



St John the Baptist Primary School

Friday 16th January 2026

Diary Dates

21st January

Young Voices concert at the O2

13th February

Break up for half term

23rd February

Back to school-

ALL CHILDREN WILL NEED

A PACKED LUNCH



Self-motivation Honesty Imaginative Nurturing Empathy

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a fantastic week we've had at school! On Thursday, we celebrated Times Tables Rock Stars Day, and we were absolutely thrilled to see so many fabulous costumes. A huge well done to everyone who participated—you truly rock! A special thank you goes to Mr Chinnery for organising the certificates for our wonderful children. Practising times tables every day is so important, and we hope you received the letter sent home to support this practice at home.

Looking ahead, we are very excited to announce that our school choir will be performing at the Young Voices concert at the O2 in London next week! This is a wonderful opportunity for our talented singers, and we will keep you updated on our progress through Dojo. Today marks our last choir club for this term, but don't worry—we will be resuming later in the year!

In addition, Halstead Swimming Club is on the lookout for new members. If your child is interested in joining, please turn to page 5 for more details. It's a great way to stay active and make new friends!

We also have some exciting news regarding our school facilities. After the half-term break, building works for our new kitchen will commence, with completion expected by Easter. This is an amazing opportunity for our school community! We will be searching for a catering manager to oversee the kitchen operations. If you or someone you know might be interested in a job during school hours and term time, please let me know. I would be happy to discuss how the kitchen will run. The official job advert will be released after Easter, so please help us spread the word!

Thank you for your continued support.

Warm regards,

Miss Gage



United we strive for excellence-together we shine

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

Our schools attendance target is 96%

	This Week Fri-Thurs	Year to date
EYFS	92.14%	95.53%
Infants	88.97%	94.19%
Lower Juniors	95.86%	95.93%
Upper Juniors	94.80%	94.87%
Whole School	92.99%	95.07%

Congratulations to KOALA CLASS for the highest attendance in December!

PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM THE SCHOOL OFFICE BY TELEPHONE OR EMAIL (NOT CLASS DOJO) IF YOUR CHILD IS OFF SICK OR WILL BE COLLECTED BY A DIFFERENT ADULT - THANK YOU.

If your child is off sick from school, please notify the school office no later than 9.25am—school policy states we need to be notified every day of absence. Please either email admin@st-john.essex.sch.uk or phone and leave a message if no answer.

If your child needs to attend a medical appointment during school hours, please complete a Medical Leave of Absence form which are available in the school office.

Please Note: Trainers are not permitted. Black shoes for boys and girls only. Children can bring trainers into school to change into at breaktime if they wish to.

Long hair needs to be tied back safely, no jewellery to be worn in school apart from small stud earrings and a watch. No nail varnish.

Unexpected School Closures

If we have to close school unexpectedly - information will be posted on the home page of the school website:

<https://www.st-john.essex.sch.uk/>

Alternatively, information can be found on the Essex School

Closures page at:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/emergency-school-closures>

The decision to close the school is never taken lightly.

Please select your child's school meals as far in advance as you can—but no later than 9am on Thursday for the following week. Any orders placed after this time will not be processed .Thank you.



Gold awards 16th January 2026

Pebmarsh Cup – Teddie

Your friends have chosen you to receive the Pebmarsh cup this week! They said you are so nice to play with and good at making things and you try hard in school. Well done Teddie!

Panthers - Olivia for Empathy.

Olivia this week we had a big change in our class and our school when Fitz was moved into Owl class. You helped the adults, the children and Fitz to feel comfortable and safe during this transition which was wonderful to see. Once Fitz was moved you helped to ensure that Owl class knew exactly how you care for him and answered all their questions to ensure Fitz gets the best treatment possible. It is fantastic to see you showing this level of empathy towards younger members of the school and demonstrates the leadership skills you have developed this year. Well done Olivia, keep being fantastic!

Koalas – Lola for Self-motivation.

Lola, you have truly impressed us with your positive attitude and dedication to swimming. In just two weeks, we've seen a noticeable improvement in your skills. We're so excited to see how much more you will progress over the next few sessions. Keep up the fantastic work, and continue being the hardworking individual you are!

Owls – Rupert for Self-motivation

Rupert, both Mrs Watkins and I have noticed how much progress you have been making recently. You take every new learning opportunity in your stride and absorb everything going on. You then begin to use this independently in your work. You are always eager to have a go and always try your hardest. This is to let you know that this has not gone unnoticed. Well done and keep going.

