

Dear Parents/Carers,

As ever, a new academic year brings changes at School for Inspiring Talents, with new staff and students joining our Life Chance 'family', and with lots of fresh ideas, activities and opportunities for us all to explore.

You should see even more progress this year with the changes we've been making to the educational curriculum for our students. The wider range of subjects being taught means we're really expanding the opportunities available to our young people, giving them the chance to develop talents and interests in areas they might not even have been previously aware of!

We're also delighted to see our outdoor education really taking shape. The investment we've made this Summer in attractive, robust play equipment and landscaping for our outdoor areas emphasises the value we put on active play. We know that it supports good mental and physical health for our learners, and we want to enable safe and stimulating outside learning activities, whatever the weather.

We're also building on the work we do for our communities around the school - you'll find more info in this newsletter about the Life Chance Trust, a charitable venture which supports young people (including our learners) as they go out into the 'wider world' at 16 and beyond. We're also making fantastic progress towards achieving the Optimus Wellbeing Award for schools, which gives us a benchmark for measuring and maintaining the all-important wellbeing of students, staff and families.

I hope you all have a pleasant break, and look forward to our next exciting half-term!

Pete Jenkins, Executive Principal



## NEW STARTERS

We welcomed the following new staff to the school:



Becca Parkinson  
*Creative Arts Therapist*



Collette Luscombe  
*Learning Support Assistant*



Daisy Ravenhill  
*Learning Support Assistant*



Emma Frank  
*Teacher*



Emma Robertson  
*Teacher*



Izzie Makinson  
*Learning Support Assistant*



Kirsty Blazquez  
*Teacher*



Rachael Hine  
*Teacher*



Ruth Horsley  
*Learning Support Assistant*

## Have you heard? Our class names have changed!

It is really important that our students have a voice and take ownership of their school and learning. This allows them to express their own thoughts and feelings, be heard and empowered. A class name, just like a sports team name, is personal and creates a sense of belonging which is essential to make students feel at home and comfortable.

One of our curriculum school priorities this academic year will focus on raising reading achievement and helping students find pleasure in stories, so classes were given the option to keep their class names, or choose a new one for the year linked to reading!

We can now proudly introduce:

### College House:

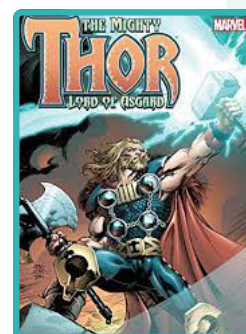
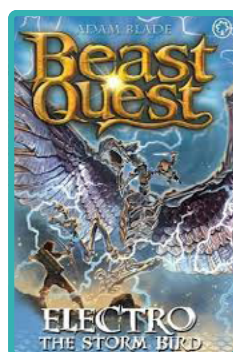
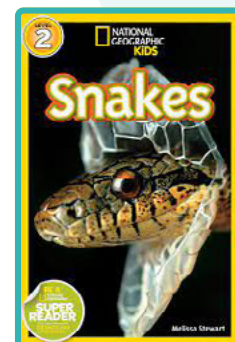
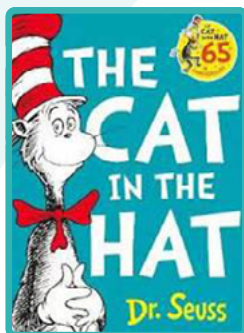
**Smoo Class** - led by Emma Robertson

**Seuss Class** - led by Rachel Ford

**Cobra Class** - led by Rachael Hine

**Beast Quest Class** - led by Emma Frank

**Asgard Class** - led by Becca Wilkinson



### Place House:

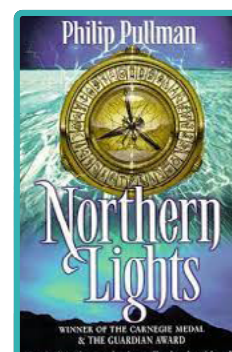
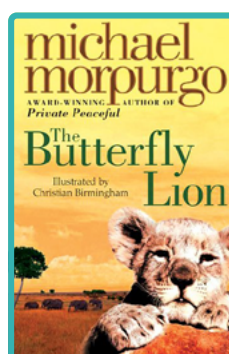
**Lions Class** - led by Kirsty Blasquez.  
*'The reason why we are called the Lions is because we're a team and looking forward to reading the book this term'*

**Sky Class** - led by Lucy Anderson  
(inspired by Philip Pullman's books)

**Gryffindor Class** - led by Brendon Eva  
(inspired by the Harry Potter series)

**Parrett Class** would now just like to be known as **Year 10** - led by Gem Adams

**Dart Class** want to keep their old class name based on the local river.  
- led by Issy Harben



A MESSAGE FROM LEWIS HARBEN



As always, we have had a very busy half-term at College House and there is so much to reflect on and celebrate!

