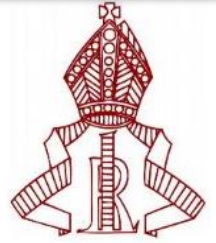


Bishop Luffa School

2026-2027 Issue 1

October 2026



Dear friends of Bishop Luffa School,

Our first newsletter of the school year covers Harvest Term. We started with a whole school assembly in bright sunshine on the school field and ended today with a storm circling around us, as we collected donations for Chichester Foodbank. In between, we have had 7 residentials, 32 day-trips, 5 Eucharists and 2 Open Evenings. It has been quite a term!

One very exciting development has been the first meeting with our new partner school in Lviv. We have postcards from 42 of their students, which we hope will be the start of a lasting friendship with 42 students here in Chichester. The amazing thing about the postcards is that, despite everything, the children still sound like children. I am praying that one day the two schools will be able to run an exchange, and that the students will meet their pen-friends face-to-face.

I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter - next stop Christmas!

Austen Hindman.
Head Teacher



Bishop Luffa Student Are Unstoppable!

Students at Bishop Luffa School were jumping for joy as they received their A-Level results in August.

For Caitlin Foyn and Aoife Van Niekerk, it means that they have secured highly prestigious degree apprenticeships. Caitlin will be training with Bentley Motors, while Aoife will be joining Mercedes Benz. They have been through a long application process, competing against hundreds of other students from across the country.



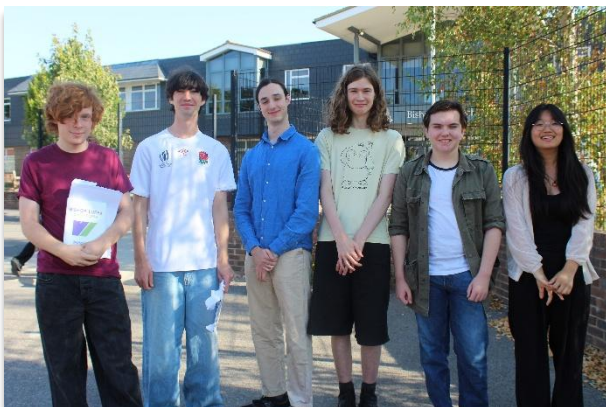
In 2022, Veronika Zavarzina joined Bishop Luffa school directly from Ukraine. Her dream was to become a doctor, but it now seemed impossible, as she would have to sit her exams in a language that she barely knew. After four years of hard work, Veronika achieved AABC in her A-levels and will be studying Medicine at Keele University.

James Morrow was the school's top achiever. James studied for 5 A-levels and achieved three A*s and two As! James is now off to Warwick University to study Computer Science.



Grace Zheng also took more than the usual three A-levels, and achieved three A* and one A. She will be studying Biological Sciences at Imperial College, London.

Fae Parr will be reading Natural Sciences at Cambridge, having secured two A*s and two As.



Ben Webster will be studying Music at Christchurch, Oxford, having achieved an A* and three As.

Many of the successes this year were in the Arts. Head of Sixth Form, Jamie Saunders, said: 'Bishop Luffa is well-known for Maths and Science, but we have a thriving Arts faculty. There are so many opportunities for students who succeed in these subjects. As well as many students



going into Architecture and Marketing, Asha Christie-Verma will be studying Theatre Writing/Directing/Performing at York and Sam Cooke will be taking Film Production at Salford University. Also, Scarlett Guilfoyle, one of our School Captains, has her first paid role as an actor at the Festival Theatre.'

Head Teacher Austen Hindman praised the whole year group. 'Every grade tells a story, and for all of the students that involves eighteen months of disruption from Covid, right at their start of their time at secondary school. What they have all achieved is a tribute to them, their families and their supporters at school. They are an exceptional group of young people and I look forward to hearing about the next chapter in their lives.'

Bishop Luffa Students Live Life to the Full!

Students at Bishop Luffa School are celebrating five years of fun and an excellent set of GCSE results!

The year group could not have packed more into their time at secondary school, including plays, trips, sporting achievements and lots and lots of charity events. On top of that, they have secured the school's strongest GCSE results since COVID.

