

Essendine Primary School News - January 2026

Head of School Message

Dear Families of Essendine Primary,

Welcome back, and a very happy New Year to you all – welcome to 2026! I hope you and your families had a restful and enjoyable break. We are already well into the term, and our children have had many valuable learning experiences and opportunities.

Thank you to all the parents and carers who were able to join us for the recent Parent Phase Meetings. It was wonderful to see such strong engagement and to work together in supporting our children. For those who were unable to attend, or who would like to revisit the information, all presentation slides are now available on the school website.

I am also very proud to share that we have received a letter from Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, recognising the excellent outcomes achieved by our disadvantaged pupils at the end of the 2024/25 academic year. The letter congratulates our school community on being among the strongest performers nationally and highlights the dedication of our staff and the hard work of our pupils. It also encourages us to continue sharing our effective practice and supporting other schools, while maintaining our strong focus on disadvantaged learners. The full letter is shared below.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and partnership. Together, we make a real difference for our children.

Kind regards,

Lisa Mafrica

Head of School

Upcoming Dates:

Monday 9th February 2025-Class Photos

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

Friday 20th March-Inset Day for staff- **no children**

Friday 27th March- last day of Spring term-1pm school closed

Monday 13th April- first day back for Summer Term

A message from Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education

Dear Lisa,

Congratulations to you and your team on the excellent outcomes the disadvantaged pupils at Essendine Primary School achieved at the end of the 2024/25 academic year. Your school's performance places it among the very best nationally, and this is a significant achievement.

This success reflects the dedication of your staff and the hard work of your pupils. It shows what can be achieved when ambition and commitment come together. Thank you for everything you do to give children the best possible opportunities to succeed.

Your school's achievements demonstrate what is possible, and I hope you will continue to share your experience and best practice with others. Even the strongest schools can go further. We encourage you to lead the way as a system leader - sharing effective practice, championing networks, supporting collaboration, and helping raise standards across the sector.

There are real opportunities available for you to support improvement for a wider group of pupils including through:

- engaging actively with your region's RISE networks and partnering with nearby schools and trusts;
- contributing to regional roundtables and professional communities to spread the approaches that are working in your context; and
- sustaining excellence by continuing to focus on disadvantaged pupils

Please pass on my thanks and congratulations to your staff and pupils. I look forward to working with you as we strive together to raise standards for all.

Bridget Phillipson Secretary of State for Education

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

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Parent Information

Nursery places for September 2026 are now open

If your child was born between **1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022**, they are eligible to start nursery in September 2026. To find out more or to enrol your child, please speak to **Anne in the school office**.

