



Moat Farm Infant School

Newsletter October 2025

It's been a busy half-term. We have been working hard on developing our school further. The children have settled well into their new classes and everyone is really working hard, we are so proud of the progress our children are making. A big thank you to all the staff for providing such a safe, welcoming, engaging learning environment for our children to thrive in.

This half term we have... held curriculum meetings for parents, opened up a new area for children to play in as part of our OPAL play, took part in National Poetry Day and World Mental Health Day, held a coffee morning for all parents to drop in and speak to us and outside services, held parents' evening consultations, held phonics workshops for parents, celebrated Harvest and collected for the Black Country Food Bank, held a sponsored run event, Year 2 have had a medicine awareness assembly run by DECCA, Year 2 have visited Smethwick Gurdwara and Smethwick Library, and Reception children have begun Phonics and Reading Practice. As always, we have had a big push on Reading this term and on developing children's love of Reading. Please continue to listen to your child read and read with them, especially as the nights are drawing in, sharing a book can be a magical experience for both you and your child.

Our School Development Priorities for this year are as follows:

1. Talking and Listening (Oracy)

We want to help all children become confident speakers and good listeners. We will enhance our school environment providing rich language opportunities so that children can express their ideas clearly, listen carefully, and enjoy meaningful conversations with others.

2. Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We are working to continue our work on improving our teaching and support for children with more complex special educational needs.

3. Helping Children Who Speak English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We are enhancing how we support children who speak other languages at home, to make sure they can fully participate and succeed in school.

4. Improving Teaching

We are helping our teachers develop their knowledge and skills using the latest research, so they can deliver the best possible lessons and support every child's learning.

5. Improving Attendance

We want to keep improving attendance by continuing the good practices we have put in place, ensuring that every child comes to school regularly to learn and enjoy their time here.

Thank you to all the parents who provide feedback and complete the surveys that we send out, as this is how we develop.

Remember:

If there is an issue or you notice something,
tell us
We will do our best to sort it out

See it
Say it
Solve it

Finally, a big thank you to the children for reminding staff on a daily basis why we continue to love our job. Have a lovely half-term. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you need to.

Mrs Walker

Email: deborah.walker@mfi.school

Nut Free School

Please be aware that we are still a **NUT FREE** school. Please do not send your child in with anything in their lunch bags that may contain nuts, e.g. peanut butter sandwiches, Snickers chocolate bars. Some of our children have severe nut allergies and we thank you in helping to keep them safe and healthy.

Is your child due to start Reception 2026?

Online applications for Reception 2026 are open!

Monday 15th September 2025 and close Thursday 15th January 2026

Please ensure you make your application online before the closing date
Thursday 15th January 2026

[Applying for a reception place / Year 3 junior school place | Sandwell Council](#)

Reminders

- **Parking:** I would like to remind parents to park responsibly and safely when dropping children off at school and when collecting them at the end of the day. The safety of our children is paramount and your co-operation is appreciated. Please ensure that you are not blocking any driveways, so that we can remain considerate of our local residents.
- **Named clothing:** Can I remind parents to ensure that all children's clothing is clearly named to avoid 'mix-ups' with uniform. We have a full box of lost property already!
- **Reporting absence:** If your child is absent from school you must telephone the school office on each day of absence. You can leave a message or speak to the office staff. Please ensure that you state your child's name and class and the reason for the absence, giving as much detail as possible.
- **Packed lunches:** our children in Year 1 & Year 2 who have a packed lunch for their dinner eat up in school in the hall now. Please ensure you add spoons to their lunch box for any yoghurt or jelly pots they may bring and also a drink for lunch time. This may be a carton of juice or squash in a bottle. This is separate to the water bottle children bring in for the classroom.

