



Meadgate Mail

Unlocking Learning Together

Dear Families,

It was lovely to welcome the children back after the half term break. We hope you were able to enjoy some time together and dodge the rain. We have a busy half term coming up, with some classes heading out on trips, the Infant Music Festival and Book Week to cram in. While the weather is still very wet, please make sure the children have coats as we do try and get outside, even if it is a bit drizzly, so a coat is a must.

Feel Good Friday



This week we explore punk music. Starting in the 1970s, punk music was a loud, fast, and exciting style of rock that was developed by young people who wanted to express their feelings about the world. Bands like Ramones and The Clash played short, energetic songs with simple guitar chords and powerful drums. Being able to actually play the instruments wasn't really a requirement! Punk music was all about being yourself, questioning rules, and having the courage to stand out. The musicians often wore ripped jeans, leather jackets and spiky (and often colourful) hair. Their music inspired kids and teenagers to start their own bands and share their voices.

Book Week 2026

You should have received a letter home outlining the events planned for Book Week next week. We love Book Week here, mainly because the teachers all love reading!

The book fayre arrived in school yesterday and will be open each evening after school, for the purchase of books. Please be a little patient, as the teachers run the fayre and need to see their classes home before they can get to the hall.

Mrs Hill has devised a special Book inspired dinner for Thursday so have a look at your Book Week letter to see what is being served, in case you would like a dinner on that day.



We are looking forward to seeing all your costumes and clues on Friday and can't wait for Ms Pateman's Book Week Quiz!

Year 1 Mystery Reader



This week, Bali's Mummy and Prince Charming (Bali's little brother, Otis) read the classic fairytale, Cinderella. The children sat beautifully and loved all the props that Bali's Mummy brought with her. At the end, we asked Year 1 to describe some of the props using interesting adjectives as they had been writing sentences with adjectives earlier that morning. "The magic wand is pink and purple and has silver bells." The pretty shoe has a blue diamond and it is very sparkly." "The white horse has a long tail and black hooves." Well done Year 1 and thank you so much Bali's Mummy and Otis. I wonder who will be next week's Mystery Reader?

Attendance

We are regularly asked by families about the fines issued for unauthorised absences in school. The information below should make that clearer and help families make an informed choice before taking their children out of school during term time.

National Threshold

A single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by ALL schools in England is as follows:

- 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 week school period.
- These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.
- For example, a 5-day unauthorised leave of absence would meet the national threshold. Equally a two day unauthorised absence followed by three days at a later date, but still within the rolling 10 week school period would count.
- The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Who May Be Fined?

Penalty notice fines are issued to **each** parent who allows their child to be absent without authorisation from school. For example, 3 siblings absent for unauthorised leave during term-time would result in **each** parent receiving 3 separate fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, the fine amount will be:

- £80 per parent, per child **if paid within 21 days**. If not paid within 21 days, the fine will increase to £160 per parent, per child, payable between the 22nd and 28th day.

Second Offence

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, a reduced rate is not available. The amount therefore will be:

- £160 per parent, per child – payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed, a Penalty Notice WILL NOT be issued and the case will be presented **straight to the Magistrate's Court.**

- **Prosecution** can result in **criminal records** and **fines of up to £2, 500**
- Cases found **guilty** in a **Magistrates Court** can show on the parent's future DBS certificate (Disclosure and Barring Service) due to a **'failure to safeguard a child's education'**

We hope this helps explain the process. Once again, these come from a National Framework under which all schools operate. If you have any questions please let us know but be aware that we will not be able to make any changes to the above or intervene in specific cases once required attendance data has been passed to the local authority.

Bulb Planting with Year 2

Last Friday, Year 2 joined colleagues from Chelmsford City Parks to plant bulbs along Meadgate stream. Several parents were able to join them, which was lovely and the rain stopped long enough for them to get bulbs in the ground and spread some wildflower seed bombs through the area. The children enjoyed stamping on them to release the seeds.

We hope that they will produce lots of beautiful flowers to support pollinating wildlife this summer and that the bulbs will flower and naturalise over the coming years.



