

Essendine Primary School News - December 2025

Head of School Message

Dear Families of Essendine Primary,

Following the completion of the consultation for the restructure of the HLTA team at Essendine, I am writing to let you know that Sally Alemayehu and Brian Ellington, our Higher Level Teacher Assistants, will be leaving us at the end of this term – 19th December 2025. Sally and Brian's redundancy is a direct result of trying to ensure that we are able to maintain a positive budget position moving into the next financial year. It is not a decision that has been taken lightly, but as the school roll continues to fall, we have to be continually prudent in how we manage the budget moving forward. I wanted to extend my huge thank you to Brian and Sally for their commitment and support for over 20 years of dedicated service to the school. Sally has been with us for 23 years and Brian 25 years - an incredible amount of loyalty and hard work over the years to the school. I wish them every success in the future. They will be greatly missed, but I'm sure they will stay in touch.

I wish everyone a lovely holiday and look forward to seeing you back on Tuesday 6th January 2026.

Take care,

Lisa Mafrica

Head of School

Upcoming Dates:

Friday 19th December: Last day of term. **1pm finish for all children**

Christmas Break: Monday 22nd December 2025- 5th January 2026**-school closed**

Monday 5th January 2026-school closed for children. Staff Inset only

Tuesday 6th January 2026-first day back for children-Spring 1 term

Parent Phase Meetings w/c 12th January 2026

- Monday 12th January-EYFS parents - 9am
- Wednesday 14th January-Year 3/4 - 9am
- Thursday 15th January-Year 5/6 - 9am
- Friday 16th January-Year 1/2 - 9am

Friday 13th February 2026- last day of term-normal finishing time, 3:30pm

Half-term break: 16th February-20th February 2026-school closed

Monday 23rd February-first day back for children

Connected Futures Partnerships

Dear Families of North Westminster Federation,

We are pleased to share the outcome of the recent consultation on the proposal for North Westminster Federation to federate with London Community Education Federation and Oxford Gardens Primary School. Following careful consideration of feedback, governors from all three Governing Bodies met this week and unanimously agreed to form a single federation.

The new federation will formally come into effect on 12 January 2026. You will find the official outcome letter attached in both an Arabic and English version sent to your email address.

We are delighted to announce the name of our new federation: Connected Futures Partnership. This marks the start of an exciting new chapter, strengthening collaboration and opportunities for our children and communities.

Kind regards,

Aaron Sumner

Monthly updates, news and events in and around your school community

Contents Page

- **Head of School Message**
- **Monthly updates**
- **Attendance**
- **Whole School Events**
- **EYFS-Reception/Nursery**
- **KS1-Year 1 and Year 2**
- **Lower KS2 -Year 3 and Year 4**
- **Upper KS2-Year 5 and Year 6**
- **Volunteers**
- **Climate Change Committee**
- **Gardening Club**
- **Children's University**
- **JAG-Stay and Play**

Parent Information

Xmas Tree





We’re excited to let you know that, once again, **Pines and Needles** has kindly donated a beautiful Christmas tree to our school.

They are also offering parents and staff 10% off Christmas trees from any of their London pop-up stores and online shop. Please quote the following code:

Discount Code: SCHOOL10

Family Fun



HAF Services

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme is a Department for Education (DfE) funded initiative that provides free activities and food provision for children aged 4 to 16 eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) during the Easter, Summer and Christmas Holidays.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster City Council offer a HAF Programme, providing an array of enriching and fun activities for local young people throughout the school holidays.

We want children and young people to have a choice of activities to access new experiences and opportunities. Previously, through this programme, children and young people have been able to experience arts and cultural events in the borough and participate in fun physical activities and outdoor play such as horse riding, zip lining, acrobatics, and canoeing.

The programme also offers activities that develop self-confidence, resilience, social skills and improve mental health for all children and young people who attend! Alongside these activities, nutritious meals are available for attendees each day.

Please take a look at the website for more information: https://ourcity.org.uk/haf-programme



Tesco and Essendine-LAST CHANCE!





1 - Closes at the end of December, please vote if you haven't already!

