

# Links Journal

## Spring Term 2026



### School Calendar

*spring Term  
Ends*

**Friday 27 March 2026**

**@ 12.30pm**

*Easter Break*

**Monday 30 March —  
Friday 10 April 2026**

.....

**INSET DAYS**

**Monday 13 April 2026  
No Children in school**

**Student Parent Review  
Day**

**Tuesday 14 April 2026**

**Form Tutors will arrange  
a convenient time to meet  
with parents & children**

**Summer Term Starts**

**Wednesday 15 April 2026**

*Bank Holiday*

**Monday 4 May 2026**

*Half Term*

**Monday 25— Friday 29 ay  
2026**

*Summer Term  
Ends*

**Friday 17 July 2026 @  
12.30 pm**

Dear Parents/Carers

As we come to the end of the Spring Term, we would like to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been a busy and successful few months.

Throughout the term, the children have enjoyed a wide range of engaging activities and experiences, and we hope they have shared some of these with you at home. Thank you for your continued support, which makes such a positive difference to your child's progress.

Year 11 will return for their final weeks at Links before beginning their GCSE examinations. Please encourage them to revise over the break—it is never too late to make a difference. The Year 11 Leavers' Celebration is scheduled for Friday 8 May 2026 at 11.30 am, followed by a BBQ for Year 11 children and their parents/carers in the afternoon. On this day, children in Years 7, 8, 9, and 10 will finish at 12.30 pm.

I would like to say a big thank you to Mrs Ojo for her dedication, hard work, and support at Cedars throughout her time with us. We truly appreciate all that she has contributed.

Wishing her every success and happiness in her next chapter as she continues her journey as a teacher in an SEN provision.

We hope you all have a restful and enjoyable Easter break, and we look forward to welcoming the children back for the Summer Term.

*Mrs Brown*



Mrs Brown  
Head of School



Links Academy welcomes comments from parents/carers and families about any aspect of school life.

Please contact us via our email [admin@linksacademy.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@linksacademy.herts.sch.uk)

[www.linksmultiacademytrust.herts.sch.uk](http://www.linksmultiacademytrust.herts.sch.uk) to view Ofsted reports, key dates, journals and school information

# INCLUSION

It has been a busy and exciting time for children at Woollam Crescent during the Spring Term.

In English this term, we have been working more on developing our writing skills, both for specific purpose and creatively. This forms a large part of their grade at GCSE, so it has been pleasing to see the successes in class with tasks such as narrative / story creative writing, writing persuasive emails and letters, and finally working on our descriptive writing and the language features included in that type of writing. We have also recapped grammatical devices that help our children with creating and organising powerful sentences. It has been a great half term, and I congratulate the children for their hard work in English.



This term also had an e-safety focus as children entered discussions and completed tasks around Safer Internet Day. With the theme focusing on AI and its uses, it was a timely top up of skills and discussion around an important subject for all years. The children engaged and enjoyed the ability to connect with the topic that is relevant to them every day.

The children also enjoyed a fantastic trip to Hudnall Park for some outdoor learning. The visit provided a great opportunity for pupils to develop teamwork and resilience while taking part in a range of outdoor challenges. Highlights of the day included racing on the go-karts and tackling the obstacle course, where children encouraged one another and showed excellent determination. The trip was a wonderful way to build confidence and strengthen friendships outside the classroom.



They have also been working hard in Food Technology and some have successfully achieved their Level 2 Home Cooking Skills qualification, demonstrating their growing independence and practical ability in the kitchen. Throughout the course they have developed essential cooking techniques, learned about nutrition, and prepared a variety of healthy dishes. The qualification recognises the effort and commitment they have shown in these lessons.



Inclusion also celebrated World Book Day on 5 March with a fun theme inspired by Dr. Seuss alongside the Cedars, primary children. Staff enjoyed decorating the school, dressing up as characters from the much-loved stories, and creative activities. Grinch pancakes, Cat in the Hat skewers and green eggs and ham were some of the creations the children made. It was fantastic day that was enjoyed by all.



Meanwhile, our Year 11 children began their mock examinations on 9 March. So far, the exams have been going well, with many children showing focus and determination as they prepare for their final GCSE exams later this year. Teachers have been very pleased with the positive attitude and effort shown by children during this important assessment period.

