November Newsletter 2026

Headteacher Welcome

Welcome back to the start of another busy and exciting half term! I hope all of our children and families enjoyed a relaxing half-term break and are ready for the weeks ahead.

We have already had a fantastic start to the term. Our Wagtails enjoyed a wonderful trip to Pendennis Castle, providing a memorable learning experience and bringing to life a topic they have really enjoyed in school. We have also had children representing St Merryn at sporting events, as well as our first Family Dining event for our Robins families. It has been lovely to see so many opportunities for our children and families to come together.

This is always a particularly exciting half term as we begin the countdown to Christmas. With just over three weeks until our first performance, Christmas rehearsals are now well underway! These performances offer so much more than the excitement of taking to the stage. They provide a wonderful opportunity to enrich the curriculum, bringing together elements of PE, Art and Literacy through a meaningful, real-life experience. Most importantly, they help our children to develop confidence, celebrate their talents and create those proud moments and special memories that we know families will treasure. Please take a look at the dates section of the newsletter for details of all our Christmas performances and events.

Remembrance

This Sunday, 8th November, we will be attending the Remembrance Service at St Merryn Church at 10:45am. We warmly invite our families to join us and represent the school as part of this important community occasion. Following the service, our children will be invited to lay a wreath and poppies at the war graves. If possible, we ask that children wear their St Merryn fleece or jumper.

Remembrance will continue in school on Wednesday 11th November, when our Robins and Wagtails children will take part in a special Remembrance Assembly. Our KS2 children will also have the exciting opportunity to take part in a special workshop with author Tom Palmer to mark the occasion.

I would also like to thank our families once again for your continued support as I continue in my new role across St Merryn and Trevisker Schools. Although my time is now shared between both schools, St Merryn remains very much at the heart of my work, and I continue to be incredibly proud of the warmth, positivity and strong sense of community that make our school such a special place.

As always, I welcome opportunities to speak with our families. Whether you have a question or concern, or simply a success to share, please do catch me on the gate or make an appointment through Mrs Worrall. Working together is key to ensuring that every child feels happy, supported and able to thrive and achieve their very best.

I look forward to sharing what promises to be a very special and exciting half term with you all.

Kyja King

Headteacher

Staffing Update

As you are aware, we are currently in the process of appointing a new class teacher for our Wagtails Class. We have been really pleased with the level of interest in the position and are looking forward to holding interviews at the end of this week. We will, of course, update our families as soon as we are able to share further news.

In the meantime, we are really pleased that Miss East will be increasing her working week to three days, helping to provide important consistency and continuity for our children. Miss Hill will teach Wagtails on Thursdays and Fridays.

We are very grateful to Miss East for her continued commitment to the children and for supporting us during this period of transition.

If you have any questions or queries about these arrangements, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kyja King

Headteacher

Pendennis Castle

We had a fantastic trip to Pendennis Castle, and we were incredibly lucky with the beautiful weather! The clear skies made it the perfect day for our pupils to explore the historic castle and its vast grounds, uncovering centuries of history along the way. A major highlight of the day was an engaging workshop where the children delved into the castle's origins and learned exactly why Henry VIII chose this strategic location for his coastal fortress. The excitement continued as everyone got to dress up as the various staff members who once worked at the castle, discovering what their daily jobs entailed through interactive roleplay. It was a wonderful,

hands-on learning experience, and the children represented the school beautifully throughout the day.















FOSMS News

It's been another busy and successful few months for Friends of St Merryn School, and we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has supported our fundraising efforts.

Our **Halloween Disco** was a great success, raising **£111.10**. A special thank you to the parents who stayed behind to help – we really appreciate your time and support!

Our **Harvest Festival raffle** raised a fantastic **£79**, and our biggest achievement was our **150th Anniversary Community Family Fun Afternoon**, which raised an amazing **£1,650.54**! Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, donated prizes and helped make the event such a success.

Christmas is coming!

Christmas Gifts

The children have been busy designing their own Christmas artwork, and very soon our online shop will be opening, giving you the opportunity to purchase bespoke Christmas cards and gifts featuring your child's designs. Keep an eye out for more information!