I have been extremely proud of how our students have welcomed new peers and staff members alike. All of our classes have had the privilege of new additions and whilst change can be a challenge, it also provides much opportunity for growth and development. In what feels like no time at all, we have seen the development and formation of new healthy and trusting relationships.

Continuing our focus on reading, and it's central role in our curriculum at SfIT, we have developed a larger library space than we've ever had before. It really is the perfect spot to choose a book and get comfy under a blanket to enjoy it!

Another exciting development has been the creation of our 'adventure playground' which all classes have been making great use of. The traversing ropes, tower and slide provide great climbing opportunities, but we also have plenty of other spaces for the students to explore and embrace such as the tunnel, sandpit and balance beams. The 'Tree Deck' provides a location to slow down and enjoy the peaceful vista whilst the 'Reading Throne' is perfect for whole class shared stories. We are all excited to be a part of the creative use of our new outdoor spaces and to see our students learning through play.

Lewis Harben & the College House Team.

SMOO CLASS

Smoo class have had a great first half term! As the newest members of the school, I am so incredibly proud of how they have all settled into their new classroom. We have spent a lot of this half term getting to know one another and our new environment - we have particularly been enjoying soft play and the amazing immersion room!

As budding historians, we have started to delve into life in 1666 as we have been exploring the Great Fire of London. Smoo class couldn't believe that Samuel Pepys chose to bury cheese and wine to keep them safe! We have also loved exploring Forest School with Katie and particularly enjoyed whittling and fire starting.



## SEUSS CLASS

In RE this term, we have been looking at the Jewish festival Sukkot. We made our own Sukkah from a cardboard box. Then we made a bigger version in the classroom and shared food inside it!

In History we're learning all about the Stone Age. Linking to National Poetry Week we wrote 'kenning' poems describing a Stone Age human - we shared these with the poet who came in to talk to us!



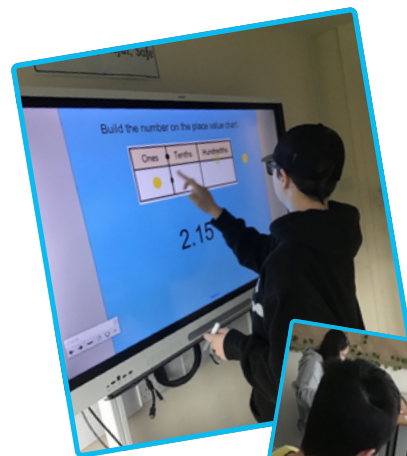
## ASGARD CLASS

Asgard class have had a fantastic start to the year! We have been settling into our new classroom and focussing on building relationships between the students as well as with their key adults. This has been a personal highlight for me as there have been some big moments of personal growth for all of the students individually.

This term has included changes to our timetable and curriculum which, as with any period of change, has been challenging at times. I am very proud of how the class is adjusting to this and the effort that they are putting in. I am also pleased to say that the Year 10 students have started working towards their Functional Skills exams at the end of the academic year.

This half term we have enjoyed spending time together as a class in the new adventure play area as well as engaging in Forest School, catering and swimming sessions in small groups. We have also enjoyed exploring the ways that our new SMART board can extend our learning.

Keep up the great work guys!



## BEAST QUEST CLASS

Beast Quest (Year 7) have welcomed their new teacher beautifully this term and we have spent valuable time getting to know each other and ourselves. We have adventured to South Africa and befriended a white lion in Michael Morpurgo's *The Butterfly Lion* and explored the mysterious and beguiling world of ocean debris in David Wiesner's *'Flotsam'*. We have begun creating our armour for a charge into the legions of Roman Britain and considered our own positions on religion and what we know of it.

We've spent weekly swimming sessions building water confidence and mastering our strokes, enjoyed the freedom and nature of forest school, cooked countless tasty dishes in catering and shared meaningful time catching up with peers over breakfast. The new adventure playground has brought us an exciting end to our day, where we can run, jump and play together and let our imaginations climb. We look forward to another half-term of relationship building, adventure and magic!



## COBRA CLASS

This term, to celebrate a classmate's birthday, we cooked a 3 course meal as a class and enjoyed sharing it at the end of the day.

We have been coaching and supporting each other to play some quite competitive chess and now enjoy playing against the adults.

Two of the boys enjoyed a "taster" session at Equafinity last week and are now looking forward to visiting on a weekly basis to develop their social and interaction skills while caring for the ponies and learning outdoors.