2026 Strutton Ground Express Express SW1P 2HY

2299 Covent Garden Express Express WC2E 9EQ

2377 Dean Street Express Express W1D 3RF

2410 Goodge Street Express Express W1T 2QB

2601 Dominion London Express Express W1T 7RQ

2717 Cliford Road Maida Vale Express Express W9 1SY

2722 Euston Road Express Express NW1 3AU

2726 Baker Street Express Express W1U 6FY

2757 Mayfair Express Express W1J 7UP

2861 Maida Vale Express Express W9 1UP

3012 Paddington Express Express NW8 8EX

3093 Regent Street Express Express SW1Y 4LR

3276 Paddington Express Express W2 1JX

3466 Bayswater Express Express W2 3RL

3467 Royal Hospital Road Express Express SW3 4HN

3478 Old Brompton Road Express Express SW7 3DY

3482 Trafalgar Square Express Express SW1A 2DR

4447 Queensway Express Express W2 6LS

4620 Marble Arch Express Express W2 2EH

4683 Baker St Express Express W1U 8EW

4850 Covent Garden Endell Street Express Express WC2H 9H

J 4901 Victoria Express Express SW1V 1RX

5177 Monck Street Victoria Express Express SW1P 2BW

5190 Marylebone Melcombe Street Express Express NW1 6AE

5565 Lisson Grove Express Express NW1 6TU

5714 Pimlico Express Express SW1V 3EN

5878 Fleet Street Express Express WC2R 1DA 6668 New Cavendish Express Express W1W 6BE

Nucleo

Did you know that Nucleo runs in our school?

Nucleo is the only organisation of its kind in the country - a FREE, immersive, ensemble-based music education charity. We run in Essendine School six days a week (after school and on Saturdays), and our students attend ensemble-based music learning sessions 3-4 times a week. We work with children and young people aged 0 to 20, and we teach all standard orchestral instruments – violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, French horn, trumpet, trombone, tuba and percussion!

Nucleo's programme is free to participants, and instruments are provided. We currently have a waiting list of around two years, but we prioritise places for Essendine Primary pupils, so if you are interested in joining our programme, please sign up for our waiting list at the link below. We would be delighted to welcome you as soon as we can!

If your child already plays an instrument, we may also be able to offer them a space much sooner, as they could join one of our more advanced groups. We offer ensembles for students from complete beginners, to beyond grade 8.

We are very proud to deliver our programme at Essendine Primary School, and would love to hear from families who may be interested in joining Nucleo!

Office Opening Times-please note the change made to closing time in the office.

Opening Times:

8:00 AM TO 11:30 AM

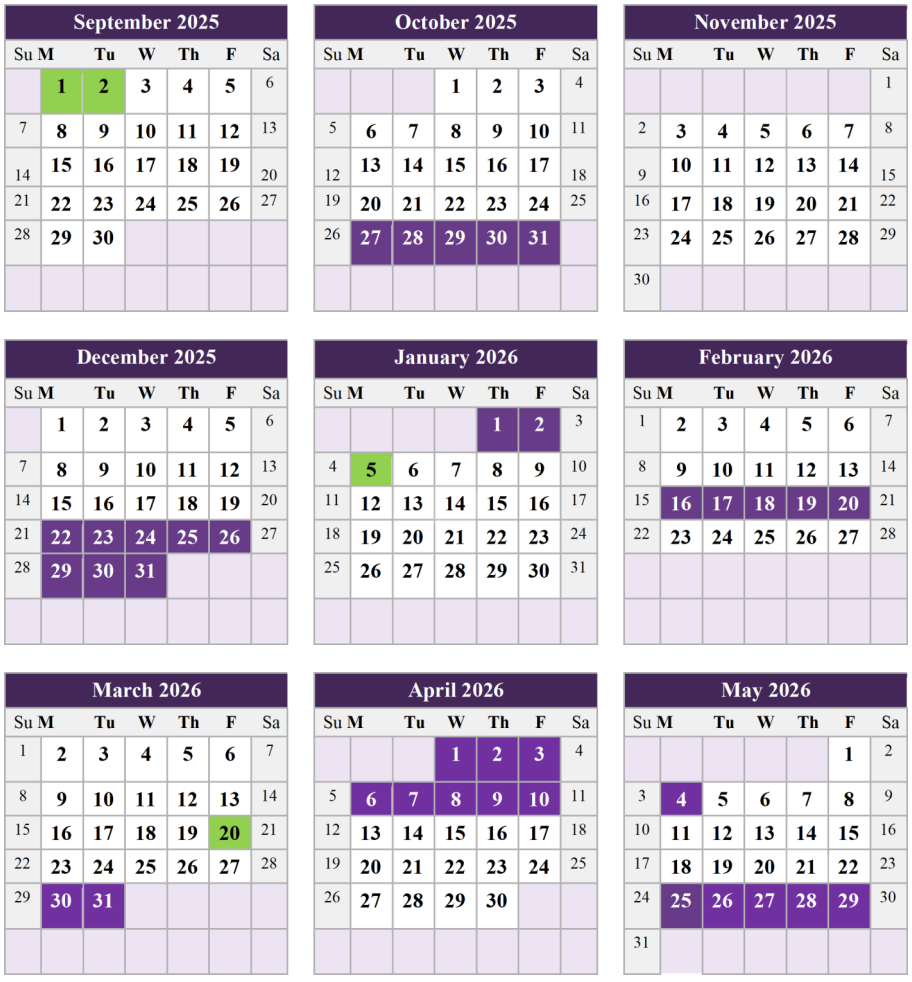
Office is closed between 11.30am and 1:15pm

