



12th December 2025

Diary Dates



December

- 15th – Lower KS2 (Years 3&4) Carol Concert to parents 9:15am
- 15th – Yr5/6 football match v Merrylands (A) (selected children)
- 16th – Upper KS2 (Year 5&6) Carol Concert to parents 9:15am
- 16th – Yr5/6 football match v Phoenix (H) (selected children)
- 17th – Pantomime in school
- 19th – Last day of term

January

- 5th – Return to School
- 9th – Reception Superhero Day
- 14th – County Dodgeball Competition (Selected children)
- 14th – Police visit to Reception children
- 16th – Dental visit for Reception & Year 3 pupils
- 16th – Yr5/6 football match v St Anne Line (H) (selected children)

Inset Dates— 20th, 21st & 22nd May 2026

This week at Whitmore.....

What a wonderfully busy week it has been at Whitmore! Today, the adults have been hard at work putting together our annual Christmas video, which we hope will bring some festive cheer to you all once it's ready to share. It's always a highlight of the season and we can't wait for you to see it.

The children have thoroughly enjoyed their Christmas dinner day today, and we must give a huge thank you to our fantastic kitchen staff who produced an incredible 500 dinners! We're also grateful to all the staff across the school who helped serve the children their food and drinks, and who worked tirelessly to set up and clear down the halls. It truly was a team effort and the children had a wonderful time.

Looking ahead, next week promises to be just as exciting. We have our LKS2 and UKS2 carol performances in the playground on Monday and Tuesday mornings – we hope to see many of you there to join in the festive spirit. Then on Thursday, we're delighted to welcome Basildon's MP, Richard Holden, into school. He'll be recognising some of our talented children whose artwork was submitted to be created into his constituency Christmas cards. It's a wonderful achievement and we're incredibly proud of them.

A reminder that there are no clubs on next week, so all children will finish school at the usual end of day times.

Wishing you all a very relaxed weekend.

Mr Wade
Head of School



Well done to the following children



Certificate of Achievement

Buttercup - Zeynep K
Daffodil - Iyrs R
Primrose - Sydney
Bluebell - Oscar M
Rose - Noel B
Tulip - Jason
Lavender - Delsina C
Orchid - Maria
Sunflower - Eliza S
Birch - Joshua L
Hawthorn - Bradley B
Pine - Haadi H
Ash - Gabriel B
Beech - Charlie P
Maple - Freddie W
Olive - Olivia V
Sycamore - Amelia M
Willow - Bianca
Elder - Charlotte C
Elm - Sophia V
Oak - Shayaan

Reader of the Week

Bluebell - Yasin K
Rose - Finley C
Tulip - Kumsal
Lavender - Avie R
Orchid - Parker
Sunflower - Lucy C
Birch - Riley P
Hawthorn - Owen G
Pine - Florence G
Ash - Jacqueline H
Beech - Oscar M
Maple - Mia
Olive - Wyatt G
Sycamore - Tyler C
Willow - Hudson
Elder - Owen D
Elm - Louis C
Oak - Isabella



REMINDER

The primary school (Reception) admission round opened on Monday 10 November 2025, for parents of children to apply for a Reception school place for the academic year that starts in September 2026.

The statutory national closing date for applications is 15 January 2026.

Applications can be made online via www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. 99% of parents in Essex applied online last year

The website www.essex.gov.uk/admissions also has a copy of the Primary Education in Essex 2026-27 booklet and the Schools Admissions Policies Directories contain details of all admission policies..

Reminder that all after school clubs have now finished for this academic year. New clubs will be sent out shortly that will commence in January.



Berlesduna Vacancies



BERLESDUNA ACADEMY TRUST – VACANCIES

CANEWDON – CLEANER closing date 6th January

CANEWDON – CARETAKER closing date 6th January

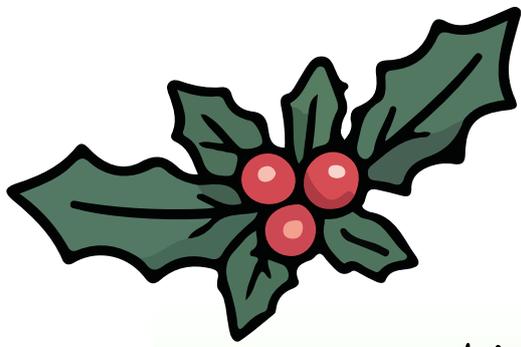
FELMORE – SEND LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT/MIDDAY ASSISTANT closing date 4th January

MERRYLANDS – CLEANER closing date 6th January

WILLOWS – MEDICAL OFFICER closing date 12th December

For more information and to apply for any of these exciting opportunities, please follow the link to our website [Vacancies - Berlesduna Academy Trust](#)





Reading Corner

This week we will be reading....