We need your help – FOSMS AGM

Finally, an important reminder that **Friends of St Merryn School needs new volunteers to keep going.**

Over the years, FOSMS has helped fund equipment, playground improvements, trips and treats for all our children. However, we urgently need new people to take over key committee roles. Without this support, the group will have to fold, meaning these extra opportunities and experiences could be lost.

Our AGM takes place on **Monday 16th November at 3:20pm**, and we'd love to see as many parents and carers there as possible.

You don't need previous experience or lots of spare time – just a willingness to get involved and help make a difference.

Please come along and help us keep FOSMS going for all our children.

Padstow Lantern Parade - Friday 4th of December

We are very excited to be making our own lanterns in class this year in preparation for the **Padstow Lantern Parade on Friday 4th December at 6.00pm** (meeting at 5.30pm). Our theme is the wonderfully festive poem *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* by Clement C. Moore. Teachers have been busy planning some magical lantern designs for the children to create, inspired by the characters and images from this much-loved Christmas poem. **We would love as many families as possible to come along, join us and celebrate the start of the festive season!** It promises to be a magical evening!



Early Years

What a wonderful start to the half term we have had in Early Years. We are incredibly proud of the progress the children are making, particularly in **phonics, speaking and communication**. It has been lovely to see their confidence grow as they share ideas, retell familiar stories, ask thoughtful questions and develop the early reading skills that will support them as they become

confident readers. We are also seeing growing independence in their learning and daily routines, alongside a real enthusiasm to explore and learn.

This half term, we are excited to be supporting the **St Merryn community Christmas celebrations** by helping to create decorations for the village Christmas tree. We would be very grateful for donations of **clean plastic bottles, particularly larger bottles**, which the children will transform into festive decorations.

We are also continuing to develop our Early Years learning environment and would welcome donations of **good-quality, preloved toys and resources** that families may no longer need. We are particularly looking for:

- wooden toys
- dolls' houses and figures
- small-world animals
- puzzles
- Sylvanian Families or similar small-world toys
- construction toys

Thank you, as always, for your support. We are looking forward to a **magical half term filled with learning, creativity, community spirit and festive fun!**

Mrs Muller

Children in Need - Friday 13th of November

We are looking forward to supporting **BBC Children in Need on Friday 13th November**. We will be holding a special assembly to help the children learn more about this fantastic charity and the amazing work it does to support children and families across the UK. To help us raise money, children are invited to come to school wearing their **home clothes or something spotty** in exchange for a suggested donation of **£1**. We hope the children will enjoy joining in and showing their support for such a worthwhile cause. Thank you, as always, for your generosity and support!



Family Dining

Back by popular demand! We are delighted to once again invite parents, carers, and family members to join us for a special *family dining experience* here at school. Come and enjoy a delicious lunch freshly prepared by our very own chefs, Paul and Lucy. This is a wonderful opportunity to experience some of the tasty meals our children enjoy each day, including dishes made with ingredients home-grown in our very own polytunnel.

Save the Date!

Wed 11th Nov – Wagtails

Wed 18th Nov – Starlings

Wed 25th Nov – Kestrels

Wed 2nd Dec - Barn Owls



Outdoor Learning



Our Wild Tribe sessions are continuing this term and the children in Robins and Wagtails are looking forward to getting outdoors this term to enjoy the fresh, wintery weather. Robins have already been busy learning about the United Kingdom, matching the flags of the four countries, building dens, creating wobbly bridges, and exploring the natural world around them. These hands-on experiences encourage teamwork, resilience, curiosity, and a love of learning outdoors.

We are also delighted to share that Trelawney Garden Centre has generously gifted us an enormous box of seeds for our polytunnel and garden. Last term, Gardening Club worked incredibly hard to clear a space for a sensory garden. We would like to make the garden using recycled tyres. We would love some help bringing this project to life. If you can spare a couple of hours, help collect tyres from the local garage, or support in any way, please let Mrs Muller know.





