

September 2026 NEWSLETTER



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER...

It has been a fantastic start to the new academic year at Woodend Farm School. Our pupils have returned positively and settled in well across both our Witham and Baddow sites. We have been delighted to welcome new pupils and staff members to our school community, and it has been wonderful to see new relationships already beginning to flourish.

Across both sites, we have been focusing on embedding "The Woodend Farm School Way", ensuring that our shared values, therapeutic approach, and high expectations are understood by everyone. Pupils have embraced routines well and are already demonstrating the resilience, kindness, and engagement that make our school such a special place.

We are also incredibly proud to share that Woodend Farm School has been shortlisted for an Outstanding Impact Award by the National Association of Special Schools, recognising the difference our staff make to the lives of our pupils and families. This is a wonderful achievement and a testament to the dedication, passion, and expertise of our whole school community.

In addition, we are delighted to welcome Bear, our new therapy dog, to the Woodend Farm School family. Bear has already made a positive impression on pupils and staff alike and will play an important role in supporting wellbeing, emotional regulation, and positive relationships across the school.

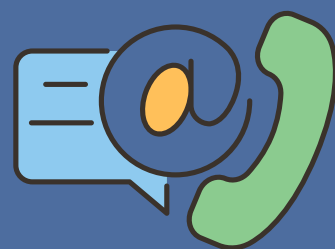
We are excited for the year ahead and look forward to celebrating the many successes and achievements of our pupils as the term progresses.

CONTACT INFO:

If you need to contact the school, our office team can be reached by:

Email at: admin@woodendfarm.school

Telephone on 01376 790202 between 9:00am and 4:00pm, Monday to Friday.



For class-related queries, parents and carers can also send messages directly to their child's teacher via ClassDojo.

We are always happy to help and will respond to enquiries as promptly as possible.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTORAL TEAM

It has been fantastic to welcome our pupils back to school, and we'd like to extend a warm welcome to all the new children and families joining the Woodend Farm School community.

A reminder that new consent forms should be returned as soon as possible to ensure we have up-to-date contact information and permissions for your child. Please ensure these forms are completed and returned by Friday 2nd October 2026.

As we continue to enjoy some warmer weather, please ensure children come to school with appropriate clothing, sun cream where needed, and a labelled water bottle.

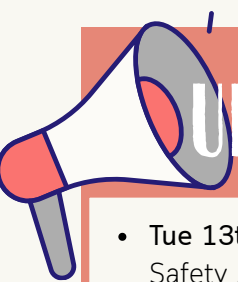
For families providing packed lunches, please remember that Woodend Farm School is a strictly no-nut school to help keep all members of our community safe.

As previously mentioned, we are pleased to welcome Bear, our therapy dog, who has already become a much-loved member of the school community, as well as new specialist services including Art Therapy, Music Therapy, and Occupational Therapy. We are also delighted to welcome several new staff members to the Woodend Farm team.

Parents and carers, we would love to hear from you! If you have any particular skills, hobbies, professions, or areas of expertise that you would be willing to share with our pupils, please get in touch. Whether it's gardening, cooking, art, music, construction, animal care, or another area of interest, we are always grateful for opportunities to enrich our pupils' learning experiences.

School uniform and branded items can be ordered via www.gemzthreadz.co.uk.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to another exciting and successful year ahead.



UPCOMING EVENTS

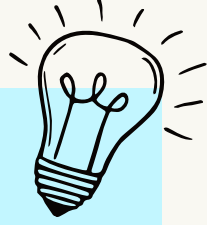
- **Tue 13th Oct 2026:** Firework, Bonfire & Halloween Safety Assembly (Primary Witham Site) - 1pm & 1.30pm (pupils only)
- **Fri 23rd Oct 2026:** Firework, Bonfire & Halloween Safety Assembly (Secondary Baddow Site) - 11am (pupils only)
- **Mon 16th Nov 2026:** Knife Crime Awareness (Secondary Baddow Site) (pupils only)
- **Wed 18th Nov 2026:** Mental Health Workshops (pupils only)

KEY DATES



- **October Half Term:**
 - 26th Oct 2026 to Fri 30th Oct 2026
- **Non Pupil Day:**
 - Mon 2nd Nov 2026
- **Christmas Break:**
 - Mon 21st Dec 2026 to 1st Jan 2026
- **Non Pupil Day:**
 - Mon 4th Jan 2026

SCHOOL COUNCIL



We are delighted to introduce our Autumn Term School Council members. They have been chosen to represent their classes this term and will play an important role in sharing pupils' ideas, suggestions and views.

Our Autumn Term School Council Representatives are:

Hunter, Max, Austin, Kaydence and Kai

Congratulations to all of our representatives. We look forward to hearing their ideas and seeing the positive contribution they make throughout the term.