*****SCHOOL HAS TO ALLOCATE 6 DAYS EACH YEAR FOR STAFF TRAINING*****

We have had 2 already at the beginning of this term
~~Monday 1st September~~
~~Tuesday 2nd September~~
Monday 3rd November
Friday 5th December
Monday 1st June
Monday 20th July



'At Moat Farm Infant School every day we learn, achieve, have fun and play'



Useful Maths Apps

Available for parents to download for their children on Apple, Google and Amazon App stores

Type into your app store

Suitable for EYFS

1 - Minute Maths
White Rose Maths

Numberblocks world
Numberblocks World

Meet the Numberblocks
Numberblocks

Please try any of the Mathematical Apps above to support your child's Mathematical knowledge in a fun way. Let us know how you get on!

Safeguarding – Child Protection

It may be helpful for parents to know that schools are required to report any obvious or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to Social Services. This procedure is intended to protect children at risk. Staff are encouraged to take the attitude that, where there are grounds for suspicion, it is better to be safe than sorry. This does mean that there is risk of upsetting some parents by reporting a concern, which on investigation proves unfounded. In such circumstances, it is hoped parents will appreciate how difficult it is to carry out this delicate responsibility, and would accept that staff were acting in what were believed to be the child's best interests. To find out more about this you can read our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in full on our website. As members of a community, we all have a duty to report any concerns or suspicions that a child is not being treated correctly.

All our school staff complete Level 1 safeguarding training every year in school. We also have a number of staff who are our Designated Safeguarding Leads in school, who you can speak to confidently if you have any worries or concerns. Our DSLs are Mrs Davis, Mrs George and Deputy DSLs – Mrs Walker, Mrs Somers, Mrs Anslow.

Affected or Involved?

If you, or someone close to you, has been involved in a Child Protection Enquiry, you can also find useful information on Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership (SCSP) website - <https://www.sandwellcsp.org.uk/parents-carers/>. Also see the SCSP Procedure re Child Protection Enquiries by clicking on this link: [1.9 Child protection enquiries | West Midlands Safeguarding Children Group \(procedures.org.uk\)](#)

If you need advice, information or want to talk to someone, you can contact Early Help at your local [Community Operating Group](#) or the Sandwell MASH 0121 569 3100.

Alternatively you can contact:

- [ChildLine](#) on 08001111
- [NSPCC](#) Helpline on 0808 800 5000

Members of the public with concerns

If you are worried a child may be suffering significant harm, or if you are concerned a child has suffered harm, neglect or abuse, please follow the advice below:

- If you believe a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, you should contact the police by dialling 999.

If you have concerns about a child or young person but believe they are not at immediate risk you can:

- Discuss your concerns with a professional you trust such as a health visitor, teacher or GP
- Contact the Sandwell Safeguarding Team on 0121 569 3100
- Contact the NSPCC on **0808 800 5000** (free service, lines open 24 hours a day). They will listen to your concerns, offer advice and support and can take action on your behalf if a child is in danger. You can also report concerns anonymously. For further information or to report your concerns online visit: www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/report-abuse/

Coffee morning

Thank you to all those parents who attended our coffee morning on Wednesday 8th October. Parents and agencies enjoyed having coffee and cake to start the morning off. We had a range of agencies who provided parents with information, support and some freebies too. This included SENDIASS, Police, Barnardo's, Speech and Language, Sandwell Parent Voice and Ideal for all. We will be holding further coffee mornings over the year.



Year 1 Phonics Workshops

We were delighted to welcome parents into school for the Year 1 Phonics Workshops. The sessions gave parents a valuable insight into how phonics is taught across our school and how this essential skill supports children in becoming confident and fluent readers.

During the workshops, parents had the opportunity to see first-hand the strategies we use in class and to take part in activities with their children. This practical experience helped parents to understand how reading practice sessions work in school, giving them ideas and confidence to support reading at home.

Phonics is a vital part of early reading and writing development, helping children to decode words and build a strong foundation for lifelong literacy skills. We are grateful to all the parents who joined us and for their continued support in helping children develop a love of reading.

If you were unable to attend the workshops and would like more information, please visit our school website. Under the Curriculum tab, you will find a Phonics section with helpful videos and resources to support you and your child at home.

