



Edwinstree Middle School
A Voluntary Controlled Church of England School

NEWSLETTER for PARENTS & CARERS
Week Ending: 16/10/2026.

Edwinstree Term dates:
Term Dates 2026-27 & 2027-28

Homework week: - A
Diary Dates:

20/10/26	Year 5 "Getting to know you" Parents meeting 5pm
23/10/26	Harvest Services at Aspenden Church (AM)
26/10-30/10/26	Half Term
03/11/26	School Photographs
06/11/26	Year 8 HPV Vaccinations
11-12/11/26	Year 6 Lancaster Model
17/11/26	Flu vaccination Mop Up
19/11/26	Year 7 Hertfordshire Lieutenancy presentation
01/12/26	Year 5 Christingle (PM)
03/12/26	INSET DAY
04/12/26	Occasional Day
10/12 – 11/12/26	Christmas Services at St Peter's
18/12/26	End of Term 1.20pm.
04/01/27	INSET DAY
05/01/27	Start of Term

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Use of bikes/scooters

If you are happy for your child to ride/cycle to school, please may we ask that you provide them with a helmet for their safety and to remind them how to ride safely on their way to and from school?



School Photographs

The school photographer will be in school on 3rd November 2026. Sibling photos will take place first, followed by individuals.

Please may we ask that your child comes in the correct school uniform, wearing their white polo shirt (not red PE top), Edwinstree School logo sweatshirt and hair has been styled if necessary.

*As a Christian school we recognise the unique and wonderful in everyone.
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What did we explore in COWO this week.

Mr Rowlands used his COWO space this week to provide an information session on the lockdown procedures for our school. Hymns on Friday were with Year 5 and Year 7, practicing the hymns for our Harvest Services next Friday.

Mrs Gant's tutor COWO continued with the theme of *Humility*. Within this, tutor groups explored the 5-year strategy that students have agreed to, where we place the heating on early during the winter months and then turn off after midday. The school keeps relatively warm, but students are encouraged to wrap up. Within this approach, students discuss and consider whether they wish for this to continue. They look at the climate change and how this can reduce greenhouse gases, but also how much this energy reduction saves the school. We do constantly review and should a significant cold spell occur, this decision would be reversed.

Why might your child talk to you about this?

As well as looking at school, we show them how a small change at home of turning down the heating can make a difference.

Harvest Service

The school will be walking to Aspenden Church in year groups for our Harvest Festival.

As part of the experience, we get to enjoy the beautiful countryside around us. Students are offered two of the 50 things to do in nature before you are 11½ from the National Trust. They will have the opportunity to complete the run/roll down the hill challenge. <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/50-things>

Students will be required to wear non-uniform on this day and bring a spare pair of boots or shoes that you do not mind getting muddy. We walk whether it is rain or shine, so please keep an eye out for the weather.

To complete this walk, we are asking for parent volunteers to help us. Below is the timetable for the day which shows the timings of your child's year group walk and service.

We would really appreciate your support. Please email admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk if you can offer your help on this day.

- **Year 5** – depart school 10.15am, 11am harvest service, then walk back to school.
- **Year 6** - depart school 10.55am, 11.40am harvest service, then walk back to school.
- **Year 7** - depart school 8.55am, 9.40am harvest service, then walk back to school.
- **Year 8** - depart school 9.35am, 10.20am harvest service, then walk back to school.

Who won the conkers tournament?

Congratulations to Jack for winning the tournament, his team tutor 6B will now choose either a fun afternoon at the park, potentially use the swimming pool or time in the hall with games for after half term. The Art Club are judging our *Values* display contest, and again the tutor group winners will be announced and also take part in a fun afternoon.

Parent Governor Votes

We are pleased to confirm that two parents have volunteered to stand for the vacant Parent Governor position on the school's governing board.

Profiles for both candidates will be out in next weeks newsletter for you to cast your vote.

Fidget Aids

We have recently seen a significant increase in pupils using fidget aids during lessons and would like to address this before the half-term holidays.



Fidget aids can have both positive and negative effects. They may help to improve focus and act as a tool for managing stress. However, not all fidget aids are beneficial for learning. Items that require visual attention, include a game element, or make noise can actually reduce concentration, both for the pupil using them and for others in the class. Some items may also be unsuitable for certain subjects, such as science, due to health and safety considerations. As with any personal item brought into school, fidget aids may be lost or shared inappropriately. Unfortunately, we cannot take responsibility for this.

