



Welcome to our December Newsletter!

As we head into the final weeks of term, there's a lot of festive fun on the horizon. We're looking forward to the upcoming Santa Dash, the always-brilliant Rocksteady Concert, and our much-loved Carols on the Playground. Christmas wouldn't be complete without our Christmas Dinner, and of course, the excitement of our Panto Trip!

It's a busy and joyful month, and we appreciate everyone's support in helping these events run smoothly.

A quick reminder that the last day of term is Friday 19th December, and collection will be at 1pm.

Wishing you all a warm and festive December!

Mrs Aoife Greaves

Headteacher

School Meals on Panto Day - 16th December

Reminder - only sandwich options will be available for school meals on Tuesday 16th December as the children will not be back in school until around 1pm that day.

Christmas at St Nicholas' Church Hockliffe

The children have been invited to perform at St Nicholas's Church on Saturday 20th December at 7pm. It would be great if some of the children could attend to sing the song we have been practising. Unfortunately due to prior engagements Mrs Greaves and staff will not be able to attend but the children have been practising the song in school.

Staff Carpark

Please be aware that the staff carpark is for staff to park in. Please do not park here at drop off and pick up.

Reading Afternoon

Just a reminder that we will have our next Reading Afternoon on Thursday 8th January 2.30 - 3.10. We look forward to seeing you there.

Thank you

A huge thank you to Mr Stanbridge for all your hard work decorating our school for Christmas, we really appreciate your time and effort.



Attendance & illness

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school.

If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone or email the school office. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know.

The link below gives further information on childhood illnesses.

https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

EVERY SCHOOL DAY MATTERS



Thinking about requesting a term-time holiday? Please think carefully.

Headteachers can only agree to time off in exceptional circumstances. The Department for Education says that family holidays or trips for leisure aren't considered exceptional.



Every lesson missed impacts upon your child being able to reach their potential.

Why time in school matters:

- Even a few days away can leave gaps in learning, especially in maths and literacy
- Children can find it harder to catch up when they return, which can knock their confidence
- They may miss projects, group work or assessments that are difficult to repeat
- Being away can mean missing social moments with friends and classmates
- Teachers want every child to succeed, but it's hard to help one pupil catch up without holding others back

We know family time is important – but so is your child's education.

Please plan holidays during school breaks so your child doesn't miss out on learning or friendships.

Unauthorised absences can lead to a fine.

Each parent may be fined £160 per child if a pupil misses 5 days of school without permission.

Repeated absences could result in court action, larger fines, or a criminal record.

Every day in school helps your child build a brighter future.

For more information visit:
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school-attendance

Important - Winter Illness

As we move further into winter and in response to the increasing number of children and adults falling ill at this time of year the following guidance is available:

- [NHS Guidance for Parents](#): Is my child too ill for school? – a useful resource to help parents decide when children should stay at home.
- [Preventing and controlling infections Guidance](#): Includes advice on vaccination, ventilation, and good respiratory hygiene.
- [A to Z managing specific infectious diseases](#): Practical guidance on managing specific illnesses.

Early Years and Childcare Team

0-19 Support & Intervention

Children and Families Service

Central Bedfordshire SENDIASS Annual Survey 2025

(Special Educational Needs Disability Information Advice Support Service)

Have you accessed Information, Advice or Support from CB SENDIASS?

We need to hear from YOU! 

Your feedback—whether it's good, bad or needs improvement—helps us know where we are getting things right and where we need to improve.

Every SENDIAS service shares a summary with the Council for Disabled Children.

🌟 Why take part?

- ✓ It's super quick (just 10 mins!)
- ✓ 100% confidential & anonymous
- ✓ Your voice helps shapes the future of the service! 🌟

👉 Click here to share your thoughts: [CB SENDIASS ANNUAL SURVEY 2025](#)

 **Deadline: 14th December 2025**

Don't miss out—make your voice count! 🙌

CB SENDIASS thank you for your valuable time and input!

Request for Spare School Clothing

We're collecting *trainers, plimsolls, socks, pants, trousers and tights* that children may have outgrown or that families are planning to throw away. If you have any clean, usable items to donate, please bring them to the school office or hand them to one of the adults on the playground.

Your contributions help us support children who need a quick change during the school day. Thank you for your kindness and help!

Coping Over Christmas

The cooler weather, darker evenings, social gatherings and the busyness of school and work as the year comes to an end can all have huge impacts on our mood. Please find some information [here](#) about Coping Over Christmas which you might find helpful.

Parking at school

It has been highlighted to school that there is some poor parent parking, on Woburn Road and the side streets.