As we settle into our new school year, I wanted to take a moment to share our school rules with you all. We are committed to ensuring every pupil feels welcomed, supported, and ready to explore and learn. We look forward to the wonderful journey ahead this school year and the many achievements we will celebrate together.

Our school rules

We listen

- Be ready to learn in lessons
- Listen carefully to instructions so you know what to do
- Listen to everyone in school – staff, children and visitors
- Take part in lessons through paired talk, showing an awareness of when it is time to talk
- Take an active part in lessons, offering answers and explanations to questions asked

We are kind

- We are kind and polite to everyone
- We always share and take turns
- We say sorry when we should and mean it
- Respect each other
- Know how to be a good friend
- Play safely together outside on the playground

We work hard

- Take care of our work and be proud of it
- Always have a go and persevere even when things get 'tricky'
- Work within an appropriate noise level (adults should not have to shout to make themselves heard)
- Be engaged in lessons, to learn and remember more

We are helpful

- Keep our school tidy
- We notice when a friend needs help
- We offer to do things for one another
- Tell the truth

We are safe

- Listen to and follow instructions
- Walk at all times around school and look where we are going
- Line up sensibly when asked
- Use toilets appropriately, remembering to flush the toilet and wash our hands thoroughly
- Don't wear jewellery (except small stud earrings, watches and religiously significant items)
 - Use equipment safely and in appropriate way in the classroom and out on the playground

We look after our things

- Take care of our own things such as coats, book-bags, water bottles, P.E bags etc.
- Use equipment properly
- Take care of school resources by looking after them properly eg replacing lids on pens and glue sticks, handling books correctly

Online Safety Tips for Parents of 4-7 Year Old Pupils

Keeping your child safe online is a shared responsibility. Here are some simple ways you can help your child enjoy the internet safely:



1. Set Clear Rules and Limits

- Agree on how long your child can be online each day.
- Choose specific times for screen use, avoiding bedtime and mealtimes.

2. Choose Age-Appropriate Content

- Use apps, games, and websites made for young children.
- Use parental controls and filters on all devices to block unsuitable content.

3. Supervise Your Child's Online Time

- Always watch or be nearby when your child is online.
- Explore websites and games together to understand what they are seeing.

4. Talk About Staying Safe

- Explain that not everything online is true or safe.
- Teach your child never to share personal details like their name, address, or school.

5. Encourage Open Communication

- Let your child know they can tell you if something online makes them feel worried or upset.
- Reassure them that you are there to help.

6. Use Safe Online Spaces

- Use child-friendly search engines and platforms with safety features.
- Regularly check privacy settings on apps and devices.

7. Be a Good Role Model

- Show your child how to use technology respectfully and responsibly.
- Demonstrate kindness and safe behaviour online.

8. Keep Devices in Shared Areas

- Encourage your child to use devices in family spaces, not bedrooms.

9. Stay Informed

- Keep up to date with the apps and websites your child uses.
 - Use trusted resources like Childnet, NSPCC, and the UK Safer Internet Centre for advice.
-

Helpful Resources for Parents

- Childnet: childnet.com
- NSPCC E-safety: nspcc.org.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre: saferinternet.org.uk
- Internet Matters: internetmatters.org

We take online safety extremely seriously and constantly put measures in place to try and mitigate any content that pupils can access. We acknowledge that many pupils will have access to the internet and internet-based devices at home and out of school. The following age limits have been taken from the NSPCC website:

Facebook 13 + years
Snapchat 13 + years
Instagram 13 + years
TikTok 13 + years
X (previously known as Twitter) 13 + years

If you have any specific concerns around your child's internet usage or any queries you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact us.

School Values

Our school motto is 'At Moat Farm Infants everyday; we learn, achieve, have fun and play!' School plays a crucial role in shaping young children's personal, social and emotional development, which are foundational life skills. Our values teach young children how to interact positively with each other.

Our school has 6 core values: **Collaboration, Respect, Creativity, Perseverance, Caring and Reflectiveness.**

This half term we have been learning about **collaboration**.