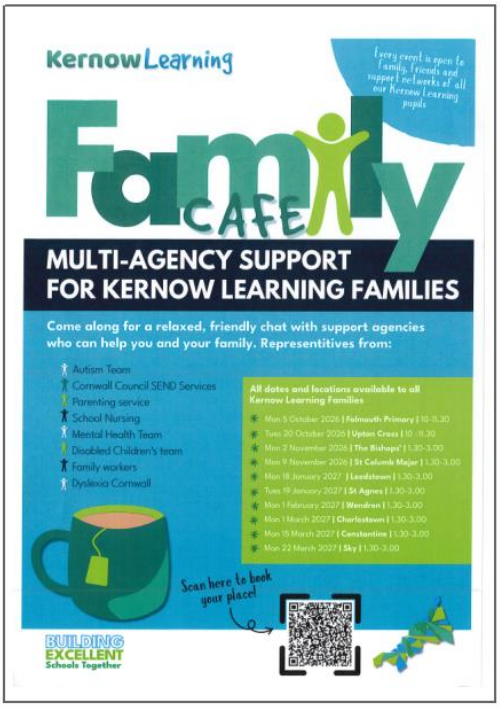


Music Update

Across the school, the children have been buzzing with excitement this term! We are incredibly proud of all the children for their hard work and enthusiasm in preparing for our Harvest Festival performances. Their singing, confidence, and teamwork made the celebrations truly special. Looking ahead, this is one of the most exciting terms for music in our school, with preparations beginning for our Nativity and KS2 performances. The children are already learning new songs and practising their performances, and we hope you'll soon be hearing plenty of the tunes being sung at home!

Inculsion - Advice from our SENCO





Reading for Pleasure

Below are handpicked book recommendations broken down by Key Stage, along with top tips to keep the reading spark alive at home.

Recommended Reading Lists by Key Stage

Early Years & Reception (Ages 3–5)

Focus: Rhyme, repetition, vibrant illustrations, and interactive reading.

- ***The Bear and the Seed*** **by Poonam Mistry** – A visually stunning, gentle folktale exploring nature and conservation.
- ***Unexpected Guests*** **by Mariajo Ilustrajo** – A hilarious and heartwarming picture book about endearing mice adapting to human neighbours.
- ***Ruby's Worry*** **by Tom Percival** – A warm, accessible story for talking about feelings and emotional literacy.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1–2 / Ages 5–7)

Focus: Early chapter books, graphic elements, high-interest plots, and humour.

- ***Adventuremice: Mini Mice Mayhem*** **by Philip Reeve & Sarah McIntyre** – Packed with colour illustrations, fast-paced action, and big laughs.
- ***Scaredy Cat*** **by Alex Falase-Koya** – An empowering early reader about overcoming fears and building everyday confidence.
- ***Hotel Flamingo*** **by Alex Milway** – A charming illustrated chapter book series celebrating team spirit and kindness.

Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3–4 / Ages 7–9)

Focus: Illustrated fiction, high-energy graphic novels, and relatable characters.

- ***Bunny vs Monkey: Day of the Heroes!*** **by Jamie Smart** – A runaway hit with pupils; comic-strip formats build reading stamina and pure joy.
- ***Watts & Whiskerton: Mischief on the Midnight Express*** **by Meg McLaren** – A cosy, animal-detective mystery designed to hook developing readers.
- ***The Breakfast Club Adventures*** **by Marcus Rashford & Alex Falase-Koya** – Full of mystery, friendship, and positive life lessons.

Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5–6 / Ages 9–11)

Focus: Immersive fantasy, thought-provoking contemporary stories, and gripping mysteries.

- ***The Wrong Shoes*** **by Tom Percival** – A compassionate, authentic story about empathy, equity, and growing up.
- ***Chronicles of a Lizard Nobody*** **by Patrick Ness** – Fast-paced, surreal, and wonderfully funny fiction that appeals to reluctant and avid readers alike.
- ***Greenwild: The World Behind the Door*** **by Pari Thomson** – Rich, atmospheric fantasy perfect for lovers of magic, nature, and adventure.

Quick Tips for Reading at Home

1. **Audiobooks Count!** Listening to audiobooks builds rich vocabulary and comprehension without decoding pressure.
2. **Embrace Comics & Graphic Novels.** Graphic formats are brilliant for visual readers and build critical story inference skills.
3. **Keep Reading Aloud.** Don't stop reading to your child once they can read independently—sharing a complex story at bedtime keeps reading a shared pleasure.
4. **Visit Your Local Library.** Free access to thousands of titles lets your child follow their interests without any pressure to stick with a book they aren't enjoying.

