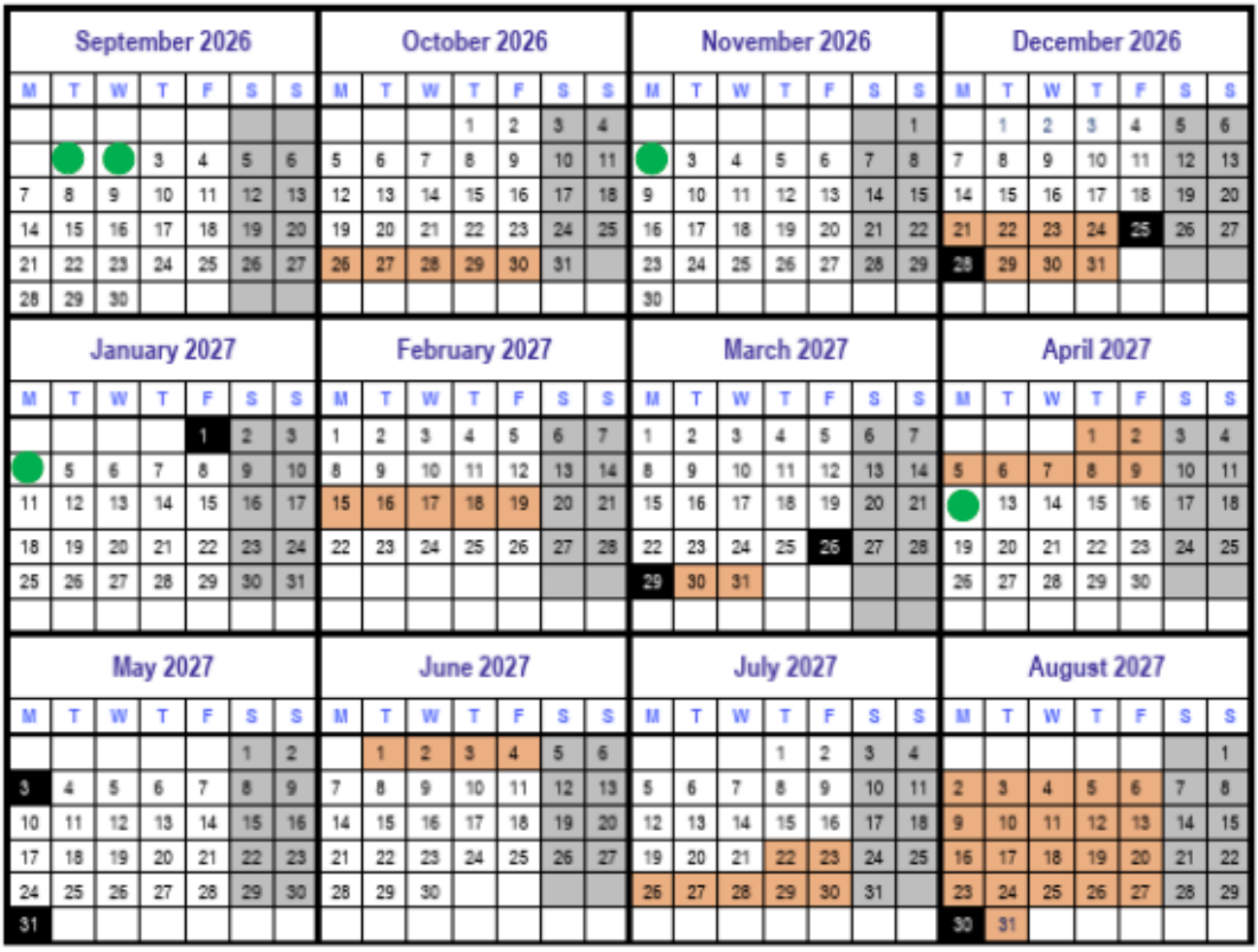
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Kindness, belonging, believing, achieving

Essex County Council School Term and Holiday Dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools - Academic Year 2026-2027



= Schooldays = School holidays = Bank holidays

= Weekends = **Non pupil days**

In addition, schools allocate five non-pupil days out of the school days indicated, or the equivalent in disaggregated twilight sessions.

Autumn Term:	Tuesday 1 September 2026 – Friday 18 December 2026 *Half Term 26 October – 30 October*	74 days
Spring Term:	Monday 4 January 2027 – Thursday 25 March 2027 *Half Term 15 February - 19 February*	54 days
Summer Term:	Monday 12 April 2027 – Wednesday 21 July 2027 *Half Term 31 May – 4 June, and May Bank Holiday - 3 May*	67 days
		195 days

Please note:
The above dates may vary for individual schools, especially Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies.
You are strongly advised to check with your child's school before making any holiday or other commitments.