To show we can collaborate we need to: work together, listen to each other, share and take turns.

Next half term we will be focusing on **respect**.

When we are respectful we: treat everybody fairly, listen to others and show good manners.

Year 2 trip to Guru Nanak Gurdwara and Smethwick Library

Our Year 2 trip to the Gurdwara and library was a great success! The children were really well-behaved throughout the day and showed lots of interest and respect, especially during our time in the Gurdwara, where they listened carefully and asked thoughtful questions. They were curious about the traditions and enjoyed learning about the Sikh place of worship.

At the library, they stayed engaged, explored books with enthusiasm and took part in a story telling session from the librarian. It was a lovely day out and we were really proud of how they represented the school!



Conversation Starters

Talking to your child about how they're feeling can be tough, especially if you're concerned that they're having a hard time. You might not know what to say, or feel worried about how your child will react. It doesn't matter what topic the conversation starts with – it's about the opportunity it gives you to talk about feelings and provide comfort.

Whilst the activity is underway, what's the best way to encourage your child to open up? Have a look at some of our conversation starters.



Here are some things you could ask to get the conversation started:

What was the best bit of your day?
 What was the worst bit of your day?
 What did you do today that made you proud?
 How are you feeling?
 What would you like to talk about?

If your child is having a hard time, you can try to find out how they like to be supported by asking gentle questions like:

How can I support you through this?
 Do you want to talk about what's going on?
 Is there anything you need from me? Space, time to talk, time to do something fun?
 What was the biggest problem you had today? What helped?

"Is there anything you need from me? Space, time to talk, time to do something fun?"

10 Proven Strategies for Helping an Anxious Child

<p>1. QUIET HUGS</p> <p>Help your child feel safe by reassuring them that you are there and willing to help. Words can sometimes exacerbate anxiety, so sitting quietly with lots of hug and empathizing can often work better.</p>	<p>2. SEE YOUR CALM PLACE</p> <p>Remember a time you were happy, calm and peaceful. See it in your mind with as much detail as possible. Always use the same calm place to enhance the effect.</p>
<p>3. 5X5 GROUNDING</p> <p>See 5 things, hear 4 things, touch 3 things, smell 2 things and taste 1 thing.</p>	<p>4. DRAW YOUR ANXIETY</p> <p>Draw a picture of what you are worried about.</p>
<p>5. BLOW BUBBLES</p> <p>Research has shown the 10 deep breaths resets the automatic nervous system and helps to calm the amygdala. Blowing bubbles is a great way to get a child to blow deep breaths. Party blowers or straw and balled up paper offer other ways to do the same.</p>	<p>6. PET A FURRY FRIEND</p> <p>Research has shown that petting an animal reduces the heart rate and calms the body. Sitting for 10 or 15 minutes petting a furry friend is a wonderful way to relieve anxiety and bring some smiles to a child.</p>
<p>7. JUMPING JACKS</p> <p>Anxiety often causes shallow breathing. Having the child do an exercise forces deep breaths that can reset the anxious feelings.</p>	<p>8. REMEMBER PAST SUCCESS</p> <p>Remind the child to think about the last time they overcame their anxiety. Remind them that they can do this, even though it can be hard.</p>
<p>9. PROBLEM SOLVE THE FEAR</p> <p>Help the child talk through what solutions could be used if their fear were to come to fruition. Knowing they can handle the worst can help calm the fear.</p>	<p>10. DESTROY THE WORRY</p> <p>Have the child write their anxiety on a piece of paper and then tear it.</p>



Attendance for term 1 (1.9.25-17.10.25)

Rainbow	Mole	Owl	Robin	Fox	Sunshine	Badger	H/Hog	Heron	Squirrel	Frog	Otter	Rabbit	K/Fisher
91.1	96.8	96.9	98.2	97.7	93.7	95.8	94.1	98.1	96.7	96.4	97.8	98	97.8

We have made an excellent start to this academic year with our attendance throughout school. We know that children who attend school regularly have the best chance of success in their learning, have better friendships and a better understanding of our rules and values. Excellent attendance of 96% or above, means children have only missed up to 8 days off school in an academic year through illness or an authorised absence.