Lucy Pitts is a great example of the schools' motto: 'life in all its fullness'. Lucy achieved seven grade 9s, but she hasn't spent her time chained to her desk. While she was studying for her GCSEs she was in two plays at Chichester Festival Theatre, including taking the title role in Cinderella, and



sang in the school's La Diva choir, performing across Chichester and on tour in Spain. Tristen George, her Head of House, said: 'Lucy always wants the best for the people around her and never puts herself first. She is incredibly humble about her personal achievements. She is a great example to younger students that if you have fun challenging yourself, you will be successful.'

Izzy Cotton and Eleanor Maxted also achieved seven grade 9s, and were both awarded A grades in Additional Maths.

Another student whose sense of fun and positive attitude have delivered amazing GCSE results is James Kambalami. James achieved five grade 9s, and all his GCSEs were at grade 7 or above. His Head of House, Rob Goldsmith, praised his positivity: 'James is the sort of person who brightens up other people's lives. He is so committed to his friends and to supporting his House. This excellent set of results are well deserved and reward for so much hard work.'



Vika Z achieved at least a grade 5 in all eight GCSEs that she took, despite Year 11 being the only full year that she spent in an English school. Vika came to England at the end of Year 7, but nine months later returned to Ukraine. As conditions began to get worse in the area of Ukraine that she lives in, her mum and her took the difficult decision to leave her family and return to England. Vika had only fourteen months to adjust to her new life and prepare for her exams. Bishop Luffa's Head Teacher, Austen Hindman, said: 'Vika's achievement is beyond anything that we can reasonably expect from a young person. She has

had to constantly adapt to circumstances beyond hers and her family's control. It is humbling to see her smiling in school each day, embracing the opportunities that she's given.'



Other high achievers included Flo Sutherland, Mary Gardner-Smart, Ava Harman, Maurice Hatton, Isla Hill, Thea Miller and Anna Swain, who all achieved five or more grade 9s.

Head Teacher Austen Hindman said: 'Our school community is so proud of the achievement of all of our Year 11 students. They do not fit the stereotype that we pin on teenagers: they care for each other and they want to make the world a better place. They are successful because they are ambitious for their whole community and not just for themselves.



We wish them all well in the next stage of their lives.'

Ayla takes to the Stage

Earlier this year Ayla Tran (9Ridgeway) took part in SkoolFest at the Worthing Pavilion Theatre, taking to the same stage that has hosted legendary artists such as Jimi Hendrix and The Who. She performed an original song that she wrote herself, and absolutely brought the house down, proudly representing Bishop Luffa. As a result of Ayla's performance, she secured studio time at the Northbrook Recording Studios during the summer holidays, as well as a professional photoshoot with a local photographer who was so impressed by her music that they wanted to support her journey.



Ayla has had a really exciting summer. Since the Worthing Pavilion performance, she has performed at festivals and events almost every week, which has been fantastic experience for her. To finish off an exciting summer break, Ayla performed at the Victorious Festival in Southsea at the end of August, which is by far her biggest event yet and something she was incredibly excited about. We can't wait to follow Ayla's musical journey.

Bishop Luffa Sixth Form Sailing Team continues to make waves!

This year our Sixth Formers created a new sailing team, taking part in various events during the Spring and summer. Following a fantastic first Firefly Team Racing event during the Easter holidays at Itchenor Sailing Club, with an incredible 2nd place overall, the team returned for a second event at the end of May.

The Easter event saw Bishop Luffa win every race on the water, with final positions decided on points alone. Hosted in brilliant sunshine and cool breezes, the event featured strong competition from HISC, Seaford and ISC, and was a superb introduction to team racing for our sailors.



At the second event, four teams competed in another closely fought day of racing, winning 50% of their races. Special thanks also to parent supporter Mr Board for helping and supporting the team throughout the event, it was hugely appreciated.

A huge well done to all our sailors for their teamwork, determination and sportsmanship across both events. Team members of the Sixth Form Sailing Team are Matthew Board (12Andrewes), Jack Gardner (12Otter), Harry Hatfield (12King), Sam Holben (12Andrewes), George Long (12Otter), Charlie Mealing (12Otter), Isabelle Tonks (12King), and Claude Young (12Ridgeway).



Becoming part of the Bishop Luffa Family

Starting secondary school is a big moment. New buildings, new teachers, new routines and, for many students, lots of new faces. Our aim with Year 7 induction is about more than just helping students work out where their classrooms are. We want them to start feeling that Bishop Luffa is **their school**, and that they are becoming part of the **Bishop Luffa family**.