Owlets – Harrison – Self-motivation

You have knocked our socks off with your amazing learning this week. You took your time when writing facts about cars and carefully used your phonics correctly. Every morning you correctly work out the day and date by adding one more. Well done Harrison, keep being you, lighting up the room with your charming smile!

Miss Gage's Shining Star of the week is:

Octavia-Koala class



On social media this week, I was surprised when I saw your face pop up! You were being praised on how welcoming you were to a new member of your class. It is lovely to see that you are just as much an amazing person outside of school as well as inside!





If you're pregnant or have children under the age of four, you could get help to buy food and milk.

Apply online for NHS Healthy Start.



www.healthystart.nhs.uk

  @NHSHealthyStart



About the scheme

The NHS Healthy Start scheme helps young families and those who are pregnant to access healthy food, milk and vitamins.

The scheme is available in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

People may be eligible if they have responsibility for at least one child under the age of four or are more than 10 weeks pregnant. Eligibility also depends on the benefit the person receives and what their income is.

People apply for the scheme online and get a prepaid card, which they can use to buy healthy food and milk. They can also get free Healthy Start vitamins.

The prepaid card can be used in most places that sell eligible healthy food and milk items and accept Mastercard®. The card is topped up every four weeks with their payments.

Once on the scheme, people will get:

- £4.25 each week of their pregnancy (from the 10th week of pregnancy)
- £8.50 each week for children from birth to one year old
- £4.25 each week for children between one and four years old

The payments will stop on the child's 4th birthday or if they no longer receive the qualifying benefits.

**New Year
Sport
Alert!!!!**

Love swimming?

Are you 6 years or older?



Want to be professionally coached?

Want to compete in national leagues?

Want a free trial at a top local club?



SwimMark

We would love to hear from you if you are 6 years or older, swimming at stage 5 or higher and interested in having a one month free trial with Halstead Swimming Club.

Please contact: info@halsteadsc.co.uk to arrange your trial.



team
Dandelion
a parent support hub

TEAM DANDELION

A PARENT SUPPORT HUB

Do you support a child with additional needs?

Join us for a coffee, cake and a listening ear

Support from professionals, parents and carers with lived experiences

Join us for a cuppa at our monthly

COFFEE AFTERNOON

THE SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

**ST ANDREW'S CHURCH HALL
HALSTEAD CO9 2LD
1.00-2.30PM**

Join with other parents to learn more about your child's neurodivergent needs. We support families with fostered, SGO and adopted children too.



For more information, please call Suzanne on:

07930372219



In collaboration with The Maze Group and supported by Families InFocus





Meet Team Dandelion

Team Dandelion is a group of parents and carers who have lived the SEND journey. We are passionate about supporting families across Essex who need guidance, advice, or simply a listening ear and, of course, a cup of tea.

Our Founders

Suzanne Kenneally offers guidance and practical support tailored to your family's individual needs.

Rachel Jobson provides a compassionate listening ear and tools to support emotional wellbeing.

Both Suzanne and Rachel bring lived and professional experience from neurodiverse households, with extensive knowledge of navigating the SEND system, disability support, and adoption. Suzanne is a facilitator for The Maze Group in Colchester, and Rachel is an experienced Parent Mentor.

About Team Dandelion

Team Dandelion is made up of parents and grandparents who share their knowledge and experience to help support your child's development.

Together with our dedicated volunteers, we are opening Team Dandelion – a Parent Support Hub. A friendly, safe, and welcoming space for parents and carers of:

- Neurodiverse children
- Adopted or fostered children
- Families experiencing challenging behaviour

If you need understanding, reassurance, or support, you'll find it here.





FEBRUARY HALF TERM 2026

Little Oaks Holiday Club



**Action packed
holiday club**

Mon 16th Feb
Tues 17th Feb
Wed 18th Feb
Thurs 19th Feb

Whacky STEM
Outdoor adventures
Arts & Craft
Baking fun
Engineering challenges

**Belchamp St Paul Primary
School, CO10 7BP**

8.30am-3.30pm

Open to all local children
aged 3-11 years old.

BOOK NOW

belchamp@littleoakskids.com

Fun activities each day including:
Arts & Crafts, Baking, Whacky Science, Exploring Nature,
Engineering fun, Forest School and more!

littleoakskids.com/holiday-clubs | 07704 296484