Safety tips for parking outside schools

When picking up or dropping off your children at schools, you should do the following:

- Allow yourself plenty of time as the area is likely to be busy.
- Do not park on yellow zigzag lines and avoid parking opposite them.
- Do not park on pathways blocking them for pedestrians.
- If you decide to park further away, please be considerate of local residents and avoid blocking driveways or access ways.
- Please be mindful of local residents who do have the right to complain to the council and the police about dangerous or illegal parking.

Mental Health Support Team

Spring 2026 Community Access Service Webinars

For parents/carers:

- 14th January, 12pm until 1pm - Supporting behaviour and managing emotions in children (5-11 years)
- 29th January, 12pm until 1pm - Recognising and responding to anxiety in children (5-11 years)
- 26th February, 4pm until 5pm - Supporting your teenager with anxiety (12+ years)
- 17th March, 4pm until 5pm - Supporting school transitions

Central Bedfordshire Community Access Service

Upcoming Events

Online Workshops for Parents & Caregivers
Click on each to sign up or scan the QR code!

Date	Topic	Time
JANUARY 14	Supporting Behaviour and Managing Emotions in Children (5-11yrs)	12-1 PM
JANUARY 29	Recognising and Responding to Anxiety in Children (5-11yrs)	12-1 PM
FEBRUARY 26	Supporting your Teenager with Anxiety (12+ yrs)	4-5 PM
MARCH 17	Supporting School Transitions	4-5 PM

**We care
We respect
We are inclusive**

NHS
East London
NHS Foundation Trust

Values

In December we are learning about the value of Hope.

Hope is like a little light you carry inside you.

Even on days that feel cloudy or hard, that light reminds you that good things *can* happen. It helps you keep trying, keep dreaming, and keep moving forward.

Imagine you're learning to ride a bike. You wobble, maybe you fall, and it feels tough. Hope is the part of you that whispers, *"I can get this if I keep practicing."* It gives you energy to try again.

Hope doesn't mean everything will always be easy. It just means you believe that tomorrow can be better, and you have the power to help make it that way—by working hard, being kind, and not giving up.

Hope helps people dream bigger, stay brave, and look for solutions instead of stopping when things get tricky.

So hold on to your little light.

It can guide you farther than you think.

Hannukah

Sunday, 14 December 2025 and ends at nightfall on Monday, 22 December 2025
Chanukah is the Jewish eight-day, wintertime "festival of lights," celebrated with a nightly menorah lighting, special prayers and fried foods. It is a festival commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire. The Hanukkah celebration revolves around the kindling of a nine-branched menorah, known in Hebrew as the hanukiah. On each of the holiday's eight nights, another candle is added to the menorah after sundown; the ninth candle, called the shamash ("helper"), is used to light the others. A menorah is lit in every household (or even by each individual within the household) and placed in a doorway or window. A special Hallel prayer is recited daily, to offer praise and thanksgiving to G-d. The tradition is actually to give Chanukah gelt, gifts of money, to children. In another allusion to the Hanukkah miracle, traditional Hanukkah foods are fried in oil. Potato pancakes (known as latkes) and jam-filled donuts (sufganiyot) are particularly popular in many Jewish households. Other Hanukkah customs include playing with four-sided spinning tops called dreidels and exchanging gifts. "Hanukkah Sameach!"

Christmas

24-27 Dec 2025

Christmas is an annual festival commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ, celebrated primarily on December 25 as a religious and cultural celebration among billions of people around the world. In the UK, families often celebrate Christmas together, so they can watch each other open their presents. Most families have a Christmas Tree in their house for Christmas. The decorating of the tree is usually a family occasion, with everyone helping. Children believe that Father Christmas or Santa Claus leaves presents in stockings or pillowcases. These are normally hung up by the fire or by the children's beds on Christmas Eve Here are some other examples of how different countries around the world celebrate Christmas:

Sweden

The Yule Goat has been a Swedish Christmas symbol dating back to ancient pagan festivals. However, in 1966, the tradition got a whole new life after someone came up with the idea to make a giant straw goat, now referred to as the Gävle Goat. Each year, the massive goat is constructed in the same spot. Fans can even watch a livestream from the first Sunday of Advent until after the New Year when it's taken down.

Philippines

Every year, the city of San Fernando holds Ligitan Parol (or Giant Lantern Festival) featuring dazzling parols (lanterns) that symbolize the Star of Bethlehem. Each parol consists of thousands of spinning lights that illuminate the night sky. The festival has made San Fernando the "Christmas Capital of the Philippines."

Iceland

Similar to the 12 days of Christmas in the U.S., Iceland celebrates 13. Each night before Christmas, Icelandic children are visited by the 13 Yule Lads. After placing their shoes by the window, the little ones will head upstairs to bed. In the morning, they'll either have received candy (if they're good) or be greeted with shoes full of rotten potatoes if they're bad. And you thought coal was a terrible gift!