We have since heard from Chelmsford City Parks. They wanted to say how much they enjoyed working with Year 2 and what a credit to the school they were. In fact, they were so impressed they are keen to work with them again later in the year - well done Year 2!

Age Appropriate Viewing

We have been made aware that one or two conversations on the playground amongst, our older children, have been focused on Netflix viewing unsuitable content for children of this age.

It is always important to have appropriate parent controls set up on the television and Internet to protect children from accessing unsuitable content, but these should be checked regularly as sometimes system updates can revert settings to the default options.

If you have older children in your household, please remind them that if they are watching content, which may be suitable for them, that there are younger children in the house for whom it might not be appropriate.

Ramadan

Ramadan is underway and we know several of our families are observing the period of fasting. If your child/ren is taking part we ask that you take some time to look over our Ramadan Fasting Policy which explains how we will support your child during the period and ensure that any reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that the experience is a positive one for them. You will also need to fill in a permission slip so that we know which children are involved and will not be eating lunch etc. Both documents can be reached by [following this link](#).



Drop - In Mornings

Please see the next dates that Mrs Ing and Ms Pointon will be at The Orchards Café from 9-10. They are looking forward to meeting you for a chat about any concerns you may have regarding your child or family, i.e. children's additional needs, housing, benefits, counselling, foodbank, etc. Or just drop-in to purchase a drink and say hello! We love to meet you, and to get to know our families even better.



Forthcoming dates:

Tuesday 3rd March

Tuesday 5th May

Anna Ing: aing@meadgate.essex.sch.uk

Mel Pointon: m.pointon@meadgate.essex.sch.uk

Signs of Spring

We hope that you have noticed some early flowering bulbs, starting to peek through the grassy areas around the site. There are some beautiful purple crocuses if you can spot those and several patches of snowdrops and daffodils. Please encourage your children to enjoy spotting the flowers as they are a sign that better weather is heading our way, but please refrain from picking or squashing them as they do provide essential food for pollinators at this time of year.



Letters Sent Home

Monday 23 rd February 2026	All Year Groups	Registration Form for Class Photos
Tuesday 24 th February 2026	YR + Y6	NCMP Emailed
Tuesday 24 th February 2026	Year 4	Oliver Performance at GBHS
Wednesday 25 th February 2026	All Year Groups	Book Week Letter Emailed

Dates for your Diary

WB 16th March 2026	One Planning Meetings
Thursday 19 th March 2026	Year 2 Trip to Chatham Green
Friday 20 th March 2026	Year 2 Infant Music Festival
Wednesday 25 th March 2026	Year 3 Trip to Colchester Castle

Monday 30 th March – Friday 10 th April 2026	Easter Holidays
Wednesday 15 th April 2026	Year 1 Trip to Mountfitchet
WB 27 th April 2026	Mock SATS
Tuesday 5 th May 2026	Year 5 Trip to Chelmsford Museum
Thursday 21 st May 2026	Year 4 Trip to Thorndon Country Park
WB 11 th May 2026	SATS Week
Friday 22 nd May 2026	INSET DAY
Monday 25 th – Friday 29 th May 2026	May Half Term
WB 1 st – 14 th June 2026	Multiplication Tables Check Window
WB 8 th June 2026	Phonics Check Week
Monday 15 th June 2026	Reception Trip to Barleylands
Tuesday 23 rd June 2026	TELAT Sports
WB 29 th June 2026	Year 6 Isle of Wight Week
Tuesday 30 th June 2026	Year 2 Mini Games
Thursday 9 th July 2026	Sports Day
Wednesday 15 th July 2026	Leavers Assembly to Year 6 Parents
Friday 17 th July 2026	Last Day of Term

2025/2026 - Term & Holiday Dates

Monday 30 th March – Friday 10 th April 2026	Easter Holiday
Monday 13 th April 2026	First Day of Summer Term
Monday 4 th May 2026	May Day Bank Holiday
Friday 22 nd May 2026	Non Pupil Day
Monday 25 th - Friday 29 th May 2026	Half Term Holiday
Monday 20 th July 2026	Non Pupil Day
Tuesday 21 st July 2026	Break up For the Summer Holiday