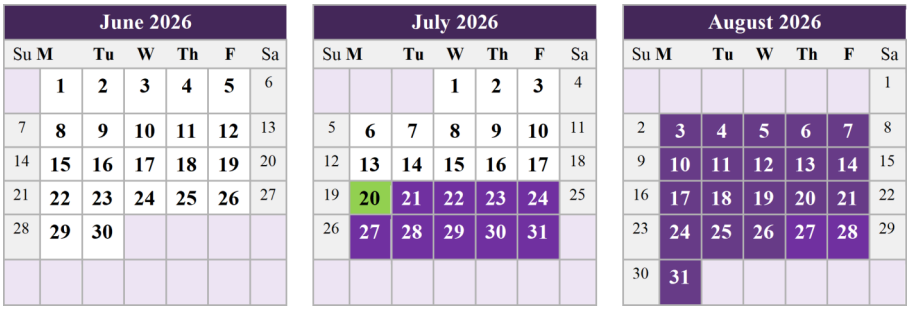
1:15 PM TO 4:00 PM

Access outside these times is by *appointment only/emergency*.

Breakfast club starts at 8am please arrive before 8.20am

2025-2026 School Calendar





June 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2026						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SCHOOL IS CLOSED ON THE DAYS THAT ARE SHADED

INSET DAY (open to staff only): 1 & 2 September, 5 January, 20 March & 20 July

SCHOOL CLOSED

Start of the Day

Drop off

At 8:45am the main school gate opens.

Nursery and Reception children are taken by their parents to their classrooms via the EYFS front gate on Essendine Rd.

Children in Years 1-6 go straight to their classroom through the main gates.

At 8:55am class starts and the gate closes and all parents/carers must be out so that we can secure the site.

Pick up

At 3:25pm the main gate opens to parents.

Nursery, Reception children collected from the EYFS classrooms via the **EYFS Gate on Essendine Rd at 3.15pm** .

Y1-Y6 children are escorted to the collection area in the playground where parents will be waiting.

You must collect your children or arrange for a responsible adult (over 16 years-old) to do so. If you are asking someone else to collect your children, the school needs to know. This is in the interest of your children's safety.

Only Year 5 and 6 children are allowed to go home by themselves, once written authorisation has been received.

The school gate closes at 3:40pm and any children not collected will be taken to the Front Office area. Late penalties are issued for lateness beyond this time.

Medical Updates

We would like to remind parents/carers that any medication for children must be brought to the office, where you will be asked to complete a consent form. **Do not give any medication to class teachers or children.** Please also remember to update the office with any changes regarding your child's medication and any changes in illness/medical conditions.

Parking



We have had a number of complaints recently from our neighbours regarding double parking and idling on Essendine Road, particularly during pick up and drop off times. Please be considerate of our neighbours. We will be working with WCC parking to enforce restrictions to parking in line with local regulations. Thank you.

Packed Lunches at Essendine





It is easy to create an appetising packed lunch every day for your child. You should try to give them nourishing foods that are good for them. ***Sweets, biscuits, crisps, chocolate and fizzy drinks or any food high in sugar or salt are not allowed as part of a healthy packed lunch. Fast food is also not suitable for packed lunch. Nuts are not allowed in school.*** *Subsequently, no foods that may contain nuts or similar allergens are also not allowed. The only hot meals served are school meals from the school kitchen. Water is available at mealtime.*

Our school is a nut free zone - no nut based food/May contain nuts items allowed for packed lunch.