At Edwinstree, pupils already benefit from movement breaks throughout the day, as well as access to our Wellbeing Hub, where they can regulate their emotions when needed. Before allowing your child to bring a fidget aid into school, please ensure they understand the following expectations:

- I use fidgets to help me focus so that I can learn.
- I keep my fidget on my desk or in my hands.
- I do not show or pass my fidget to others.
- I put my fidget away when I am finished with it.
- I understand that if I do not follow these rules, my fidget may be removed.
- I understand that staff are not responsible if my fidget is lost or damaged.

Suitable fidget aids include simple items such as squiggle aids, foam shapes, or chewable sensory tools.

The following items are not permitted:

- Items that make noise
- Items with a gaming component
- Items with small parts that could pose a choking hazard (e.g. Tech Decks)
- Items containing gel or liquid that could leak or burst

Thank you for your support.

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The UK government has agreed on a social media ban for children and young people under the age of 16. Under current plans, the ban will include sites such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook and X, requiring platforms to have more robust age-checking.

PSHE education has always been designed to be universal and preventative, to teach young people about the issues they might experience before they encounter them in the world. Just as we teach about the risks associated with alcohol before young people turn 18, and about sexual relationships before they are 16, we should continue to teach about the benefits, challenges and safety considerations associated with social media before they are 16.

Research from Australia

The current timeline for the ban to be implemented in the UK is Spring 2027.

Fact sheet: New rules to protect children online - GOV.UK

Satchel One App

Once downloaded, to log in they search for 'Edwinstree' and use the 'Sign in with Office 365' option. They need their school email address - which is their username@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk - and the password they use to log into the network at school.

The login experience on our mobile app is very similar and requires all of the same information!

Download on the
App Store

GET IT ON
Google play

15:02

← Back Log In ?

✓ Satchel Academy

I already have an account

Log in with email or username

I do not have an account yet

Log in with PIN or Parent Code

or

Sign in with Google

Sign in with Office 365

Sign in with FIM Unity

'Getting to know you' meeting.

What is the Year 5 *Getting to know you* meeting about?

Doors will open at 5pm. English and Maths will deliver their presentations in the hall at 5:30pm. English, Maths and Science books will be available to view in the Tutor Rooms. Either pop up before or after the talk, to meet the tutor and hear how they are getting on. Form tutors will be based in their form rooms- the pupils should know their way!

We look forward to welcoming our parent and carer community to our school.

Mrs van Wyk - Head of Year 5.

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Year 6 News:

SATs

As we begin preparing for the Year 6 SATs, we want to reassure families that our focus is always on helping every child feel confident, supported, and able to do their very best.

For some pupils, particularly those with identified SEND, we may consider whether access arrangements would help them to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding more effectively during the tests. It is important to note that access arrangements are not awarded simply because a pupil has a diagnosis. They are considered where a pupil's needs have a significant impact on their ability to access the tests and where the support reflects their usual way of working in school. Access arrangements can include support such as extra time, a reader, a scribe, rest breaks, a prompter, or a smaller test room. Any arrangements used during SATs must be supported by evidence and be part of a pupil's normal classroom practice.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) automatically receive 25% extra time in the SATs (except for the spelling test, which has a different format). Pupils who are eligible for access arrangements will have the opportunity to practise using them during our Mock SATs in February. This helps children become familiar with the support available and allows us to make any adjustments needed well before the statutory tests in May.

If we feel that an access arrangement may be appropriate for your child, we will discuss this with them and you, these conversations will happen during Spring Term 2027. Our aim is to ensure that every pupil feels comfortable, well prepared, and ready to approach the SATs with confidence.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to help all Year 6 pupils have a positive and successful SATs experience.

Year 8 News:

HPV Vaccine

The immunisation team will be visiting our year 8 students on 6th November 2026. The HPV vaccine helps protect against human papillomavirus (HPV). It is recommended for children aged 12 to 13 years old.

Please keep an eye out for correspondence via email/text which contains a link to the consent form. You will need to respond even if you do not wish for your child to receive the vaccine - there is an option to decline. Correspondence from the vaccination team will be sent to parents via the following:

Vaccinations in Schools :
vaccinations.in.schools@notifications.service.gov.uk (email)
NHSUK (text message)

If you have any queries, please contact the vaccination team directly on 0300 5555 055 (option 7) or via hct.csais.herts@nhs.net.

Food and Nutrition – All Years

An experience from the East this week – flavours driven by whole and ground spices like cumin, coriander, cardamom, cloves, cinnamon and black pepper filled the E Block corridors. Fabulous curry making by Year 8 – well done!

All years are now up and running on Satchel 1 – please keep an eye out for home learning and ingredients requirements.

Year 5 – This week we reviewed the theory and completed initial product evaluations for our Dippy Divers created last week. We looked at what went well, how we could improve our dishes and explored other ingredients we could have used.