Nursery - Giraffes can't dance by Giles Andreae

Reception - Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain

Year 1 - Supertato by Sue Hendra

Year 2 - The bear under the stairs by Helen Cooper

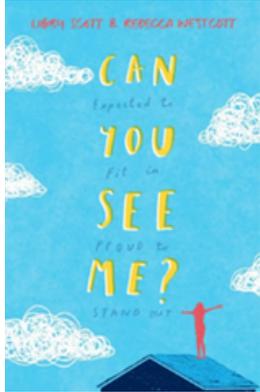
Year 3 - The boy who grew dragons by Andy Shepherd

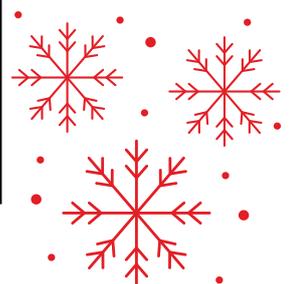
Year 4 - The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S.Lewis

Year 5 - The boy at the back of the class by Onjali Rauf

Year 6 - Windrush Child by Benjamin Zepaniah

Recommended Reads

KS1	Lower KS2	Upper KS2
		





Phonics

We're teaching every child to read with Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised
A complete SSP validated by the Department for Education



Please scan the QR code or click the link to take you to the Little Wandle Parents page where you will find how we teach a new sound, how we teach children to read decodable words and tricky words. You will also find how to pronounce all GPCs your children learn.

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>



Reception	This week in Reception each class have been reviewing the sounds the children are least confident in. The children have all tried really hard in their recent phonics assessment and have made so much progress.
Year 1	Year 1 completed their autumn term phonics assessments this week. Well done to all the children.
Year 2	This week year 2 have been reviewing phase 5 GPCs and words. Well done everyone for learning their spellings this half term! Spellings will be sent home again on the first week in Spring 1.

Player of the week—

- Lavender— Temi A
- Orchid — Amelia
- Sunflower— Iremide O
- Birch— Riley P
- Hawthorn— Ethan S
- Pine— Ralph C
- Ash— Lexi B
- Beech— Amelia R-R
- Maple— Caleb
- Sycamore— Imogen B
- Olive - Freya F
- Willow— Alianna
- Elder— Owen D
- Elm— Zack M
- Oak— Darius



- Player of the week—
- Bluebell— Nathaniel O
- Rose— Harley G
- Tulip— Tiffany





Talk it Topic

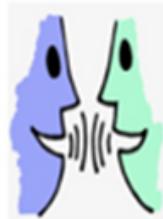


'Talk it' topics are an opportunity for children to discuss an issue or idea throughout the week which is linked to the British Values. It encourages children's communication skills as well as debating skills and is fun. We cover a different topic in school each week. It would be

fantastic if you could talk about it at home too. This week's topic will be— Early Years— How can we show kindness to elderly people? This is linked to the British Value - Democracy.

KS1 & KS2—What does kindness look like? This is linked to the British Value - Democracy.

Oracy Corner



Let's Talk



"Would you rather be Santa's elf or reindeer?" Discuss.

Build
Develop, add to or elaborate on an idea.

Start by saying:

- Building on X's idea...
- I agree and would like to add...
- X's idea made me think...

Build

Challenge
Disagree or present an alternative argument

Start by saying:

- I disagree because...
- To challenge you X, I think...
- I understand your point of view, but have you thought about...?

Challenge



Essex County Council
Libraries

10 January to 22 February 2026



Winter Reading Challenge

Find out more about how to take part in this free activity on our website: libraries.essex.gov.uk

Dear Parent/Carer,

Your child is invited to sign up for this year's Winter Reading Challenge at your local library!

What is the Winter Reading Challenge?

The Winter Reading Challenge is a fun activity put together by Essex Library Service for children aged 0-12. It encourages children and families to keep reading over the winter and to visit their local library.

Children are invited to complete 6 challenges from a list of 12 reading and creative activities, and it's FREE to take part. Their mission is to help some friendly animals that work in different professions across Essex!

How can my child take part?

Visit your local library to sign up. Your child will:

- Receive their Challenge sheet
- Choose 6 challenges to complete (from a list of 12)
- Earn a sticker for each challenge they complete
- When they've complete 6 challenges they will receive a certificate and they will be able to enter our prize draw – with the chance to win bigger prizes such as Kindles, book tokens and toys

When?

The challenge starts on Saturday 10 January and runs through to the end of the February half term on 22 February. Unsure where your closest library is? Use the Essex Library Service website to check.

Head to your local library this winter and sign up! You can find out more about the challenge on the library website and if you have any questions, please ask staff in the library.

We look forward to seeing you!

Best wishes

Essex Library Service





Our Nursery Children put on a Carol Concert for their parents this week. They performed amazingly and we are so proud of them all.