UNIFORM

The school uniform varies depending on your child's age. For health and safety reasons, jewellery, other than a wrist watch, is not allowed. Hijabs should be plain navy blue or

white. The essential uniform, which your child needs to have, is in BOLD and can be found on our website too.

Please ensure all jumpers/blazers are clearly labelled with your child's name, so it can be returned promptly if lost.

EYFS Pupils (Nursery - Reception):

- **Navy blue Essendine jogging pants or shorts**
- **White Essendine T-shirt**
- White or black socks
- Black shoes (no trainers)

Key Stage 1 Pupils (Year 1-2):

- **Essendine navy blue polo shirt**
- **Essendine sweat shirt or cardigan**
- **Black, navy blue or grey trousers with white or black socks**
- **A navy blue and white check dress with navy, grey or white tights**
- Black shoes (no boots or trainers if possible)

Key Stage 2 Pupils (Year 3-6):

- **Black Blazer**
- **White smart shirt (not a polo shirt)**
- Dark Grey V Neck Jumper or Dark Grey Cardigan
- **Tie in House colours**
- (Kilburn Park = Green / Elgin = Red / Shirland = Blue / Morshead = Yellow)
- **Black smart Trousers with white or black socks**
- **Black smart Skirt with navy, grey or white Tights**
- Black shoes (no boots or trainers if possible)

The PE uniform for all children consists of:

- **Navy blue Essendine jogging pants**
- **White Essendine T-shirt**
- **Black pumps or Trainers**

Ordering

Essendine School Uniform can be ordered online from Stitch Design where you can register for an account using the schools postcode (W92LR). Place your order, pay online and receive items within 2-5 working days:

Uniform Swap

Ask at the office about uniform swapping events, which we will organise throughout the school year.

Alternatively, please contact the reception desk for a current price list and hard copy of the order form.

Parent Information Sessions

Mrs Breich has been working hard on the new Parents' Information Session Timetable- January / April 2026 and we will email the sessions for Spring term shortly. Please join our sessions, which normally are only 30 minutes. Any questions please ask Mrs Breich.

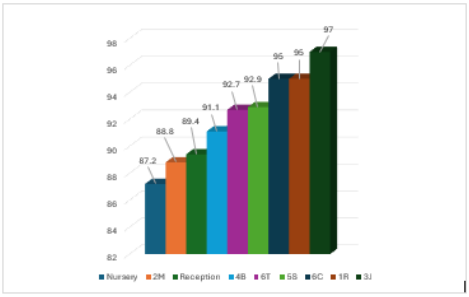
Attendance

Our Attendance Policy has been updated following the new government guidelines, for more information, please visit the school's website- Key Information- Policies- Attendance Policy

Please find below our school attendance record for all classes – December 2025

Group	% Attend
Nursery	87.2
2M	88.8
Reception	89.4
4B	91.1
6T	92.7
5S	92.9
6C	95
1R	95
3J	97
Totals	92.4

Well done to 3J for scoring best attendance of the month with a record of 97%!



Our Attendance Policy has been updated following the new government guidelines, for more information, please visit the school's website- Key Information- Policies- Attendance Policy

Please find below our school attendance record for all classes – December 2025

Thank you to the many parents who attended our morning meetings to ensure Essendine improves its attendance this year. I know we can continue to improve.

Whole School Events



Congratulations to Jessica and Hamza for having their art work displayed at the Royal Albert Hall this December. They were very happy to be invited to an open morning on Sunday 14th December to see the display and enjoy some refreshments.

Music at Essendine

The children have thoroughly enjoyed their Music lessons every Friday, delivered by the Tri-borough team. They have been enthusiastic about singing, moving to music, and exploring different sounds and instruments. These sessions have helped to build confidence, creativity, and a love of music in a fun and engaging way.






MUSIC

Keyboard Lessons & Keyboard Club

This term at Essendine has been an exciting one in the world of keyboards! Our young musicians have been hard at work tackling their individual piano pieces and confidently moving on to more advanced music as the weeks go by. Many students have now completed their beginner book (*Piano Time No. 1*) and are proudly heading towards their ABRSM piano exams, which is a fantastic achievement.

Over in Keyboard Club, things have been even more electric. The children have been rocking out together as a full class ensemble to the classic hit *"Twist and Shout"* by The Beatles. We have been diving into the world of chords and learning how to play a three-chord sequence along with the song. The class split into mini synth bands, each adding their own sound, before coming together to create one big synth-pop performance. It sounded incredible and was a real musical highlight of the term!