## FOREST SCHOOL

We've had an exciting start to Forest School as we've discovered some ancient ruins - so it's been all hands to the spade to see what we can discover.

Everyone who has come outside to Forest School has enjoyed lots of digging, as well as cooking some tasty pancakes and yummy flatbreads.

We've also encouraged nature activities such as feeding the birds and making sure our site stays as exciting and playful as possible.

We'll keep you informed about our digging discoveries!



## A MESSAGE FROM LUCY GRELEN

After a busy half-term, the summer holidays feel like a distant memory. We have welcomed three new students, one new teacher and three new Learning Support Assistants. We also have two students and two teachers who were previously at College House. A big thank-you to our children here for being so welcoming to all the new people!



I think the biggest change which happened over the summer holidays is our amazing outside equipment being installed. The children have thoroughly enjoyed being outside on the zip line, swings and climbing fort and playing in the sand pit. This has made a huge difference at break and lunch time, and even the staff like to use the zip line every now and then!

Our Year 10 and 11 classes have been working extremely hard, starting to work towards their qualifications and to start thinking about what they want to do when they leave us. They have started Travel and Tourism and History with both Issy and Gem teaching these specialist subjects.

The Year 9 students have been going to Combe Pafford to take part in Hair and Beauty and of course, all children continue to go swimming each week as well as weekly forest school and cooking sessions.

We have had World Mental Health Day where we took part in #HelloYellow on Monday 10th October. We also had National Poetry Day where we were lucky enough to have a local poet and an environmental scientist from Greenpeace in to run workshops and speak to our children.

We are looking forward to the half term break and hope you have a lovely time with your families.

Lucy Grenen and the Place House Team

## DART CLASS

Dart Class have come back to school and hit the ground running this term with preparations for their GCSEs, functional skills and BTEC exams. We are really proud of their dedication to GCSE Maths and English, and they are also really loving their catering course at College House with Marc. Year 11 and year 10 now swap lessons and are taught by Gem for English and Issy for maths, and they have adapted to this change fantastically.

Next term, we will be focusing on post 16 careers and thinking about the steps we can take to progress towards our goals and dreams!

## LIONS CLASS

This half term we have done lots of amazing work! We have been reading Harry Potter where we built a den so we can all get comfy and listen to the story. They even asked to read more afterwards!

We've had some great fun in forest school where we have built dens, made pizzas, made mallets and yummy Chilli hot dogs!

During English we have focused on looking at nouns, adjectives and verbs which the students have all managed to do amazing writing because of this.

We are aware of all the changes that have happened this term but we are so proud of all the students for progressing so much during their time back and welcoming our new, amazing teacher Kirsty!



## SKY CLASS

This term in Sky Class (year 8) we have been working on relationship building by playing various different board games including a science board game that was part of our ecosystem topic.

We have also started our inspiring talents projects - including creating a new class door sign, homemade dog treats as well as LOTS of baking!



## PARRETT / YEAR 10 CLASS

Year 10 have had a wonderful start to their Key Stage 4 curriculum, settling in well into their new classroom with new staff and lots of change! In English Language we have been learning about how authors structure and use language to make their writing interesting. We had great fun learning about structure through the medium of...Lego. Students are now preparing for their functional skills tests in English and Maths which will take place next term.

Outside the classroom, we've had lots of exciting opportunities. Our Parrett Master Chefs have been making curry, noodles, mac 'n' cheese and the best omelette their teacher has ever tasted! (Thank you KGT). All students have engaged fully in forest school, making chilli dogs, hammers and building fires. We will shortly be welcoming Sharron Robbie from ASK to speak to our Year 10s about apprenticeships and supported internships for when they leave us at Sfit and continue with their education and future goals.

Year 10: We are so proud of you!



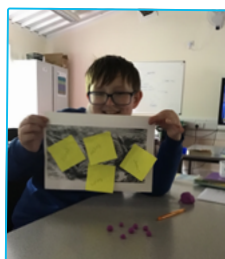
## GRYFFINDOR CLASS

Back to school!

In year 9, we have all been working so hard, from learning all about WW1 in history, to excelling in our maths skills. We can all work successfully using a variety of different multiplication methods now!

We've spent so much time having fun and learning new life skills at Combe Pafford, and in forest school too, check the photos to see! Oh and let's not forget the fantastic time we have shared on the new outside equipment - the zip wire is our favourite!

Year 9 staff are so proud of your current progress and can't wait to see you all continuing to shine and smile as the weeks go on. Keep up the great work! You are all brilliant!