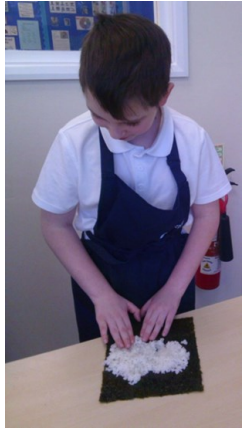
Overall, it has been a productive and enjoyable time, with children continuing to work hard both in and out of the classroom. We look forward to sharing more of their achievements for the term ahead.

**Mr Holgate and Mr Marland, Inclusion Team**

## Cooking and Healthy Lifestyle

In the first half of this term, we focused on living a healthy lifestyle and thinking about how much sugar we consume. We explored making a range of sweet and savoury foods, but for the sweet treats, we substituted sugar with healthier alternatives. Some of the delicious dishes we created included veggie rainbow wraps, banana brownies, carrot cupcakes, Asian cucumber salad, and we finished with sushi.

In the next half of the term, we moved on to an Easter cooking theme. The children had great fun making hot cross buns, mini egg brownies, Easter cookies, cheesy buns, and mini egg mini cheesecakes. The children really enjoyed experimenting with different recipes and learning new cooking skills.

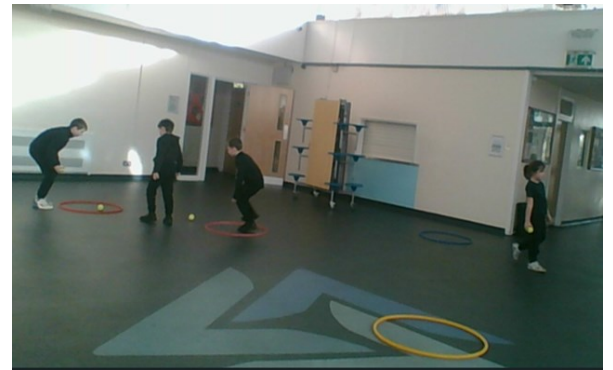


*Mr Taylor & Mrs Barnes, Teachers of PSB*

## PE

Throughout the spring term, children took part in a variety of engaging PE sessions designed to develop coordination, balance, agility, and teamwork. They participated in a range of movement-based challenges and team games, including activities such as Cone Collectors, Sharks and Fish, Cat and Mouse, and different variations of dodgeball. These games encouraged children to move quickly, react to others, and develop spatial awareness while working cooperatively with their peers.

The children also rotated through skill stations where they practised balance, problem-solving, and ball control using equipment such as cones, hoops, beanbags, and balls. Team games such as Bench Ball and relay challenges supported communication, cooperation, and passing skills. Across the term, the sessions helped children build confidence in physical activity while developing important skills such as quick reactions, coordination, and positive teamwork in a fun and active environment.



*Mr Taylor & Mrs Barnes, Teachers of PSB*

# WORLD BOOK DAY



On Thursday 5 March, children from Inclusion and Cedars came together to celebrate World Book Day with a fun and creative theme inspired by Dr. Seuss.

Throughout the day, children took part in a variety of exciting activities linked to some of Dr. Seuss's most well-known stories, including *The Cat in the Hat*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, and *The Lorax*.



One of the highlights of the day was the themed art and food activities. In the kitchen, the children created a range of imaginative treats inspired by the stories. These included delicious Grinch pancakes, colourful *Cat in the Hat* fruit skewers, bright *Lorax* oranges, and of course the famous green eggs and ham. The children thoroughly enjoyed preparing and tasting their creations while learning about the stories behind them.



Creativity continued with a variety of Dr. Seuss-themed arts and crafts. Children designed and made fantastic artwork inspired by the characters, patterns, and bright colours found in the books. From *Cat in the Hat* hats to *Lorax*-themed crafts, the effort and imagination shown by everyone was wonderful to see.



To finish the day, children took part in a special activity inspired by *The Lorax*, which teaches an important message about caring for the environment. Together, the children planted sunflower seeds, symbolising growth, nature, and looking after the world around us.



Cedars also invited parents and carers in for a story together to finish the day. The children enjoyed showing their adults their workbooks before receiving books and a postcard to celebrate their effort in World Book Day.

It was a fantastic day filled with reading, creativity, and teamwork. Our children showed great enthusiasm and really embraced the spirit of World Book Day.

**Miss Crawford, Lead Practitioner PSB**



## MINI POLICE at Cedars

This term, we have had a fantastic time being part of the Mini Police program and working with our resident PCSO, Mr. Bunn. We have learned so much about the police and how they help our community.