Cello and Violin



2 - Well done to all the students who have been learning cello and violin this year! You've made a great start, showing focus, perseverance, and a growing confidence with your instruments. Keep practising and enjoying the journey — we're looking forward to a performance soon!

School Council at Essendine



This month, our School Council introduced a new initiative: Right of the Month December's right of the month focused on the Right to Life, Survival and Development. This right means that every child has the right to be kept safe, healthy and cared for, and to have the support they need to grow, learn and reach their full potential. Throughout the month, pupils will be exploring what this looks like in everyday school life and how we can work together as a community to uphold this right for all children. Our School Council also had the exciting

opportunity to meet with a representative from Kensington Palace to discuss our ongoing partnership and the projects we are developing together. The children shared their ideas confidently and thoughtfully, and Kensington Palace were impressed by their enthusiasm and commitment. They were given an opportunity to share their thoughts and draw pictures of what they believe Kensington Palace looks like, which have been shared below.







EYFS Nursery/Reception

This term in EYFS children have made great progress through a wide range of play-based learning experiences. They have developed their communication and language skills by

sharing ideas, listening to stories, and taking part in group discussions. Through hands-on activities, children have strengthened their early maths, literacy, and social skills while building confidence, independence, and curiosity about the world around them.

















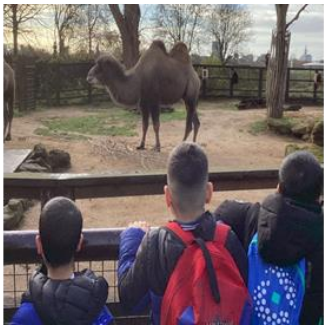




KS1 -Years 1 and 2

Year 1 and Year 2 have had an exciting and memorable term! Year 2 enjoyed a wonderful trip to the zoo, where they explored different animal habitats and spotted a range of animals from across the world.

Both year groups rounded off the term by performing **'A Christmas Recipe'**, delighting us with their confidence, expression and festive spirit. We were truly amazed by their hard work and talent!

















Lower KS2-Years 3 and 4

Year 3 and 4 have had a fantastic Autumn term filled with memorable experiences and achievements!bYear 3 and 4 delighted audiences with their wonderful performance of A Dancing Christmas Party, showcasing their hard work and creativity on stage. Parents and carers were also invited in to take part in a special publishing session, where they could celebrate their children's writing achievements and see their work come to life. Year 4 have had a particularly active term, successfully completing their swimming lessons and

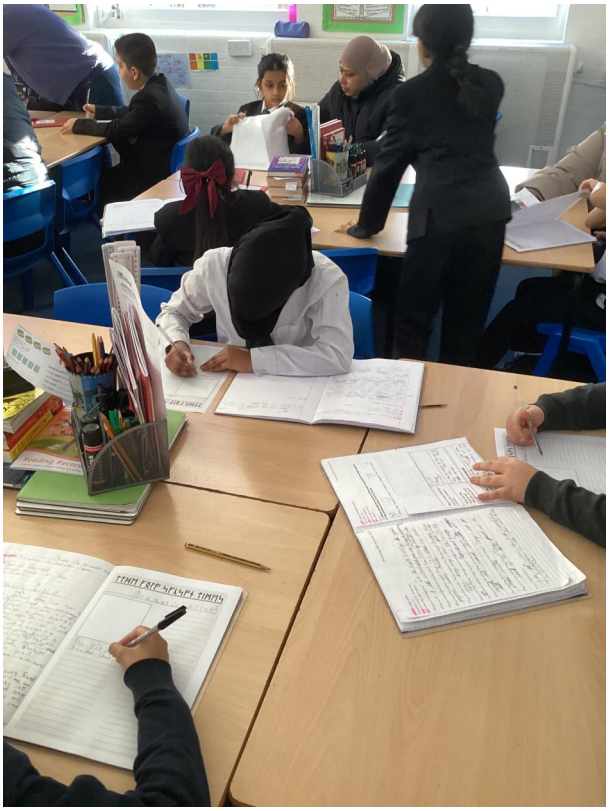
developing important water safety and swimming skills. Both year groups have worked incredibly hard this term, and we're so proud of everything they've accomplished. We can't wait to see their talents continue to shine in the Spring term!