Thank you to all our families for prioritising school attendance for your children so they do not miss out on the learning each and every day. We have 240 pupils who have not had a day off since September!! Keep this up 😊 You are in the top band for attendance! Parents, you will have received your child’s attendance in your recent parent’s consultation meeting – please use this to see what band your child is currently in for their attendance. If you have any questions, please either speak to your child’s class teacher or speak to our Attendance Officer, Mrs Taylor who is always happy to help and offer support.

Attendance Bands

Band 1 95-100%

Band 2 90-94.9%

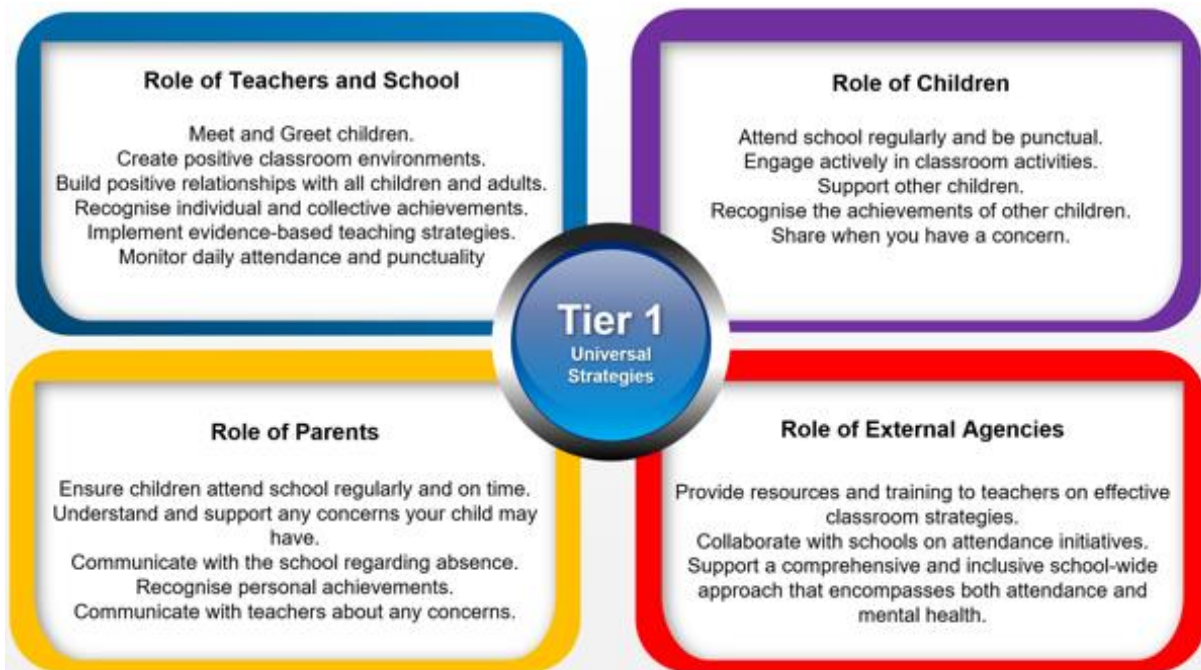
Band 3 85-89.9% When attendance falls below 90% it is classed as Persistently Absent by the Department of Education

Band 4 80-84.9%

Band 5 Below 80%

Well done to Mole, Owl, Robin, Fox, Heron, Squirrel, Frog, Otter, Rabbit and Kingfisher for having fabulous Autumn 1 attendance. All classes who met or exceeded our school target of 96% have earned a non-uniform day at the end of this half term!

This is our universal offer for all children and families for attendance.



Harvest Festival

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all your kind and generous donations of food for our Harvest collection, this is very much appreciated and they will be given to the Black Country Food Bank. We had a special Harvest Assembly in school on Friday 24th October, where Abigail Yates from our local Londonderry Baptist Church LBC came to speak to the children in KS1.