Why Blending Is Important for Early Reading

When children begin learning to read at school, they learn the sounds that letters make and then practise putting those sounds together to read words. For example:

s-a-t → sat

At first, children may say each sound separately. As they become more confident, they learn to say the sounds more quickly and smoothly. In Read Write Inc. (RWI), this is called **Fred Talk**. Fred can only speak in sounds, so children learn to listen carefully, blend the sounds together and say the whole word.

Blending is one of the most important early reading skills. To become successful readers, children need to recognise sounds quickly and accurately, blend them together smoothly and read familiar words automatically, without having to stop and think about each individual sound. The faster children can spot and say their sounds, the easier it becomes for them to blend and read new words independently.

How can you help at home?

Blending can be practised through fun games and everyday conversations. You can use Fred Talk during daily routines by saying phrases such as:

- "Please put on your **c-a-t**."
- "Can you find your **b-a-g**?"
- "Sit on the **r-u-g**."

You can also play **I Spy** using sounds instead of letter names. For example, you could say, "I spy something that is a **d-o-g**," or "I spy something that is a **p-e-n**."

Another enjoyable activity is a treasure hunt around the house. Ask your child to find objects such as a **c-u-p** or a **h-a-t**. These short activities help children to hear sounds in words and blend them together in a relaxed and enjoyable way.

Top tips for practising blending

Remember to use pure sounds rather than letter names. Practise speedy recognition of sounds using sound cards or flashcards and encourage your child to say the sounds quickly before blending them into a whole word. You can also watch the Read Write Inc. Virtual Classroom videos together to reinforce the sounds and blending skills your child is learning at school.

Just a few minutes of fun practice each day can make a real difference. The more confidently children recognise and blend sounds, the more successful and independent they become as readers.

Mrs Olivey





Book Fair

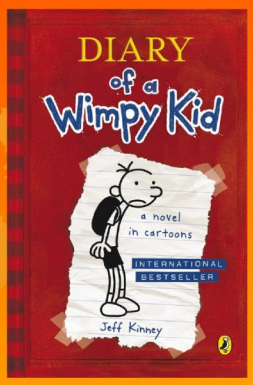
We are delighted to announce that our annual Scholastic Book Fair will take place from Monday 9th November to Friday 13th November. The fair will be held in the school hall after school each day.

Children will have the opportunity to browse a fantastic selection of books and discover their next favourite read. Families are warmly invited to come along and explore the fair together.

you buy earns FREE BOOKS for our school*

COME TO OUR BOOK FAIR

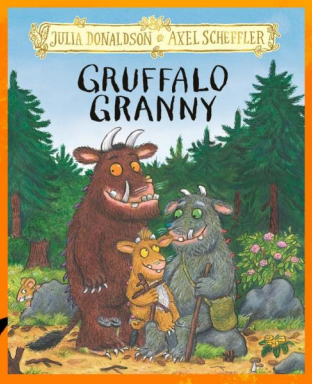
And find your next favourite read!



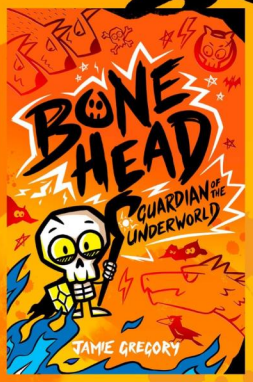














Illustrations © Jamie Gregory 2026

GO ALL IN. National Year of Reading 2026

DATE: TIME:

LOCATION:

Scan to pay securely online!

Attendance

Every School Day Counts

We all want the best for our children, and one simple way to support their learning and wellbeing is through regular attendance. Research shows that pupils who attend school more than 95% of the time tend to achieve significantly better outcomes in both primary and secondary school—even missing just a few extra days can make a difference.

By establishing consistent routines, keeping open communication with our school, and seeking support early if needed, we can help our children thrive. Together, we can give every child the best possible start in life through strong, regular attendance

Below is a useful reminder of current legislation regarding penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school.

A National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, has been introduced following changes to the law. These Government regulations came into effect from 19 August 2024 and now affect when penalty notices are issued in Cornwall.

What are the changes?