That began on Thursday 3rd September, when our new Year 7 students arrived for their first day. They were welcomed by staff and older students, before coming together in the Bartlett Hall for breakfast. From the start, we wanted the day to feel calm, friendly and reassuring.

During the day, students spent time with their Form Tutors and Houses, began getting used to some of the routines of secondary school and took part in Positively YOU, looking at positive and creative approaches to learning.

They were also supported by our brilliant Year 8 House Buddies, led by **Izzy Harris in 11Sherborne, our first ever Student Ambassador**. Izzy stayed with us throughout the whole of Induction Day and did a fantastic job supporting our new students.

The day finished with our traditional **Spaghetti Towers** challenge. **7Otter were this year's winners with a tower measuring 68cm**, just 2cm ahead of Ridgeway. Congratulations to **Liv, Jayna, Jemima, Phoebe, William and Mae**.

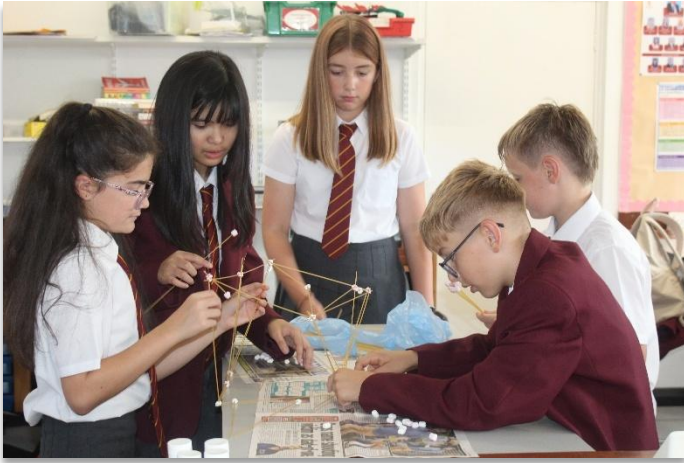
And then, of course, the real thing started!

The first couple of weeks of Year 7 are always a bit of a balancing act. We want students to know that there are plenty of people around to help, while also encouraging them to start finding their own feet. At first, that means a bit more help getting around the school, a little extra time between lessons and plenty of familiar faces around H Block.

It doesn't take long, though. Already we are seeing students confidently heading off to lessons, finding their way around the site and getting on with school life as if they have been here rather longer than a couple of weeks. There will still be the occasional wrong turn — and probably a forgotten book or two — but that is all part of it.

Perhaps the best way of judging how things are going is to listen to the students themselves. When we asked them recently what they had enjoyed so far, their answers included PE, Music, the canteen, the library, the clubs and how welcoming their teachers had been.





One student probably summed up the first couple of weeks best: *"It's hard to find your way around at first but you soon learn where all the classes are."*

There are still plenty more parts of the Year 7 induction journey to come, including the Year 7 residential. But the first few weeks have already been about exactly what we hoped they would be: **growing in confidence, building relationships, finding their place and becoming part of the Bishop Luffa family.**

Neil Topley, Assistant Headteacher

Students' Achievements

Congratulations to the following students:

Henry Fraser (11King) won the South Coast Championship with his crew from Shoreham Rowing Club, in the J16 Open Quads (4 rowers with two blades each year 11 and under) in Deal in September, having won the South East division earlier in the summer. They have worked so hard all season as a crew. Henry is in number 3 seat (3rd from front facing backwards).



Former student Elyot Harmston (class of 2021) was the GB Representative in the World Skills Championships for aircraft maintenance and won silver. Upon leaving school Elyot undertook a British Aerospace apprenticeship, winning Apprentice of the Year when he finished.

Congratulations to Elsie Huxtable (10Ridgeway) who had a great time swimming for Team Sussex at the National Team Event in Sheffield in October. Sussex finished 6th, which is their highest place ever.



Ava McGarry-Knightley (11Ridgeway) took part in the South Coast Dance Festival. Ava had two entries – a quartet and a group dance – and she achieved second place in both. What a fantastic achievement.

Autumn-Rae Carter (10Story) entered a national poster designing competition with Girlguiding for The Big Gig which was held at the O2 Arena in October. Autumn-Rae's design came in the top ten and was on display on the big screen at the O2 and 21,000 Guides saw it which was amazing.