World Mental Health Day

Thank you to all of the children and staff who wore yellow on Friday 10th October for the #helloyellow campaign. This campaign helped to show our children the importance of their feelings, which we explored further during our class story time. In Early Years, we had a yellow themed day and read 'The Colour Monster'. We spoke about our feelings and what we can do if we are feeling sad. The children listed many things that make them happy such as; going for walks, talking to their grown-ups, listening to music and blowing bubbles. In KS1, we had an assembly where we discussed feelings, expressions and how we can look after our mental health. The children came up with suggestions such as; exercise, an appropriate amount of sleep, eating healthily and having calm time.



This half term we have continued to develop playtimes and lunchtimes through OPAL. We have recently launched some new areas for the children to play in, they have been so excited!

The children now have access to a range of new spaces at lunchtimes. These includes grass areas, a sand area, a chalk wall and a new scooter board area. Our water area has also been improved and reintroduced to children. It has been so lovely to see the smiles and excitement on the children's faces.

We are continuing to work on new ways to further develop playtimes. Thank you so much for your OPAL donations, these help us to provide new, exciting opportunities for your children.



flu: 5 reasons to vaccinate your child



1. Protect your child

The vaccine will help protect your child against flu and serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia

2. Protect you, your family and friends

Vaccinating your child will help protect more vulnerable friends and family

3. No injection needed

The nasal spray is painless and easy to have

4. It's better than having flu

The nasal spray helps protect against flu, has been given to millions of children worldwide and has an excellent safety record

5. Avoid costs

If your child gets flu, you may have to take time off work or arrange alternative childcare

For more information visit
www.nhs.uk/child-flu

Flu **i**mmunisation
Helping to protect children, every winter

Dates for your diary – Autumn Term 2025

October	November
<p>Bring in harvest food donations until 24th</p> <p>1st Black History Month</p> <p>2nd Census day</p> <p>2nd National Poetry Day</p> <p>8th Coffee morning for parents with invited visitors – in the school hall at 9am</p> <p>8th Kingfisher & Rabbit Yr 2 trip to Gurdwara & library</p> <p>9th Frog & Otter Yr 2 trip to Gurdwara & library</p> <p>9th – 16th Book Fair</p> <p>10th World Mental Health Day - wear yellow accessory with school uniform</p> <p>13th Owl & Mole Phonics, brain-break, story parent workshop 2.15pm in class</p> <p>13th Year 2 DECCA assembly</p> <p>14th Robin & Fox Phonics, brain-break, story parent workshop 2:15pm in class</p> <p>15th Parent Consultation Meetings 3:15-8pm</p> <p>20th Heron & Squirrel parent phonics workshops 2:15pm in hall</p> <p>21st Hedgehog & Badger parent phonics workshops 2:15pm in hall</p> <p>24th Harvest Festival Assembly – donations to go to Black Country Food Bank</p> <p>24th PE sponsored event day (EYFS funds)</p> <p>27th- 31st School closed half term holidays</p>	<p>3rd Teacher Training Day – School closed</p> <p>5th Rabbit and Kingfisher reading workshop 2.15pm in hall</p> <p>6th Frog and Otter reading workshop 2.15pm in hall</p> <p>10th Flu sprays</p> <p>11th Remembrance Day</p> <p>W/b 10th Maths week</p> <p>14th Children in Need Day – letter to follow</p> <p>W/b 17th School’s Anti-Bullying Week – ‘Power for Good’ (a week after national anti-bullying week)</p> <p>20th Nurse Team in to complete Reception health checks</p> <p>21st Wear odd socks day for Anti -Bullying Week</p> <p>21st Nurse Team in to deliver ‘Pants’ Session to Year 2</p> <p>21st Nurse team in Reception - Hands and Teeth session</p> <p>24th Year 1 DECCA assembly</p> <p>D&T workshop 9-10: 24th Rabbit, 25th Otter, 26th Kingfisher, 27th Frog</p> <p>25th Fox and Robin PD early writing workshop letter to follow</p> <p>27th Mole and Owl PD early writing workshop letter to follow</p> <p>27th Year 1 Trip – Londonderry Church RE visit Squirrel & Heron</p> <p>28th Year 1 trip – Londonderry Church RE visit Badger & Hedgehog</p> <p>28th Flu sprays</p>
December	January
<p>3rd Badger & Heron Christmas celebration with parents 2:30pm</p> <p>4th Hedgehog & Squirrel Christmas celebration with parents 2.30pm</p> <p>5th Teacher Training Day – School closed</p> <p>W/b 8th Rainbow and Sunshine parent consultations</p> <p>8th Flu sprays</p> <p>9th Rocksteady concert 9am for parents</p> <p>10th Christmas jumper day and Christmas dinner day</p> <p>11th Owl & Mole Christmas crafts 2pm in hall</p> <p>12th Fox & Robin Christmas crafts 2pm in hall</p> <p>12th Pre-school Nursery Christmas Breakfast 9am</p> <p>12th PM Nursery Christmas Crafts</p> <p>15th Otter Christmas concert 9am</p> <p>15th Reception disco 3.15-4.15pm in hall</p> <p>16th Year 1 disco 3.15-4.15pm in hall</p> <p>16th Frog Christmas concert 9am</p> <p>17th Year 2 disco 3.15-4.15pm in hall</p> <p>17th Kingfisher Christmas concert 9am</p> <p>17th Rainbow craft 2pm in hall</p> <p>18th Preschool Nursery & Rainbow disco 3.15-3.50pm in hall</p> <p>18th Rabbit Christmas concert 9am</p> <p>19th Party day & non-uniform</p> <p>22nd- 2nd Jan School closed Christmas holidays</p>	<p>5th School re-opens for spring term</p>