1. There is now a new national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions for any reason (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period, at which point a penalty notice must be considered.
2. You can no longer take your child out of school for one week's holiday without the consideration of a penalty notice being issued.
3. The penalty fine is now £80 if paid within 21 days. If the fine is not paid within the first 21 days, it rises to £160 if paid within 28 days of being issued.
4. If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine automatically rises to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.
5. If a parent commits a third offence in a 3-year rolling period, the local authority must consider other enforcement options available to them. This may include prosecution.

Please see the FAQs below for more information about how the new rules affect you.

FAQs

Who can be issued with a penalty notice?

Each parent can receive a fine for each child who has unauthorised absence from school.

In education law, anyone who lives with a child and has day-to-day care of the child is considered a parent, whether they are the biological parent or not. This includes step-parents and partners.

Do the rules only apply to holidays during term time?

No. They apply to all unauthorised absence from school, including holidays. Unauthorised absence also includes other absence that has not been agreed, such as truancy, arriving late after the register has closed, and failing to provide reasons for absence.

How do I request leave for my child during term time?

You must submit an Exceptional Circumstances / Absence Request form before the proposed absence (see your school's policy for the required notice period). The Head Teacher decides whether there are exceptional circumstances that allow them to grant the time off. Do not assume the absence is granted until you receive written confirmation from the school.

Do the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence have to be taken all at the same time before a penalty fine is issued?

No. A penalty fine can be issued for any combination of unauthorised absences over a 10-week rolling period. They may be consecutive or non-consecutive and may span across two terms (including between academic years).

What happens if I am issued with a penalty fine and I don't pay it?

Unauthorised absence from school is an offence under S444 of the Education Act 1996. A penalty fine gives you the opportunity to settle out of court. If you do not pay, you can be prosecuted for failing to ensure your child's regular attendance.

What should I do if I am worried about my child's attendance?

You should contact your child's school (Mrs King) and ask for advice on how they can support you to improve the situation.

If you have any **Safeguarding Concerns**, here are some important contacts for you to use.

A message from Cornwall Council...

As part of our commitment to keeping you informed about local services, we want to share an important update regarding children's support and safeguarding in Cornwall. The Cornwall

Council Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU) and the Early Help Hub have officially merged. They are now working together as a single, unified service called the Multi-Agency Support and Safeguarding Hub (MASSH).

What does this change mean?

This merger creates a simpler "single front door" for families. Whether you need early support, parenting advice, or have a worry about a child's well-being, everything is now handled by one integrated team. The goal is to make it much easier and faster for families to get the right help at the right time.

How to contact MASSH

If you need advice, want to request support for your child, or need to report a safeguarding concern, please use the updated contact details below:

- 📞 Main Phone Line: 0300 123 1116 *(Open Monday to Friday, 8:45 AM – 5:00 PM)*
- 🌙 Out of Hours & Weekends: 01208 251300 *(For urgent issues outside of normal office hours)*
- 📧 Email: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk
- 💻 Online Portal: You can also securely request support online by visiting the official Cornwall Council MASSH webpage.
- 🏝️ Isles of Scilly Residents: Please use the dedicated line at 0300 1234 105 *(Option 5)*.

Please note: If your family is already working directly with an assigned social worker or Family Help Worker, you should continue to contact them directly rather than reaching out to the new hub. Our school team is always here to support you as well. If you have any questions about these changes or need assistance connecting with local services, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Other News


edsport
GIRLS ONLY
FOOTBALL
FUN • FRIENDS • DEVELOPMENT
ALL ABILITIES WELCOME!
HAVE FUN
DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS
TRAINING & REGULAR MATCHES
BE PART OF A GREAT COMMUNITY
EVERY WEDNESDAY
TREVIGLAS NEWQUAY
5-6PM
ONLY £16 PER MONTH!
MORE THAN FOOTBALL
GIRLS SUPPORT GIRLS
BELIEVE | BELONG | BECOME


THANK YOU!
FOR HELPING WITH FREE BREAKFAST CLUBS RESEARCH
BREAKFAST CLUB
FUEL UP
FREE TOAST
Read the findings!
Scan this QR code