ROLE MODEL OF THE MONTH



Freddie

Freddie has been an excellent role model, consistently demonstrating kindness, respect and consideration towards others.

He is supportive of his peers and has been especially thoughtful in helping his new classmate feel welcome and settled.

Freddie has shown patience and understanding, helping them to become familiar with classroom routines and showing them the Woodend Farm way.

Freddie has demonstrated our school values of Believing, Kindness and Growth through his positive attitude towards learning and the way he supports those around him. He approaches school with enthusiasm and is always willing to help others.

Freddie should be very proud of the positive example he sets within the classroom.

William



William has been a wonderful role model this month and should be incredibly proud of all he has achieved.

He approaches school life with a positive attitude, embraces new opportunities with enthusiasm, and always strives to do his best.

A particular highlight this month has been William's growing confidence in developing friendships and positive relationships with his peers. He has shown kindness, worked well with others and become a valued member of group activities.

William's cheerful attitude, caring nature, and commitment to both his learning and friendships make him a fantastic role model and a valued member of the school community.

Well done William!

THRIVE

This half term, pupils across both the Primary and Secondary departments have been using their Thrive sessions to support their transition into the new school year. Together, we have explored changes such as new classes, routines, staff, and expectations, helping children feel settled and confident in their school environment.

Pupils have also enjoyed sharing their favourite summer holiday memories and reflecting on their feelings as they return to school. It has been wonderful to see children engaging positively in their sessions, developing emotional awareness, building confidence, and strengthening their wellbeing as they start the year.



PE - WITHAM SITE

Since returning to school all of Woodend Farm Primary School have hit the ground running. We have returned focusing on agility and balance, using activities to challenge the students.

They have really enjoyed getting back into the PE groove and completing activities with their new classmates. The students that were at the school last year are able to guide and support the new students. It has been lovely to see so many new students getting stuck into PE.

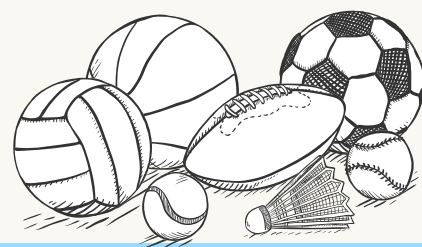
Lunchtime club has returned by popular demand, and the students absolutely love it. Every lunch has seen between 10-15 students engaging and participating in sports like Football, Hockey and Athletics.

PE - BADDOW SITE

The year started with strategy games in PE and the students had to work in pairs to select equipment and suitable tactics to compete against another pair. Engagement and enthusiasm was high during these sessions and Destiny and Oliver set a school record, completing one of the courses in just two shots!

Lessons then moved onto football, with a focus on agility and speed. Students needed to think quickly to complete agility challenges and then remain focused on their technique to score goals. We had some phenomenal 'top bins' finishes!

For some of the students, who were not comfortable playing football, they demonstrated these skills by playing basketball and throwing and catching games.



HOUSE CAPTAINS

We are delighted to relaunch our House Teams this year: Honor, Strength, Bravery and Loyalty. Our houses encourage teamwork, responsibility, determination and a strong sense of belonging across the school.

We would like to congratulate our newly appointed House Captains. Austin and Olivia will lead Honour, Hunter and Harley will lead Strength, Isabelle and William will lead Bravery, and Vann and Noah will lead Loyalty. These pupils will help promote their house values, support school events and encourage their peers throughout the year.

We look forward to seeing all pupils work together to earn house points, celebrate achievements and make this a successful year for their house teams. Congratulations to all of our House Captains. We look forward to seeing their leadership skills flourish throughout the year.



FOREST SCHOOL



Forest School has been filled with curiosity, creativity, and adventure as learners have embraced the start of a new term outdoors. Through a wide range of child-led experiences, learners have been building positive connections with the natural environment, while developing trusted relationships with staff and peers.

Our recent adventures have included foraging for blackberries around the site, learning about plant life cycles, discussing safe foraging practices, and using our harvest to create natural tie-dye and delicious campfire treats. These hands-on experiences have encouraged exploration, discovery, and a deeper understanding of the natural world.

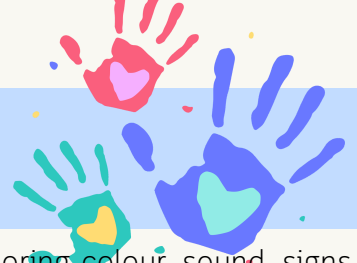
Learners have also been developing practical woodland skills through the safe use of tools, including whittling, digging, sawing, and drilling, gaining confidence, independence, and new skills along the way. Creativity and imagination have flourished through den building, tree swings, and rope work, with learners and staff working together to develop problem-solving and teamwork skills.