New Zealand

Because summer falls during Christmastime for Kiwis, a number of their traditions centre around a BBQ, or grill, where families and friends gather for a casual cookout of fresh seafood, meat, and seasonal vegetables. The New Zealand Christmas tree is the Pohutukawa, a coastal species that blooms a bright red colour in

December, providing shade during the sunny days as they sing carols in both English and Maori.

Ireland

The Irish leave a tall red candle in a front window overnight, a welcoming symbol of warmth and shelter for the holiday season. Traditional Christmas fare in Ireland often includes homemade roast goose, vegetables, cranberries, and potatoes.

Portugal and Brazil

Brazilian and Portuguese families come together on Christmas Eve to eat dinner as late as 10 p.m. Then, at exactly midnight, they exchange gifts, toasts, and wish each other a Merry Christmas. Midnight mass, Missa Do Galo (Rooster Mass), is a chance to meet up with neighbours and extended family to wish them well for the holiday season. The service is often followed by fireworks in the town square. Pictured: Cathedral Square in Mariana, Minas Gerais, Brazil

Merry Christmas

<u>2025 Christmas Services</u> <u>in the Churches</u>		
Date	Time	Service
St. Leonard's, Heath and Reach		
Sunday 7 December	11.00am	Toy Service and Family Service
Sunday 21 December	5.00pm	Carols by Candlelight
Wednesday 24 December	3.00pm	Christingle and Crib Service
Wednesday 24 December	11.15pm	Midnight Communion
Thursday 25 December	10.00am	Christmas Day Family Communion
Sunday 28 December	11.00am	First Sunday after Christmas
St. Nicholas', Hockliffe		
Saturday 20 December	7.00pm	Carol Service
Sunday 28 December	9.30am	First Sunday after Christmas
St. Michael's, Eggington		
Wednesday 10 December	7.00pm	Carol Service
Wednesday 24 December	3.00pm	Christingle Service
Wednesday 24 December	11.15pm	Lay-led Christmas Service

<u>Happenings in the Parishes in December 2025</u>			
<u>Parish Office Opening Hours</u>			
The Office is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10.00am to 12.00 noon. For further information, please contact: 07502 320025 or stleonardheath@gmail.com			
Event	Date	Time	Venue
Advent Group	Tuesday 2 December	10.15am	17 Byford Way, Leighton Buzzard
Elevenses in the church	Wednesday 3 December	11.00am to Noon	St. Michael's, Eggington
Little Fishes Group	Thursday 4 December	10.00am to Noon	St. Leonard's Church Hall
Christmas Party	Friday 5 December	7.30pm	St. Leonard's Church Hall
St. Nicholas' Supper	Saturday 6 December	7.30pm	Hockliffe Grange, Hockliffe
Advent Group	Tuesday 9 December	10.15am	17 Byford Way, Leighton Buzzard
Coffee Morning	Thursday 11 December	10.00am to Noon	St. Leonard's Church Hall
Advent Group	Tuesday 16 December	10.15am	17 Byford Way, Leighton Buzzard
Little Fishes Group	Thursday 18 December	10.00am to Noon	St. Leonard's Church Hall



Calendar

Month & school events	
<p>Forest School Maple & Rowan will have Forest school in the summer term. Which half of the term will be confirmed in the spring term. Children will be required to wear their Forest School clothes into school each week for the 6 week block. Please send a change of clothes on wet days.</p>	
<p>December 12th Santa Dash @ school (pupils & staff, no cost) Children can wear PE kit and a Christmas Accessory e.g. jumper, hairband 12th Rocksteady Concert 2.30 12th Carols on the playground 3.15 – 3.30 12th HSA Christmas Raffle 3.15 16th Panto (all children) 9.00 – 1.00 17th Christmas Dinner for pupils - children can wear a Christmas jumper or party outfit or school uniform. 18th Willow Christmas Production 2.30 – 3.00 (Willow Class Parents only) 19th Last day of term Early Close 1pm</p>	<p>3rd International Day of People with Disabilities 10th Human Rights Day 18th International Migrants Day 14th - 22nd Hannukah 25th Christmas</p>
<p>January 6th Return to school 8th Reading Afternoon 2.30 – 3.10 (parents or grandparents) 16th Dance workshop all children Chinese Dance (during the school day no cost)</p>	<p>4th World Braille Day 14th Pongal and Makar Sankranti 18th World Religion Day 20th Martin Luther King Day 27th Holocaust Memorial Day</p>
<p>February 2nd Rowan and Maple Parents Evening 1.30 – 5.30 5th Willow Parents Evening 2.30 – 5.30 6th Glow in the Dark sport event for pupils in school - wear your PE with something that will Glow in the Dark. 9th - 15th Wear Bright Shine Bright CHUMS Children's Mental Health Week 10th Safer Internet Day 10th February Maple Performance parents / grandparents invited 2.30 – 3.00 - please note change of date</p>	<p>LGBT+ History Month 9th – 15th Children's Mental health Week 10th Safer Internet Day 14th – 20th Random Acts of Kindness Week 17th Chinese New Year 17th Feb – 18th March expected dates for Ramadan 21st International Mother Language Day</p>