Some of the highlights included learning about the legal age of responsibility and understanding how our actions can have consequences. We also explored important topics like online safety and the age-appropriateness of different games.

We really enjoyed taking part in the fitness tests, such as the bleep test, which are exercises required if we ever wanted to join the police force as adults.

A huge highlight of the term was Road Safety Week. During this week, we went on a walk around the local area, had a short stop at the park, and then went to the shops to buy chips, which we brought back for lunch—an unforgettable experience!

Overall, this term has been full of learning, fun, and exciting activities, and we are very grateful to Mr. Bunn for all his support and guidance.



**Mr Taylor & Mrs Barnes, Teachers of PSB**

# ART

Our children have been working very hard in Art this term and they have produced some particularly great masks and sculptures.

I've been really impressed with how everyone of them has focused and worked on this project. I'm sure parents and families will also want to see the children's hard work, so here's a few photos.



*Ms Daly, Teacher of Art*

## Duke of Edinburgh

Over three days, our children completed their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze practice expedition, starting at Letty Green and walking to Tolmers Activity Centre. They demonstrated strong teamwork, navigation skills, and independence throughout the journey, arriving safely and setting up camp. They prepared their own meals, and showed increasing confidence in using equipment and following their planned routes.

On the second day, they walked from Tolmers back to school, showing clear progress in navigation and group organisation. On the final morning, they prepared breakfast and packed away equipment responsibly. Overall, the expedition was a great success, with all children meeting the required standards and now fully prepared for their assessed expedition in June.



*Mr Bailey, DofE Coordinator*

# MOCK EXAMS

## March Mock Exams – A Positive Step Towards GCSE Success

We are pleased to share that our children approached the March mock examinations with determination and resilience. It was particularly encouraging to see that most children arrived on time and in full uniform, demonstrating a mature and responsible attitude towards this important milestone.

These mock exams have provided a valuable opportunity for children to experience exam conditions, test their knowledge, and identify areas for improvement ahead of the summer GCSE examinations. There is still time for them to reflect on their performance, seek support from their teachers, and make meaningful progress.

As we now look ahead to the upcoming summer GCSE exams, we would like to emphasise the importance of punctuality and correct uniform. Please note that children who arrive late or are not in the appropriate uniform may not be permitted to sit their exams. Establishing these good habits now is essential for success.



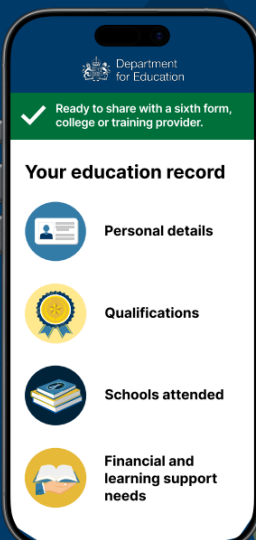
We would like to congratulate all children for their effort, perseverance, and commitment throughout the mock exam period. Your hard work has not gone unnoticed - keep going, you can do it!

Finally, a sincere thank you to our staff and parents for their continued support in helping our children achieve their best.

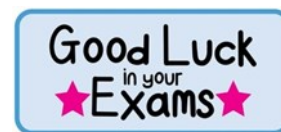
We wish all our children every success in their upcoming GCSE examinations.

## Have you got the Education Record app yet?

- 1 Download app
- 2 Get your record
- 3 Receive your results
- 4 Share your record



