



## Yardley Primary School Newsletter January 2026



16<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Welcome back. I hope that you had a pleasant Christmas break...it already seems a long time ago

### **Term dates for the 2026-27 academic year**

Firstly, here are the term dates for the next school year which starts in September 2026.

#### **Autumn Term**

Starts - Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2026

Pupils Year 1 to Year 6 will return to school Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September. New Reception pupils will start on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September

Fri 23<sup>rd</sup> October – INSET

Half term - Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October to Fri 30<sup>th</sup> October

Last day of term - Fri 18<sup>th</sup> December 2026

#### **Spring term**

Starts - Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January

Half term – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February

Last day of term - Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March

#### **Summer Term**

Starts - Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April

Half term – Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May to Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June

Last day of term - Weds 21<sup>st</sup> July

#### **Construction update**

The final planning application for the new building is due to go to committee this month and construction is most likely to start Summer 2026. The other major project, our shiny new heating system in the main building, has had a few teething problems but is now working in all areas except for the currently unused classroom, the staffroom and part of the infant corridor.

#### **Mrs Henderson**

We previously announced that Mrs Henderson was going to be leaving her role as Nursery teacher at the end of December due to family commitments. I'm happy to say that we've found a way to accommodate those commitments whilst continuing in her role at the school and therefore will be staying for the foreseeable future.

#### **Sports Trips Parent Volunteers**

It is becoming increasingly difficult to attend sporting events with the cost of coaches. This has meant we have had to travel to events via public transport and minicabs. For this to happen, the member of staff (usually Coach Claire) leading the group requires DBS checked parents by the school to meet the required adult to child ratio. We need your help volunteering for future P.E. events (with or without your child). If you would like to volunteer and are not DBS checked by the school already, please go to the office to pick up a form and follow the instructions. The school covers the cost of applying. Anyone already on the DBS update service is also accepted. Without meeting the required adult to child ratio, the children will not be able to attend these sporting events.



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### Sports results

Talking of sporting events. We continued to do well in a range of sporting events over the autumn term. We won all three of the Sportshall Athletics events (Yr2, Years 3/4 and Years 5/6), the Year 6 football competition and we got the silver medals in both girls' and boys' events in the key stage 2 Waltham Forest cross country competition. Well done to all the pupils who took part. Our year5/6 Sportshall team will now represent Waltham Forest at the London Youth Games in February.





### Important Attendance Update

Before Christmas we received 2 documents, the annual Ofsted desktop report and an analysis of Yardley's pupil attendance from the Department of Education. Both reports highlight that attendance was an area that the school could improve on and the DofE document has set the school the target of improving attendance this year by 0.5%. This doesn't sound a lot but it is the equivalent to 350 missed school days. As a school, we have been fairly light touch with regard to attendance, However, polite reminders about the importance of the children attending school and not to book term time holidays have had no impact. From January 19<sup>th</sup> the school will have no choice but to adhere to the government guidelines on attendance and the actions to be taken. I have attached the template letter which contains all the details but I will also explain the process here.

The national threshold is **10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period**. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years. A reminder that most illness absences are authorised absence so will not count towards this threshold. However, if a child has a high level of absences through illness, we may require medical evidence or it could be recorded as unauthorised.

When a child reaches the threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period, it will trigger the following actions.

- Firstly, a member of the office staff will phone one of the child's parents/carers to make sure they are aware that the child's attendance is a concern and to discuss any ways that the school can help improve it. This will be followed up with an email to confirm the conversation and set a review date.
- If there is no improvement in the next 4 weeks, and the child continues to have 10 sessions unauthorised absence within the rolling 10 week period OR if the child's overall attendance is below 90% (this is what is classed as persistent absenteeism), then we will hold a formal meeting with the parents and create an attendance contract with agreed targets to be reviewed at a set date (between 3 to 6 weeks).
- If at this review point, attendance has still not improved then a 'Notice To Improve' letter will be issued with the warning that the next step will be a fixed penalty notice.
- Issue of fixed penalty notice. If it is a parent's first offense the fine is £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days; rises to £160 if paid within 28 days. **It is important to state that the school will not receive any of this money as all fines are paid to Waltham Forest.**
- If there is a second offense within 3 years then the fine is £160 per parent, per child, with no option for reduced payment.
- In Waltham Forest, where a pupil's attendance has met the national threshold for a third time within 3 years and the parent/s have already been issued with 2 penalty notices within that period, consideration will be given to prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which can result in a criminal conviction and fine of up to £2,500.



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We do have some families that, if this system had been in place for the last two years, would have reached the fining stage. Hopefully, by working with the school, parents will not find themselves receiving fixed penalty notices.

### **Punctuality**

The majority of our children arrive in good time each morning and we thank them and parents for that. We are still seeing large numbers of pupils arriving late. In the weeks before Christmas it was an average of 20 each day (there were over 40 on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January!). Each one of these pupils needs to be signed in and then in most cases, a member of the office staff has to walk them down to their classrooms. This is disruptive for everyone involved and most importantly, the child is missing out on learning time. Being punctual is an important life skill that children will need in their lives and should be encouraged.

In accordance to the government guidance, any child arriving after 9.15am – this is 20mins after the start of the school day – will be recorded as ‘late after the register’. **This is an unauthorized absence and will contribute to the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period** and so could lead to same actions outlined above.

10 school weeks from January 19<sup>th</sup> goes back to Monday October 20<sup>th</sup>. From next week the office will start contacting parents of children who have 10 sessions or more of unauthorized absence in that period as well the parents of children with an overall attendance less than 90%.

We have updated the school attendance policy in line with the national guidelines and this will be emailed out to all parents as well as the guidance from Waltham Forest.

If you have any questions, please email [attendance@yardleyprimary.co.uk](mailto:attendance@yardleyprimary.co.uk)

Regards  
Mr Evans  
Headteacher