It was National Poetry Day on 6th October, and this year's theme was the environment. Both schools were lucky enough to have visits from local poet Matt Bryden, and Greenpeace environmental scientist Peter Taylor, to help with this study topic. Matt read poems from his book 'Night Porter' and talked about what made him write his poems - which inspired our students to write some poetry of their own!

**Year 10 student:**

**I feel**

Exhausted because late at night I write.  
Lonely at my desk, no one is around to talk poems.  
Confused because my day is their night.  
Stressed because I can hear noises  
But the sun will rise and the poems become poetry.

**A year 7 group created a similar poem:**

**The lonely poem**

I feel emotional and lonely.  
I don't get to see my friends anymore.  
As I sleep, they work.  
And as I work, they sleep.  
I can't socialise, I feel too tired.  
You can die of not seeing other people,  
Here on the other side of the world.

**Year 11 poem writing about working on a wind turbine:**

60 metres in the air,  
I feel sick when I look down.  
The grass is wet,  
and so are the bars,  
One wrong move and I gravetise.  
From the top, I think I can see my home.

**Year 8 & 9 students created this poem about working on a ocean wind turbine:**

**Out at sea**

It's not for everyone.  
You might have a fear of heights -  
Acrophobia or vertigo they call it.  
It takes a long time to get there,  
You feel knackered.  
The blades might take your head off,  
But I like to see new places.  
I'm from the Midlands,  
But I took a 3 and a half hour flight to Gozo.  
I'd like to visit my boyfriend in Portugal.  
In Spain, a domesticated cat came to see me.



**A Year 7 group created a poem based on mining sustainably in a cave:**

**Diamonds galore**

Diamonds galore and emerald surprises...  
We mine the diamonds with iron pickaxes,  
As wolves howl in our secret underground bunker.  
We find platinum, we find the queens shadows,  
orbiting around our bodies.



## OUTDOOR PLAY @ SFIT

If you've visited Place House or College House this term you will have seen our amazing new outdoor play areas. It's been brilliant to see this project go from sketches on paper to completion, and even more rewarding to see our students (and staff) outdoors enjoying the fresh air and sunshine... exploring, playing and discovering new ways every day to use the equipment for imaginative exercise and learning !

Many thanks to the team at Earthwrights, who created, landscaped and installed the sites, including swings, climbing ropes, a zip wire, scramble frames, a tree house, see-saws, a story-telling throne, tunnel and more!



### A MESSAGE FROM JULES SANDERS

MDT have been involved with a great deal of activity since the beginning of term, so here are some updates from the team to keep you all informed!



#### Speech and Language Therapist update:

Hello! We have recently subscribed to 'Language Link' which is a programme designed to identify and support students with language and communication difficulties.

As our school SALT, I have been supporting staff to ensure that most students have now completed the online screen which assesses key areas of understanding needed for the classroom. Good understanding skills are essential for literacy development, academic success and enabling students to engage with both the curriculum and their peers.

Though this screening process, we have been able to quickly identify students who would benefit from additional high quality teaching strategies and/or small group interventions. It has also highlighted which students need further specialist support from me.

I'll be sending out information to support language development at home in the near future but please do contact me in the meantime if you have any concerns or would like to chat further!

**Cara Porter**



#### Creative Arts Therapist Update:

I am very excited to join the Multi-Disciplinary Team at SfiT. I have been working in schools for the last 15 years firstly as a teacher (PGCE) and now as a Creative Arts Psychotherapist (MA). Creative arts therapy is a form of psychotherapy which utilises children's natural language of play and creativity to explore and work through thoughts, feelings and challenging life events. Sessions might include art, play, dance, drama, movement, nature, fire making, den building and talking to help students to express and communicate their thoughts and feelings, build resources and support recovery from challenges in life. For many children, talking can be difficult and by using creative methods, some of the challenging issues can be explored, in a way that is accessible for children and young people.



I have a passion for the therapeutic benefits of arts and nature and have previously worked as a psychotherapist with children, young people and adults in education, the NHS and mental health services. I have completed additional training enabling me to work outdoors, utilising the therapeutic benefits of nature to support self-expression, wellbeing and healing. Nature is full of wonder and rich sensory experiences! Natural materials, such as; stones, bark, sand, pine cones, mud, seeds, plants, clay, mud, are often used in creative arts therapy sessions. I am passionate about my work and feel very excited to work with the students at SfiT.

**Becca Parkinson**

#### Optimus Award for Wellbeing & Mental Health:

We are progressing well with work for the school to achieve the Optimus Wellbeing standard. You may remember that last academic year we sent parents & carers a survey about mental health support – the table on the next page shows the results of that survey, made into an action plan.