Daisy Cheesman (9Burrows) competed in the Cambridge Free Ice Skating competition in September. Daisy had an amazing competition and came 3rd out of the 16 in her category.



A Luffa Supreme's First Public Gig

Bishop Luffa School's award-winning 10-piece jazz combo, *A Luffa Supreme*, played its first public concert in August at the Chichester Jazz Festival. The band, whose name is a play on words of the classic John Coltrane album, *A Love Supreme*, opened the gig on 27th August at the New Park Cinema. Their set featured the tunes, *Caravan*, which won them a silver award in the UK Schools Music Festival, *The End of a Love Affair*, *Stolen Moments* and *Strasbourg St Denis*.

The band received lots of credits and positive comments from professional jazz musicians, who also played at the festival.

Pictured are: Rebecca King (11Otter), clarinet; Joss Allport (11Sherborne), oboe and soprano sax; George Stanbridge (12Andrewes), percussion; Maurice Hatton (12Wilson), piano; Ben Taylor (12Ridgeway), alto sax; Myah Brent, tenor sax and flute; Mr Collins, double bass; Toby Russell-Wells (12Story), trombone; and Ben Webster, drums. *Picture: Carlien Photography.*



Well done for everyone one who took part and many thanks to the parents who supported the concert.

Our German Adventure

Towards the end of the summer term some of our students were lucky enough to visit Munich and Dorfen. It was a unique and exciting opportunity for students to gain an insight into German life and culture, and to develop friendships with another school that may last a lifetime.

The trip included a guided walking tour; a visit to the Allianz Arena, home to FC Bayern Munich; a tour of the Schloss Nymphenburg Palace, home of the former rulers of Bavaria; and an opportunity to view BMWs cars, motorbikes and engines. On our final day we travelled to Dorfen to meet us with students from our partner school.



The trip not only supported students in improving their German language skills but enhanced their understanding of German culture, which forms an integral part of language learning. We also worked in partnership with our link school in Dorfen, a historic town in Bavaria.

Our students had a fantastic time and have written some great reports on their trip away. These can be found on the school website

<https://www.bishopluffa.org.uk/home/news-2/our-german-adventure/>

Denise Williams, Teacher of German

Year 8 visit Marwell Zoo

The whole of Year 8 visited Marwell Zoo with their Science teachers in September. Each half of the year travelled by coach to the zoo and arrived at opening time. Both days were excellent, as the zoo was quiet and the weather favourable (just a splash of rain on Thursday).

The students were in their teaching groups and went around in those groups for the day. The day consisted of analysing the animals for their adaptations to the habitats they came from. Adaptations and evolution will be the topic they will be covering next in their science lessons. We were treated to baby giraffes, white rhinos and snow leopards. Most of the animals were out enjoying the autumn sunshine.



All the students attended an 'Adaptations and Evolution' workshop, where they learnt about the evolution of the big cats and got to ask many questions to an excellent speaker. We enjoyed lunch in the sun and a final visit to the popular shop at the end of the day. The journey home by coach went smoothly and everyone had a great day and an excellent learning experience. Some students entered a photo competition on our return and 1st prize was won by Rafferty Hinton (8Ridgeway) - a beautiful Zebra. 2nd prize went to Graham Day (8Otter) - a Meerkat on guard.

Jane Tyler, Teacher of Science & Team Leader KS3 Science



Red Roses vs Black Ferns – WXV Global Series 2026

On Saturday 26th September we took 14 lucky students to watch the Red Roses face off against a very strong New Zealand team at Allianz Stadium, Twickenham. Students enjoyed reliable travel, stadium shop mementos, tasty food and an enthralling game (plus a superb try by Luffa's own Jess Breach).



The game finished in emphatic fashion with England winning with an extra time interception try by Zoe Harrison, final score 26-19.

A huge thank you to Mr Hunter for accompanying the group. Match attendance - 59,871. Please keep an eye out for the upcoming Men's Six Nations trip to watch England vs Italy.

Tom Blewitt, Teacher of PE

Year 13 Enjoy London Art

Year 13 artists enjoyed a trip to London to explore artists and ideas for their main coursework project. We saw the immense work of Anish Kapoor with his reality bending reflective



sculptures, and the blackest paint ever developed, which makes you feel as though you could fall into it. Ana Mendieta's work, rooted in our connection with the



Earth, was raw and moving. We can't wait to see the work our students produce in response to what they saw.