Upper KS2-Years 5 and 6

It’s been an exciting and busy end to the Autumn term for Year 5 and 6!

Year 5 have been working with cricket coaches from Lord's in their PE lessons, developing their cricketing skills and teamwork. They also visited the Science Museum, where they enhanced their learning through hands-on experiments and interactive scientific activities.

Year 6 visited Paddington Academy to watch their fantastic performance of *High School Musical*. They also took part in a whole-day workshop based on **The Plum Pudding Project**, which explores the remarkable coincidence that Christmas was cancelled on the same date 376 years apart. Throughout the day, the children learned songs and rehearsed scenes connected to this fascinating moment in history.

Both year groups are also continuing to prepare for our upcoming school production of *A Christmas Carol*. We can't wait to see their talents shine on stage!







Volunteers

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Grand Union Bid for the incredible support they provided to our school this winter. Their team of dedicated volunteers brought warmth, joy, and festive spirit to our pupils through a wonderful range of Christmas and winter activities.

From creative crafts and story reading sessions to helping decorate our school for the season, every activity was organised with care, enthusiasm, and a genuine passion for making a difference. The volunteers' kindness and energy created magical moments that our children will remember for a long time.

Thank you for bringing so much joy to our school and for the meaningful contribution you continue to make in our community. We look forward to working with you again in the future.




vodafone
busi







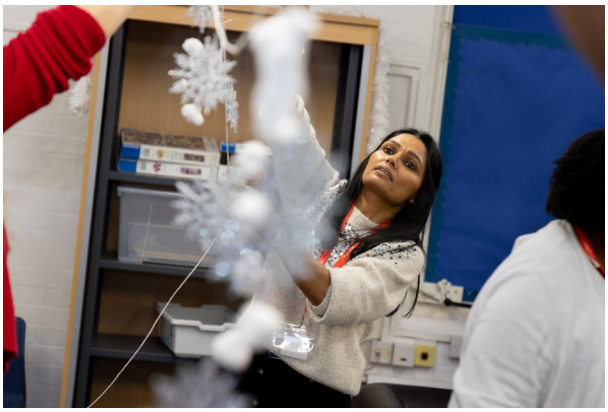














































Gardening Club

A big thank you to Lewis from the Apple Orchard Project for visiting our school and sharing his expertise with our students. Lewis showed them how to prune our apple trees properly, explaining why careful pruning is so important for healthy growth and good harvests. The session was hands-on, informative, and inspiring, and the students loved learning practical skills they can use in our orchard for years to come.




THE NORTH FACE







Turning on the Xmas Lights

A huge well done to our choir for their wonderful performance at the Turning on the Lights at Paddington Rec this year. They sang beautifully and helped create a festive atmosphere for the community, representing our school with great enthusiasm and pride. We are very proud of them.





Stay and Play

Stay and Play with JAG

Junior Adventures Group



JAG Autumn Term Newsletter

Join the JAG network

Building brighter futures together

Junior Adventures Group

junioradventuresgroup.co.uk

0333 577 1533

PARENT FEEDBACK

"We are enormously grateful for the wraparound care provided and our daughter adores her club days. We will be adding more days from January. Thank you so much. "

My son thoroughly enjoys his time with JAG. He grumbles at me if / collect him too early! Al/ of the staff are super friendly and he has the best time!



TERM BY NUMBERS!

"The ladies that run it are amazing! My son loves his time there and happily goes in each day... The ladies are so lovely and I fee/ my son is in the best care with them."

"The staff are absolutely amazing and my daughter loves going with them. I know she is well looked after... Amazing staff, affordable and children are well cared for. "

Term 1 in Action!

SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE MOMENTS SO FAR THIS TERM....

This term in our wraparound care clubs, we've loved welcoming new children into the new school year with fun "Getting to Know Me" activities that helped everyone settle in and feel part of the group. We've also been busy getting creative with seasonal crafts, from spooky Halloween creations to thoughtful Remembrance Day projects, giving children the chance to express themselves and learn through hands-on experiences. Our Adventure Programme continues to offer a wide range of activities for children to choose from each day, with Super Sports and Power Teams remaining firm favourites across our clubs, keeping children active, engaged, and excited for what's coming next.



Contact Us

junioradventuresgroup.co.uk

0333 577 1533

@junioradventuresgroupuk

@junioradventuresgroupuk

SCAN ME

Scan here to see
JAG in action

Junior
Adventures
Group