We will be sending out another survey sometime this term, but as always, we welcome any ideas or thoughts you have on ways in which we can further support mental health across the school community. Get in touch: [info@sfit.org.uk](mailto:info@sfit.org.uk)



**Megan Hornsby**

## OPTIMUS AWARD ACTION PLAN

### For Students

Aim:	How we're going to achieve this:
For all students to know that we are working towards the Optimus Wellbeing Award for schools and what this means.	This will be included in the student council. We will develop short lessons on what we are doing to support wellbeing across the school.
For all students to recognise what they can (and can't) do to support someone else with their wellbeing.	This will be supported through our PSHE curriculum.
For all of our students to be aware of how the whole school community cares for their emotional wellbeing.	Student-friendly wellbeing packs to be created. We are looking at wellbeing corners in each school site.
For all students to feel comfortable to talk about how they are feeling at school.	Our student representatives will gather student views on different ways that they can communicate their thoughts and feelings to staff.
For all of our students to feel that the school really cares about what they think and listens to what they say.	We've already had one round of the student council which was successful and resulted in lots of positive change. We've now added student wellbeing to our student council discussions. New student representatives have been elected and we look forward to having the next student council in the next half term.

### For Parents/Carers

Aim:	How we're going to achieve this:
For all parents/carers to know that we are working towards the Optimus Wellbeing Award for schools and what this means. For an increase in parent/carer contributions to the wellbeing survey that will be sent out next half term.	Communications will go out in advance of the survey on Class Dojo with an opportunity to ask any questions or give any thoughts.
For parents/carers to feel that they can discuss their own emotional wellbeing with staff if they need to.	We are currently looking in to how we can further formalise this in our contact with parents/carers for example in annual reviews. If you have any thoughts on this, please do get in contact!
For more parents to feel that the school seeks their views and includes this in our approach to supporting mental health and emotional wellbeing.	We are hoping to deliver a yearly emotional wellbeing and mental health survey to parents/carers so that feedback can be analysed and acted upon.  There will be a wellbeing slot in each Tea and Talk session. Tea and Talk will have a feedback mechanism so we can gather parent/carer views on what is helpful.  We've ensured that the newsletter has a specific wellbeing slot and a way of getting in touch with us if needed.



We've been working on plans to make sure that trauma-experienced young people - including students leaving our school - are listened to and involved in everything the charity does.

On the last two days of this term, SfIT will welcome Dr Sophie Kedzior from Kings College London (pictured left), part of a research team speaking with young people about their views and experiences.

This will give our older SfIT students the chance not only to help shape what our charity will do, and how, but also to have their voices heard in relation to how healthcare and other local support services are arranged all over the country!

### Do you know anyone who goes running regularly, or wants to start?

We're planning to get involved with running events in Exeter and Plymouth in 2023. We will have charity places available half marathons, 10K and 5k runs, in return for sponsorship.

If running's not your thing, we also need a team to cheer runners on and volunteer at water stations!

### Can I help?

Yes, we've set up some really simple ways that staff, friends and family can help support the Trust's work, with minimum effort!

**Easyfundraising** - A way to support Life Chance Trust at no cost to you, whenever you shop online (from supermarkets, to insurance, phones, and anything in between!) If you [USE THIS LINK](#) to register, your first £5 of cashback earned will be doubled. Please ask family and friends to sign up too - it's an easy way to support us at no cost to them.

**Amazon Smile** - We're a registered Amazon Smile charity, so if you change your default web browser page from Amazon's main one to the [Amazon Smile home page](#), and/or turn [Amazon Smile on within your mobile shopping app](#), more pennies can be turned into ££ for our charity.

### How can I spread the word?

As a new venture, it's really key that people know what we are doing! Please tell your networks about the Trust, and make sure you like and share our Social Media posts on:

[LinkedIn](#)  
[Facebook](#)  
[Instagram](#)

# Term Dates 2022 / 2023

**September 2022**

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

**October 2022**

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

**November 2022**

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

**December 2022**

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

**January 2023**

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

**February 2023**

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

**March 2023**

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

**April 2023**

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

**May 2023**

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

**June 2023**

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

**July 2023**

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

**August 2023**

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

## Term Lengths

- Autumn Half Term
- 7 Sep - 14 Oct
- Half Term to Christmas
- 31 Oct - 16 Dec
- Winter Half Term
- 4 Jan - 10 Feb

- Half Term to Easter
- 20 Feb - 31 Mar
- Spring Half Term
- 17 Apr - 26 May
- Summer Half Term
- 5 Jun - 21 Jul

## Key

-  Holiday
-  Bank Holiday