Laurelly Thorpe, Team Leader of Art

A Thought-Provoking Trip

On Friday 2nd October, 50 Year 9 students and five staff departed bright and early for a visit to the First World Battlefields of Belgium and France. After a good journey to Dover, it was promptly onto the ferry for an earlier than scheduled crossing, which set the tone for a trip that went extremely well. A smooth crossing (with meal voucher, which meant many cooked breakfasts!) saw us soon on our way to the first of a number of sites we would visit on our first day.



We headed for sites around Ypres, often associated with the horrific, muddy conditions we associate with the trenches of World War One. A visit to Essex Farm Cemetery, with associations with John McCrae (he wrote 'In Flanders Fields' here), and the grave of a 15-year-old volunteer helped bring home the impact of war. We then went on to Tyne Cot, the largest British military cemetery in the world, where 11000 burials highlighted the scale of loss. Aven Delahunty (9Ridgeway) laid a wreath on behalf of the School at Tyne Cot, and each student had a small wooden cross (with thanks to Mr Bonney for these) that they could

use for their own individual act of commemoration. We then moved onto the German cemetery at Langemark, where a mass grave of over 20000 soldiers proved hard for many to comprehend, and showed the scale of loss on both sides. After this, we checked into our hotel in Ypres, where students enjoyed an evening meal and an excellent games room! We finished the evening by attending the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate, where Harriet Nichols and Pip Martindale (both 9Story) laid another wreath on behalf of the students, and School.

Saturday's weather was glorious, and we headed for the Somme battlefields of northern France, preceded by a visit to Hill 62 Museum, which allowed students the chance to see many artefacts from the war, and to experience some trenches that have been preserved, including claustrophobic tunnels! A long coach journey then took us to France, where we visited sites associated with the terrible events of 1916. We visited Lochnagar Crater, created when the British detonated over 20 tons of explosives under the German front line. Then it was on to Thiepval to see over 70000 names of the missing, with no known grave. Again, an almost incomprehensible scale of loss. We finished at the Canadian memorial site of Beaumont Hamel, where we explored the preserved battlefield and discovered the story of the Newfoundland soldiers, who suffered such huge losses on July 1st 1916. We then diverted to Euston Road Cemetery on our return journey so that Ralph L'Amie (9Ridgeway) could pay his respects to a fallen relative.



Our return to Ypres saw free time, with chocolate, waffles, frites and ice cream proving irresistible to many! We finished the day with another visit to the Menin Gate. Sunday was a prompt and purposeful checking-out, and then onto a French hypermarket, where the skill of shopping in a foreign language and against the clock was a challenge many relished. We then had a superb journey back to Calais, and another early crossing (with meal voucher again!) over an incredibly calm Channel, before arriving back at School in late afternoon.

The students were superb ambassadors for the school, showing thoughtfulness and solemnity as appropriate. My thanks must go to them. My thanks also go to the staff who accompanied the trip (Mr Jackson, Ms Hurry, Mrs Grove and Mrs Syms-Evans), and helped ensure that it ran so smoothly. Plans are already underway for the next visit, in 2027!

Justin Barnett, Head of Humanities

Law Workshop

We were recently delighted to welcome Jo and Emma from *Talk the Talk*, a charity dedicated to developing young people's oracy skills. Our Year 12 and 13 Law students took part in engaging workshops, with the students speaking brilliantly in front of their peers, developing their confidence and presentation skills.



A special mention for Ruby Colston, Isaac Siddle and Amelia Geraghty-Bellingham in Year 13, and Oscar Hale-Kumba, Olivia Czopek, and Zeke Potts in Year 12 who received special acknowledgment as 'Oracy Champions' for their efforts and progress on the day. I was very proud of all the students - it takes courage to overcome the nerves and give all the activities a go. Well done everyone!

Fiona Langstone, Teacher of Law

Congratulations to the Bronze Class of 2026!

On Monday 5th October we had the absolute pleasure of awarding our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh students with their certificates and badges. The class of 2026 were the biggest cohort that we have ever put through, so thank you to everyone who has supported them with time, sweets, equipment and encouragement over their journey.

As a team we are incredibly proud of them, as they were Year 9 at the time and their expedition weekend was one of the worst I have ever experienced in terms of weather – horizontal rain and 40mph winds! This did not deter them in any way and we must congratulate them for their resilience and for never losing their sense of humour.