<p>13th HSA Valentines non-uniform - Wear Bright Shine Bright 13th Break up for half term 23rd SEND parent meetings week 24th Young Leaders Training Yr 4 am PE kit 24th Little BASH Maple lunchtime PE kit</p>	
<p>March 3rd Young Leaders Training Yr 4 am PE kit 3rd Little BASH Maple lunchtime PE kit 10th Young Leaders Training Yr 4 am PE kit 10th Little BASH Maple lunchtime PE kit 12th HSA Carer's Event afternoon times TBC 20th Yr3/4 Joy of Movement Festival during school day 20th Rocksteady Concert 2.30 TBC 27th Last day of term Early Close 1pm</p>	<p>2nd – 3rd March Purim 3rd World Wildlife Day 4th Holi 8th international Women's Day 13th Young Carers Action Day 16th – 22nd Sign Language Week 19th – 20th Eid al-Fitr 21st International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination</p>
<p>April 17th Dance workshop all children USA street dance (during the school day no cost) 22nd Cluster Sports KS Brooklands approx. 4.30 pick up</p>	<p>Stress Awareness Month 1st – 9th Passover 2nd World Autism Awareness Day 5th Easter 7th World Health Day 14th Vaisakhi 14th Sikh New Year 14th Bengali New Year 15th World Art day</p>
<p>May 14th Enterprise Day children only £1 needed in change e.g. 10 x 10p or 6 x 10p + 2 x 20p (avoid £1 coin) Each class will devise some games / activities. The children will have the opportunity to try each other's game / activity. Within the school day. 22nd HSA Non Uniform 22nd Break up for half term</p>	<p>1st Vesak 4th – 10th Deaf Awareness Week 9th Fair trade Day 11th – 17th Mental Health Awareness Day 15th international day of Families 18th – 22nd – Walk to School Week 21st World Day for Cultural Diversity</p>
<p>June 1st SEND parent meetings week 8th Sports Day parents / grandparents invited from 1.30 – 3.00 9th Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 9th Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am</p>	<p>Pride Month 5th World Environment day 14th – 20th World Refugee Week 21st World Music Day</p>

<p>10th Cluster Sports KS1 (Brooklands) approx. 4.30 pick up TBC 16th Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 16th Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am 18th HSA Carer's Event (time to be confirmed) 23rd Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 23rd Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am 30th Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 30th Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am</p>	
<p>July 1st Year 4 Transfer Day (TBC) 2nd Year 4 Transfer Day (TBC) 2nd Internal Move Up Day 7th Girls Active Rowan PE kit am 7th Boys 2 Move Rowan PE kit am 9th Parent teacher report meeting (only if required to discuss report) 3.15 – 5 10th Rowan Activity Day during the school day 15th Rowan End of year graduation celebration for yr 4 parents all Rowan invited 2.30 – 3.10 (subject to change) 16th HSA Disco 2.15 – 4.00 all children invited, price to be confirmed. Children can bring in clothes to change into at lunchtime. 17th Last day of term Early Close 1pm</p>	<p>30th international Day of Friendship</p>
<p>September 2026</p>	

HSA

Bank Details

<p>Account Name: Hockliffe School Association</p>		
<p>Account number: 72738481</p>		
<p>Sort Code: 40 33 33</p>		
<p>Reference:</p>	<p>PUPIL</p>	<p>NAME</p>
<p>Note: please do not pay for events until asked to do so by the HSA</p>		

The 2025/2026 calendar of events

EVENT	DATE	COST
HSA Christmas Raffle	Friday 12 th December (tickets pulled after the Carols in the Playground)	£5 per strip
HSA Valentines non-uniform -Wear Bright Shine Bright	Friday 13 th February	Included in annual fee
World Book Day competition <i>(More details to follow)</i>	Friday 6 th March	Included in annual fee
HSA Carer's Event	Thursday 12 th March 2.00 and 2.30	£5 per child (one adult – mum, dad, aunt, uncle, gran, grandad per child)
HSA non-uniform day	Friday 22 nd May	Included in annual fee
HSA Carer's Event	Thursday 18 th June 8.30-9.00am	£5 per child (one adult – mum, dad, aunt, uncle, gran, grandad per child)
HSA End of year Disco	Thursday 16 th July 2.15 – 4.00pm	£5 per child Children to bring clothes to change into at school
Cake sale, donut sale, ice lolly sale	Dates to be confirmed	Included in annual fee