Year 6 – Our practical next week is a colourful, nutrient filled layered pasta salad. We've looked at health and safety regarding handling boiling water and how to keep ourselves safe whilst cooking food thoroughly. Please ensure a good-sized named container (about 2/3 litres) and labelled ingredients for the practical sessions next week.

Year 7 – With bread theory completed, next week we are practicing knife skills – classic French cuts - which leads us on to dish number two, Spaghetti Bolognese. Please ensure your child has *two* medium sized carrots and *one* medium onion. Please can these be brought into school in a named food bag. Once they have completed their knife cutting skills, we will be using a food processor and freezing their prepped veg until needed after half term.

Year 8 – excellent results with your curries. I am super impressed as this is the first year in three that we haven't had one single burnt spice saucepan. Well done, as it only takes seconds for the spice mix to become overheated once the oils are released. Theory based lesson next week.

Mrs van Wyk

Gardening Club

We were very lucky this week with the weather. We have gathered more red and ripening tomatoes and our freezer is incredibly full (so much so that we've had to borrow another one!)

We planted our overwintering crops of onions and garlic in a grid pattern, alternating each square design to ensure our plants have optimum space. Fingers crossed that it all grows beautifully over late autumn and on over winter. We will look to harvest around April.

Next week will be the last gardening club until next year.
Mrs van Wyk



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Pete's Place

Meeting at St Peter's Church in the Upper Room, Fridays 4-5pm during term time, starting Friday 16th October 2026.



Pete's Place is a fun and welcoming Christian youth group for students in Years 7 and 8.

It's a place to hang out with friends, enjoy games and activities, ask big questions about life, and discover more about Jesus and faith.

Pete's place is an offer from St Peter's Church to students, to pop in after school for a hot chocolate or ice pop in the summer and for a chat. Up to 75 students were taking this opportunity last year. As part of Benedicts Law, we have alerted the team at St Peter's Church to the procedures around allergies, we therefore ask for you to complete this form if your child would like to attend, so we are able to share your child's details.

Pete's Place at St Peter's Church Fridays afterschool (Term time only) Open to Years 7 & 8 – Fill in form

Thank you.

Hertfordshire Highways Service

Please see attached paperwork regarding carriageway resurfacing taking place 30th and 31st October 2026.

Coram Family Lives

will be delivering the below online parenting workshops (via MS Teams), funded by Herts County Council in the Autumn term for parents/carers who live in Hertfordshire or who have a child attending a Hertfordshire school.

This workshop is designed to support separated/divorced parents and protect parent-child relationships.

The workshop will cover:

- Increasing your understanding of parental alienation
- Recognise the patterns and behaviours in ourselves and others
- Explore the emotional impact on children and parents
- Develop communication and de-escalation skills
- Maintain parent-child bond during reduced contact
- Improve confident with professionals

Parent Alienation Workshop

Friday 27 November 2026

9.30 to 11.30am

Online - MS Teams

Parent Alienation Workshop

Thursday 3 December

7pm to 9pm

Online - MS Teams

To book a place please click here [Coram Family Lives - Parent Alienation Workshop Referral Form](#) for our online referral form or scan the QR code on the attached flyers

Navigating the early stages of a child's SEND journey

Families who are beginning to explore support for a child or young person with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can often feel unsure where to start. To help make the process easier, Hertfordshire's New to SEND resource provides a simple introduction to the support, advice and services available locally. This helpful one-page guide includes:

- advice from families who share their experiences of starting their SEND journey
- information about local organisations, community groups and support networks
- guidance on seeking support from schools, health services and other agencies
- signposting for parents and carers looking for advice and support for themselves

The resource is intended as a starting point for families who are new to SEND and may not yet be familiar with the wider range of information available.

When families are ready to explore support in more detail, they can access comprehensive information through the Hertfordshire SEND Local Offer website. Schools are encouraged to share this resource with parents and carers through relevant communication channels and networks.

Access the **New to SEND** guide at:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/newtoSEND

The Hertfordshire SEND Local Offer provides a wide range of information, services and guidance to support children and young people with SEND and their families.

HFL Education Online Safety

Please find attached guidance, useful links, and key updates on online safety across all phases, with a focus on current trends, challenges, and developments. We hope you find them helpful and informative.

Our parents and carers newsletter includes:

- Internet matters: guides for setting screen time
- How Facebook can use the photos you don't share: what parents need to know
- AI, chatbots and deepfakes
- Gaming
- Livestreaming

Royston Youth Club (RYC).

We are a local youth club for young people aged 13 – 17, providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive space where young people can socialise, make new friends, take part in activities and simply have somewhere positive spend their free time.



Mrs J. Gant – Executive Head
admin@edwinstree.herts.sch.uk

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