We had wonderful comments from the organisations that they volunteered with and this is a testament to the incredible young people they are. This year's cohort have big shoes to fill, not least in their choice of meals – where else but Luffa would children serve steak, eggs and avocado for breakfast?!

Thank you for being so brilliant and we wish you the very best of luck with your future DofE journey.

Ms Wells and the DofE Team

Chichester BookFest YA's First Chapter Competition

Students from Bishop Luffa School attended a special awards ceremony as part of the BookFest YA, at Chichester's Assembly Room. The finalists read extracts from their work to an audience of parents, carers, family and friends, as well as teachers and school librarians.



Congratulations to Ella Blamire (11Ridgeway) who was the First Chapter winner at KS4, with *The Arrangement*, and runners-up Oscar Stephens (9Story) with *Burning Shores* and Autumn-Rae Carter (10Story) with *Monsters*. Their winning entries can be read in full online at

<https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/young-writers-from-across-the-chichester-area-celebrated-9243668>

PSHE Topics

The following topics will be covered during PSHE lessons during the second half of the Autumn term (but may be subject to change).

If you have any concerns about the topics being discussed, please contact your child's Head of House or Mrs Smerdon-Corp, Teacher in charge of PSHE (smerdon-corpc@bishopluffa.org.uk) The following subjects are being covered.

Year 7	Fireworks Sleep Respect and relationships What makes a good friend Online relationships	Year 8	Stereotypes Learning difficulties Discrimination Islamophobia
Year 9	Drugs Consent and the Law FGM Relationships	Year 10	Human rights Sextortion Make role models Relationships Abuse and control
Year 11	Teenage pregnancy Parenthood Cancer Love and abuse		

Prayers

The Parents' and Carers' Prayer and Support Group have suggested that we circulate a school prayer list, so that families can reflect the present concerns of the school in their prayers. We will aim to update the list every month.

Prayer List:

Every month:

- Students and their families
- All our staff
- Our Governors and Trustees
- Our Clergy Team and Youth Workers
- Our Worship Team
- Our Parents & Friends Association
- Our Christian Union
- Our links to the wider church
- House and Sixth Form Charities

During November and December:

- Preparations for the Sixth Form Fashion Show
- Our Sixth Form Charities this year: Grassroots, Sanctuary and Sussex Snowdrop
- Preparations for our Careers Fair in November
- Year 13 students applying to university or for apprenticeships
- Preparations for our Christmas events

School Calendar

Monday 26th – Friday 30th October

Tuesday 3rd November

Thursday 5th November

Monday 9th November

Wednesday 11th November

Thursday 12th November

Monday 16th – Wednesday 18th November

Thursday 19th November

Thursday 19th November

Thursday 26th November

Friday 27th November

Thursday 3rd December

Monday 7th December

Tuesday 8th December

Thursday 10th December

Friday 11th December

Tuesday 15th December

Tuesday 15th – Thursday 17th December

Friday 18th December

Monday 21st December – Friday 1st Jan 2027

Monday 4th January 2027

Half Term

UK/Ukrainian Reading for Pleasure Programme Information Evening

PFA Uniform Shop open (2.00pm – 3.30pm)

Flu Vaccinations (Years 7 – 11)

Whole School Armistice Day Service

PFA Meeting (6.00pm)

Sixth Form Fashion Show

Bishop Luffa Careers Fair

Year 10 Parents' & Carers' Virtual Consultation Evening

Year 11 Parents' & Carers' Consultation Evening in School

INSET DAY

Year 11 (2025-26) Record of Achievement Evening

PFA Virtual Meeting (7.30pm)

Bishop Luffa Carol Service at Chichester Cathedral (7.00pm)

Wilson House Christmas Fair (4.00pm – 6.00pm)

Year 11 Taster Day in Sixth Form

Interhouse Art Competition Exhibition

Christmas Dinners

Last Day of Term

Christmas Holidays

First Day of Spring Term

Term Dates

SPRING TERM 2027

Half Term Break

Easter Break

SUMMER TERM 2027

Half Term Break

Monday 4th January to Thursday 25th March 2027

Monday 15th February to Friday 19th February

Friday 26th March to Friday 9th April

Monday 12th April to Wednesday 21st July

Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June

INSET Days

Friday 27th November 2026

Friday 5th February 2027

Monday 12th July 2027