Dates for your diary

November

Mon 9th – Parent Consultations

Tues 10th – Parent Consultations

Wed 11th – Parent Consultations

Wed 11th Nov – Wagtails Family Dining

Wed 18th Nov – Starlings Family Dining

Wed 25th Nov – Kestrels Family Dining

Wed 2nd Dec - Barn Owls Family Dining

December

Wed 2nd - Nursery/KS1 Nativity Performance 5:00-6:00

Thurs 3rd - Nursery/KS1 Nativity Performance 5:00-6:00

Fri 4th - Nursery/KS1 Nativity Performance 2:15-3:00

Fri 4th - Padstow Christmas Lights - Lantern Parade (time tbc)

Tues 8th - KS2 Christmas Performance 6:00

Wed 9th - KS2 Christmas Performance 6:00

Thurs 10th - KS2 Christmas Performance 6:00

Wed 16th - Christmas Lunch

Thurs 17th - Christmas class parties

Fri 18th – Christmas Church Service 2:15

Fri 18th – Last Day of term

School Terms and Holidays 2026/27

St Merryn School

September 2026					
Mon		7	14	21	28
Tue	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	2	9	16	23	30
Thu	3	10	17	24	
Fri	4	11	18	25	
Sat	5	12	19	26	
Sun	6	13	20	27	

October 2026					
Mon		5	12	19	26
Tue		6	13	20	27
Wed		7	14	21	28
Thu	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	3	10	17	24	31
Sun	4	11	18	25	

November 2026					
Mon		2	9	16	23	30
Tue		3	10	17	24	
Wed		4	11	18	25	
Thu		5	12	19	26	
Fri		6	13	20	27	
Sat		7	14	21	28	
Sun	1	8	15	22	29	

December 2026					
Mon		7	14	21	28
Tue	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	2	9	16	23	30
Thu	3	10	17	24	31
Fri	4	11	18	25	
Sat	5	12	19	26	
Sun	6	13	20	27	

January 2027					
Mon		4	11	18	25
Tue		5	12	19	26
Wed		6	13	20	27
Thu		7	14	21	28
Fri	1	8	15	22	29
Sat	2	9	16	23	30
Sun	3	10	17	24	31

February 2027					
Mon	1	8	15	22	
Tue	2	9	16	23	
Wed	3	10	17	24	
Thu	4	11	18	25	
Fri	5	12	19	26	
Sat	6	13	20	27	
Sun	7	14	21	28	

March 2027					
Mon	1	8	15	22	29
Tue	2	9	16	23	30
Wed	3	10	17	24	31
Thu	4	11	18	25	
Fri	5	12	19	26	
Sat	6	13	20	27	
Sun	7	14	21	28	

April 2027					
Mon		5	12	19	26
Tue		6	13	20	27
Wed		7	14	21	28
Thu	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	3	10	17	24	
Sun	4	11	18	25	

May 2027					
Mon	3	10	17	24	31
Tue	4	11	18	25	
Wed	5	12	19	26	
Thu	6	13	20	27	
Fri	7	14	21	28	
Sat	1	8	15	22	29
Sun	2	9	16	23	30

June 2027					
Mon		7	14	21	28
Tue	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	2	9	16	23	30
Thu	3	10	17	24	
Fri	4	11	18	25	
Sat	5	12	19	26	
Sun	6	13	20	27	

July 2027					
Mon		5	12	19	26
Tue		6	13	20	27
Wed		7	14	21	28
Thu	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	3	10	17	24	31
Sun	4	11	18	25	

August 2027					
Mon	2	9	16	23	30
Tue	3	10	17	24	31
Wed	4	11	18	25	
Thu	5	12	19	26	
Fri	6	13	20	27	
Sat	7	14	21	28	
Sun	1	8	15	22	29

Key:

- School Holiday
- Bank Holiday
- INSET Day
- School open

Term dates summary:

Autumn Term (72 days)

3 September 2026 - 18 December 2026 (Half term: 26 - 30 Oct 2026)

Spring Term (54 days)

4 January 2027 - 25 March 2027 (Half term: 15 - 19 February 2027)

Summer Term (62 days)

12 April 2027 - 23 July 2027 (Half term: 31 May - 4 June 2027)

Bank and Public Holidays 2026/27

Christmas Day	25th December 2026	Easter Monday	29th March 2027
Boxing Day	28th December 2026	May Bank Holiday	3rd May 2027
New Years Day	1st January 2027	Spring Bank Holiday	31st May 2027
Good Friday	26th March 2027	Summer Bank Holiday	30th August 2027

1 - Term Dates 2026-2027