Department for Education

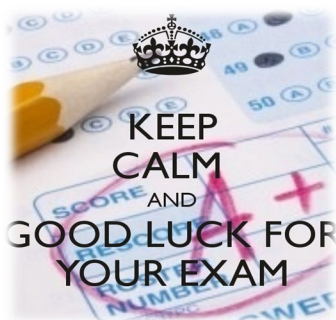


*Mrs Ulucay, Trust Exams Officer*

## Summer 2026

### Public Examination Dates

DAY	DATE	QUALIFICATION	SUBJECT	TITLE	AM/PM 9 am/1.30 pm	DURATION
Tuesday	12/05/2026	AQA GCSE	Biology	Paper 1	PM	1h 45m
Thursday	14/05/2026	AQA GCSE	Maths (non-calculator)	Paper 1	AM	1h 30m
Tuesday	19/05/2026	OCR Cambridge Nationals	Child Development	Health & well-being for child development	PM	1h 15m
Thursday	21/05/2026	Pearson GCSE	English Language 2.0	Paper 1: Non-Fiction Texts	AM	1h 55m
Wednesday	03/06/2026	AQA GCSE	Maths (calculator)	Paper 2	AM	1h 30m
Friday	05/06/2026	Pearson GCSE	English Language 2.0	Paper 2: Contemporary Texts	AM	1h 55m
Monday	08/06/2026	AQA GCSE	Biology	Paper 2	AM	1h 45m
Wednesday	10/06/2026	AQA GCSE	Maths (calculator)	Paper 3	AM	1h 30m
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>24/06/2026</b>	<b>AQA GCSE</b>	<b>CONTINGENCY DAY</b>		<b>AM/PM</b>	



*Mrs Ulucay, Trust Exams Officer*

# Sneaker Design Factory Trip

## A Visit to a Sneaker Design Factory

For a little change in the weekly visits to the farm on Wednesday, Max organised for us to go to an exciting trip to a sneaker design factory on Wednesday 4 March. It was a very special visit because we did not just look around the sneaker workshop, we actually got the chance to design our own sneakers using an AI app.

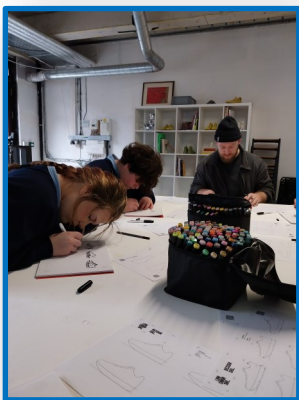
When we arrived, the staff welcomed us and explained how sneakers are designed, made and their visual for their company. They showed us different shoes they had worked on as well as current projects they were doing. We also learned that designers often test many ideas before choosing the final design.

The most exciting part of the visit was when we got to create our own sneakers. First we drew out our designs a couple times before using an AI app to help turn our ideas into realistic images of sneakers in just a few seconds. It was amazing to see our ideas come to life so quickly.

After everyone finished, we shared our designs with the group. It was interesting to see how different everyone's sneakers were. The staff explained that technology like AI is becoming very important in design because it helps designers test ideas faster and be more creative.

The trip was both fun and educational. We learned how sneakers are designed, how show production takes place, and how AI can help people create new things.

Overall, the visit to the sneaker design factory was a memorable experience that combined creativity and technology.



**Miss Crawford, Lead Practitioner PSB**

## Wenzel's The Bakers Trip

This term, the children enjoyed an exciting and hands-on school trip to the headquarters of Wenzel's the Bakers. During the visit, they had the opportunity to take part in a baking workshop where they learned how to shape bread in three different ways: plaiting, creating a Viennese-style roll, and tying a knot. The children also showed their creativity by decorating a gingerbread bunny and a fairy cake.

As part of the experience, the children were given a guided tour of the factory. They explored different areas of the bakery and saw a variety of doughnut and bread-making machines in action. Staff explained how the equipment works and how it helps produce large quantities of baked goods each day. The children also learned about the history of the company and how it has grown over time.



The trip was both fun and educational, giving children a great insight into how bakery products are made on a larger scale while allowing them to develop their own baking skills.



*Mr Taylor & Mrs Barnes, Teachers of PSB*

## Real Stories, Real Change: HACRO Visit Links Academy

Children at Links Academy recently experienced a powerful and thought-provoking session when representatives from the Hertfordshire Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders (HACRO) visited the school to share their personal journeys and the work they now do to support others.

HACRO runs a personal development programme for ex-offenders, helping individuals rebuild their lives after prison. The programme focuses on providing support, purpose, engagement, structure and opportunity, enabling people to move forward positively and successfully reintegrate into their communities.

During the visit, Tony and Paul, two members of the HACRO team, spoke openly and honestly about their own life experiences. Both men shared deeply personal stories about their past involvement in crime, gangs and drug addiction, explaining how these choices shaped their lives and the difficult consequences that followed.

What made the session particularly impactful was the sincerity with which they spoke. Their accounts were raw, honest and hard-hitting, offering children a realistic insight into the realities behind lifestyles that can sometimes be misunderstood or even glamorised. Tony and Paul described the challenges they faced, the turning points that helped them change direction, and the determination it took to leave those lives behind.

Today, both men use their experiences to help others avoid the same mistakes, dedicating their time to supporting people who are trying to rebuild their lives. Their message was clear: change is possible, but it requires perseverance, support and a commitment to making better choices.