Sandwell School Term Dates 2025-2026

Autumn term 2025

- Term starts: Monday 1 September 2025
- Half-term holiday: Monday 27 October 2025 to Friday 31 October 2025
- Term ends: Friday 19 December 2025
- Christmas holiday: Monday 22 December 2025 to Friday 2 January 2026

Spring term 2026

- Term starts: Monday 5 January 2026
- Half-term holiday: Monday 16 February 2026 to Friday 20 February 2026
- Term ends: Friday 27 March 2026
- Easter holiday: Monday 30 March 2026 to Friday 10 April 2026

Summer term 2026

- Term starts: Monday 13 April 2026 (Bank Holiday Monday 4 May)
- Half-term holiday: Monday 25 May 2026 to Friday 29 May 2026
- Term ends: Monday 20 July 2026 (Inset Day)
- Summer holiday starts: Tuesday 21 July 2026

School Nursery Places

Applications are now being taken for nursery places for September 2026, January 2027 and April 2027 intakes. Registration forms are available at the school office or it can be emailed to you on request. Don't leave it too late to apply for your place.

If you would like to know more information, ask at the office for Mrs Davis or alternatively you can email her direct on: jayne.davis@mfi.school

This is the range of options for our families:

- **30 hour** funded places for working families of **3 and 4-year** olds (8:40 – 3:00pm) you can apply for the eligibility code on this website. www.childcarechoices.gov.uk
- **15 hour** funded places for **3 and 4-year** olds - children may start with us the term after they turn 3 (8:30 – 11:30am or 12-3pm)
- **15 hour** funded places for eligible 2-year olds (12-3pm) some families may receive an ELT code or letter offering them a free nursery place for their child.
- **15 hour** funded places for working families with 2-year olds (12 – 3pm everyday) You can apply for the eligibility code on this website – free childcare for 2-year olds www.childcarechoices.gov.uk
- We also have the option for families to pay for additional nursery hours, individual sessions will cost £25 for 3 hours from September 2024.



www.childcarechoices.gov.uk



[Family Information Service Hub \(sandwell.gov.uk\)](http://sandwell.gov.uk)