Mud kitchens, water and boat play, and exciting bug-hunting adventures have all contributed to rich child-led learning experiences, providing opportunities for exploration, investigation, and imaginative role play. These outdoor experiences continue to foster resilience, confidence, communication, and a lifelong appreciation of nature



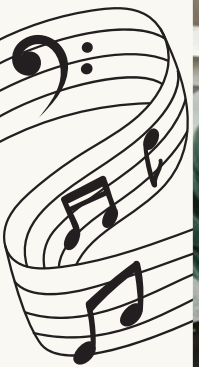


EXPRESSIVE ARTS



Expressive Arts has been a dynamic area of learning, with learners exploring colour, sound, signs, and symbols within school and the wider community. They have investigated how colours and sounds help us recognise, understand, and remember different messages and services.

Learners have designed their own signs and artwork, using descriptive language, music, and imagination to express ideas, feelings, and meaning. They have also begun an exciting musical journey with Stave House Music, exploring rhythm and musical notes through fun, character-led activities. Through singing, clapping to the beat, and working alongside staff and peers, learners have developed creativity, confidence, communication skills, and a shared enjoyment of learning through music.



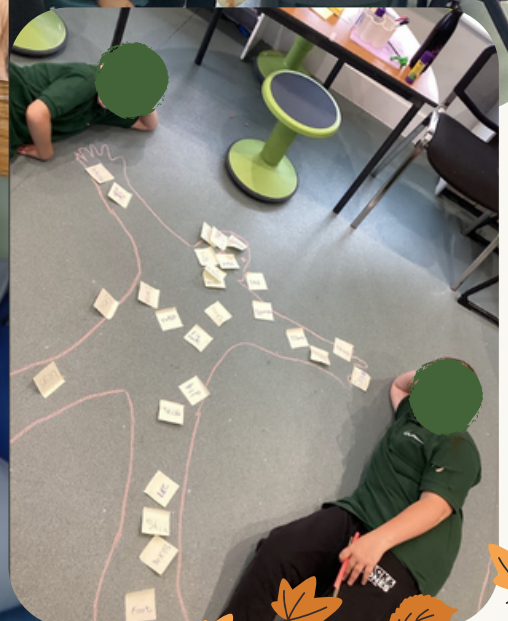
SEPTEMBER AT WITHAM...

Our Primary pupils have been exploring the fascinating topic of “Brilliant Bodies.” Through a variety of practical, creative and interactive activities, pupils have been learning about different parts of the body, how our bodies work, the importance of healthy lifestyles, and ways to look after both their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Pupils have enjoyed engaging science investigations, creative projects and discussions that have helped them develop a greater understanding of themselves and others. It has been wonderful to see their curiosity, enthusiasm and confidence grow as they have explored what makes our bodies so amazing.

Alongside their classroom learning, some classes have also been participating in swimming lessons and Forest School sessions this month. These experiences have provided valuable opportunities for pupils to develop physical skills, build confidence, increase independence and enjoy learning in different environments.

Whether mastering new skills in the pool or exploring the outdoors through hands-on activities, pupils have demonstrated excellent engagement, resilience and teamwork, making the most of every opportunity to learn and grow.



SEPTEMBER AT BADDOW...



Our Secondary pupils have been focusing on the theme of “New Beginnings,” exploring personal growth, aspirations and the opportunities that come with change. Through their learning, pupils have reflected on their individual journeys, strengths and achievements, while setting goals for the future and developing greater independence.

The topic has provided valuable opportunities to discuss resilience, self-belief, relationships and preparing for future transitions. Alongside their classroom learning, pupils have enjoyed a range of enriching experiences designed to develop confidence, teamwork and new skills.

Pupils have been engaging in fencing sessions, where they have demonstrated excellent focus, discipline and sportsmanship. They have also benefited from music tuition through Stave House, providing opportunities to develop their musical abilities, express their creativity and build self-confidence.

These experiences have supported pupils to step outside their comfort zones, embrace new challenges and celebrate personal achievements, truly reflecting our values of Kindness, Belonging, Believing and Achieving.





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.



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

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

September 2026							October 2026							November 2026							December 2026							
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January 2027							February 2027							March 2027							April 2027						
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May 2027							June 2027							July 2027							August 2027						
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31																					30	31					

☐ = 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 <i>Half Term 26 October – 30 October</i>	74 days
Spring Term:	Monday 4 January 2027 – Thursday 25 March 2027 <i>Half Term 15 February - 19 February</i>	54 days
Summer Term:	Monday 12 April 2027 – Wednesday 21 July 2027 <i>Half Term 31 May – 4 June, and May Bank Holiday - 3 May</i>	67 days
		195 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.