The session captured the attention of the children from the very beginning, with many fully engaged throughout. Hearing directly from people who have lived through these experiences brought a level of authenticity that made the message particularly powerful.

Links Academy is delighted to be developing an ongoing partnership with HACRO, and there are already several exciting ideas and initiatives being planned. These future projects aim to provide the children with further opportunities to learn about the realities and consequences of certain life choices, while also highlighting the importance of resilience, personal responsibility and positive decision-making.

The visit was a memorable and meaningful experience for everyone involved, and we look forward to continuing our work with HACRO to support and educate our children in the months ahead.

<https://hacro.org/>



# Valentines



Love was in the air at Links Academy on February 14 this year. Cupid delivered some staff wellbeing biscuits and a keepsake heart mini pencil for the staff to enjoy.



## Attendance at Links Academy – Timely Reminders

As the wet, cold, wintery months move over and make way for spring and summer our thoughts may turn to summer holidays.



Although tempting.....please remember that any leave from school during term time, must be requested in writing, in advance and Links Academy will judge each application on an individual basis.

Remember: a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance and will be referred to the Local Authority.

Punctuality remains a focus for Links Academy this term and will continue to be for the Summer Term.

With our Year 11's due to sit examinations and GCSE's during the Summer Term, never has being on time to school been so important, as national exams cannot be delayed or rescheduled because students have overslept or missed the early bus.



Now is the time, particularly for our Year 11's to find their resilience and be responsible for getting to school on time to squeeze as much learning, revision and practice as possible and helping to be prepared to arrive on time for their exams.

Student's can accumulate 'unauthorised' late marks by arriving after the registers have closed, which will impact unauthorised absences and lead to penalty notice fines....for just being really late!

Being on time for school has many benefits as it:

- improves academic performance
- fosters better social skills
- reduces anxiety
- help develop valuable life skills such as time management and responsibility.



A parents/carers positive support and encouragement with time keeping and punctuality is vital and if on the rare occasion your child will be late to school, give school a call and let the reception team know.



**01727 836150 option #1**

Please remember morning registration is: 8.40am and lesson 1 starts at 9am.

***And finally.....***

Links Academy will always try to work with students and their families to support attendance and /or improve punctuality.

If you have any concerns, please speak to your child’s form tutor at their SPRD appointment in April.

**Mrs Porritt, Trust Attendance Officer**

Check out our updated Attendance Policy  
<https://linksmultiacademytrust.co.uk/policies/>

## Cedars Attendance Update – Spring Term 2026

As we come to the end of our Spring Term, it is time to celebrate the fantastic attendance for our children at Cedars.

**I Love School – Attendance Rewards at Cedars PSB.**

Out of the 29 school days for the first half of the Spring Term, ‘I Love School’ treats and certificates were awarded by Mrs Porritt and Mrs McGleish to all our Cedars children in recognition of their amazing attendance and resilience in attending school.

Reggie was rewarded for 29/29 days, with David following closely behind with 28/29 days. All children showed great effort and resilience. We are so proud of you all, what a great start to the term!



A special guest appearance was made by Daisy the Dog, who was showcasing her wonderful tricks, once again, led by the children.

**Hop To It – Attendance Rewards at Cedars PSB.**

Our bunnies are currently busy counting the number of days for the second half of the Spring Term ‘Hop To It’ rewards. Our children’s attendance for the second half of the Spring Term has been equally impressive to date. Children will be receiving their Hop To It prizes and certificates on Tuesday 24 March 2026.



**Mrs Porritt, Trust Attendance Officer**

## 'The latest agricultural round-up'

Our 'Growing Futures' farming project continues, as part of our team-up with the 100&First Foundation, hosted by Cheyney's Farm.

Whatever the weather, the animals need feeding and the produce needs harvesting, so our children have braved the worst that January has to offer with little to no fuss. It could have been an 'udder' failure, but instead we are going from strength to strength. Each week there are more eggs being laid, more salad to pick, and more animals to care for. There's certainly more going on than meets the sty.



*Polly, not taking her space for grunted.*

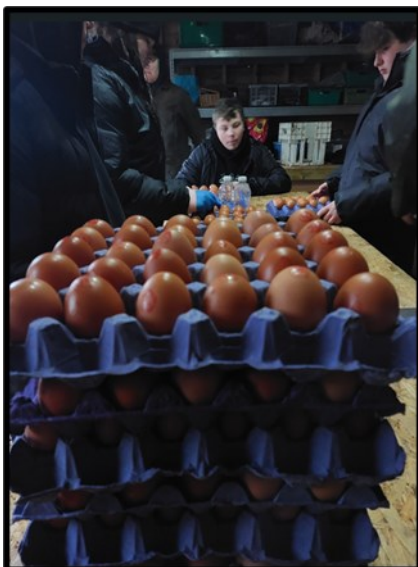


*Sheltering inside from the fowl weather.*



Our children have been involved in many tasks, including caring for the livestock, undertaking team building 'flying egg challenges', sewing new seeds, building an 'honesty box', and preparing the grow beds for the Spring months when, hopefully, the sun will emerge once again.

Although our crack team of children has varied slightly this term, we now seem to have a core of volunteers who are happy to get their hands dirty and muck in. Being a farmer isn't for everyone, but hay – it's in our jeans.



*An egg-cellent day's produce. Anyone got a cow-culator?*



*Talking in person rather than on Insta-grain. (Everybody's a comedi-hen...)*





## 'Dry January' 2026

As most of us have spent the past month sheltering from the rain, it's ironic that the only 'dry' thing to celebrate seems to be our beer and wine glasses.

It can be a test of people's resolve not to consume alcohol for a whole month at the best of times, let alone the post-festive 5-week long slog through a depressing, darkened January.

Nevertheless, a few of the staff made it to the bitter end (no pun intended), demonstrating to students that we don't need alcohol to have a good time.

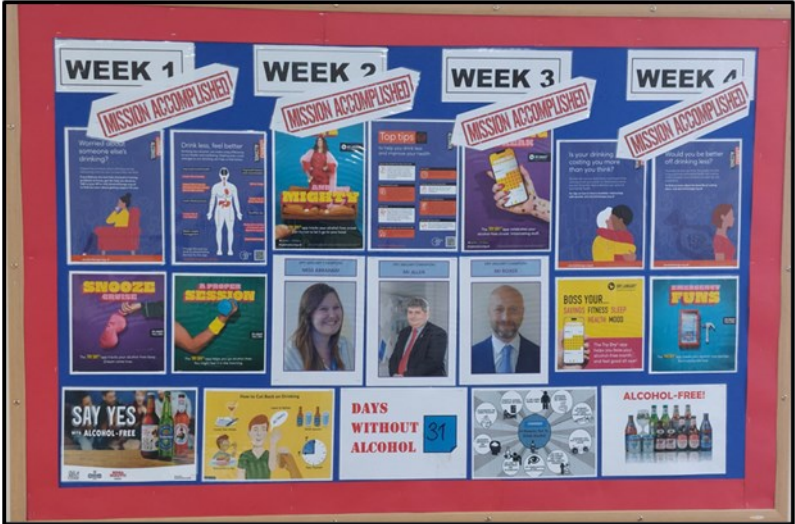
It's worth remembering that there are many advantages to being alcohol-free, even for a short time:

Improved sleep and concentration, more money in our pockets, feeling happier or less anxious, lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels, better skin condition and weight loss.

To aid success, one useful tool is the *Dry January* app, which is a **free**, behaviour-science-based tool designed to help users track their progress.

It can help alcohol-users through January and beyond, depending on their customised goals.

The break from the booze might set some of us up nicely for the summer, as 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2026 is *Alcohol Awareness Week!*  
Roll on the sunshine...



In the meantime, the advice for our children has not changed:

***“Children and their parents and carers are advised that an alcohol-free childhood is the healthiest and best option. However, if children drink alcohol, it should not be until at least the age of 15 years.”***  
- Chief Medical Officer for England, 2009

↑  
The drink-free board of success.

Mr Boxer, Healthy Lifestyles Lead

# FLYERS

attachment

## BARRACUDAS

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## easter at church farm

28th March – 12th April

**Easter Farm Day Pass**  
Includes:  
Easter Themed Activity Book  
Woodland Play Area  
Easter Bunny Riddle Trail  
Farm Bingo & spot the Easter Bunny  
See the Lambs, Rabbits & Farm animals  
Walk around the farm

**Additional Activities**  
Meet the Easter Bunny  
Easter Egg Hunt  
Lamb Bottle Feeding  
Goat Walking  
Tractor & Trailer Rides  
Fairy Trail

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