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

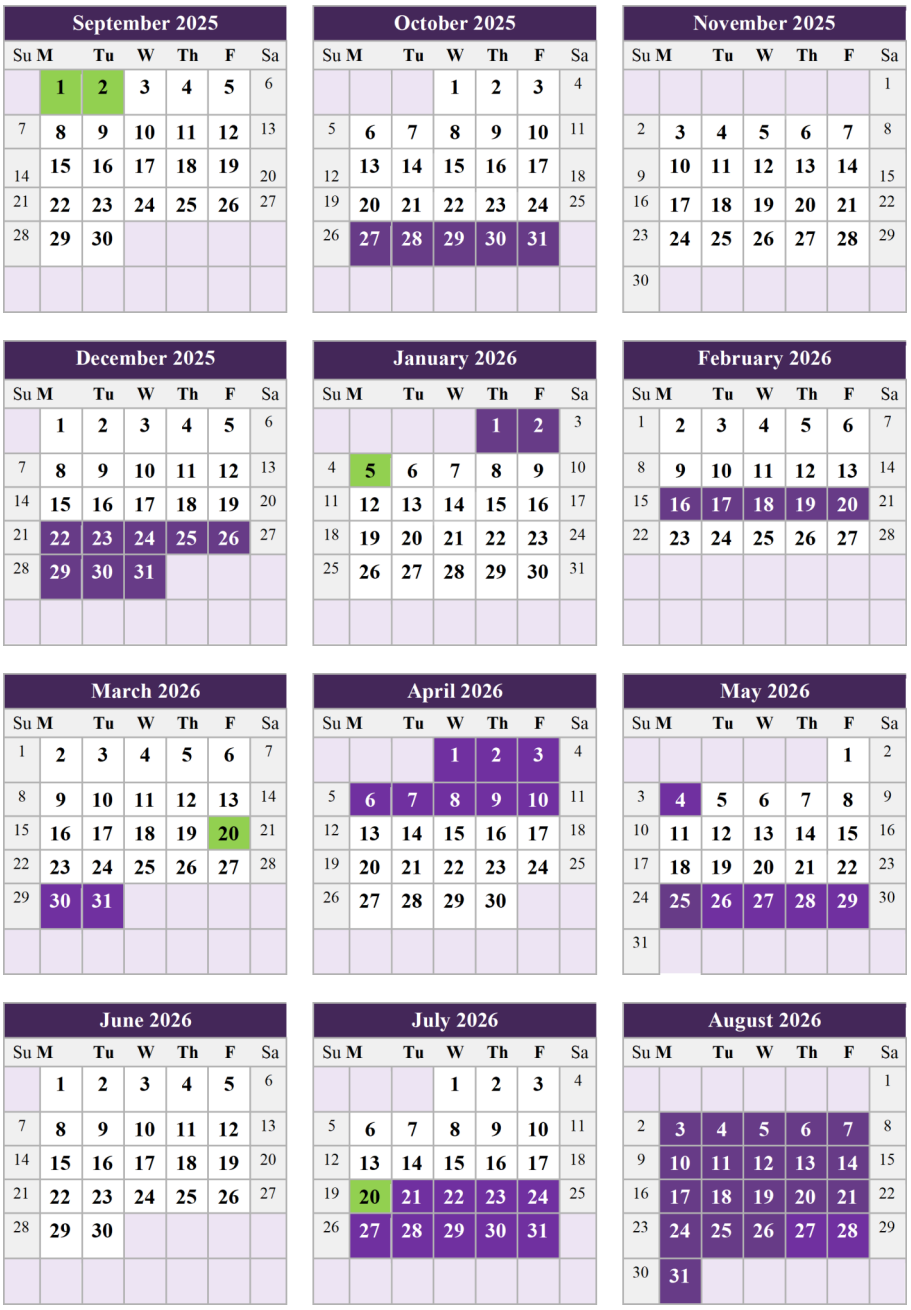
Office is closed between 11.30am and 1:15pm

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



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

Spring Term 2026

Parents Phase meetings			
Monday 12/01/26 - 9:00am **EYFS**	**Wednesday 14/01/26 - 9:00am** **Years 3&4**	**Thursday 15/01/26** **Years 5&6**	**Friday 16/01/26** **Years 1&2**

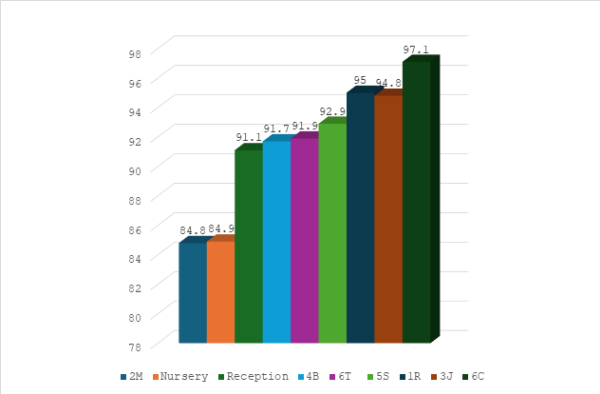
Date/ Time	Title	Agency	Summary (what to expect?)	Year Group
Tuesday 13/01/26 **9:00- 9:30am**	SEN	Essendine Primary School Miss Robinson (AHT)		All
Tuesday 20/01/26 **9:00-9:30am**	SATs and wellbeing	Westminster MIND		Year 6
Tuesday 27/01/26 **9:00-9:30am**	Phonics	Essendine Primary School Miss Tracey (AHT)	-How we teach phonics at Essendine -What we asses and what the phonics screen is -How to support at home	Nursery Reception Y1
Tuesday 03/02/26 **9:00-9:30am**	Healthy breakfast	School Nurse	-Importance of healthy food -choices -Breakfast ideas -Snack swaps -Fussy eating -Money-saving tips	All
Tuesday 10/02/26 **9:00-9:39am**	Internet safety	Essendine Primary School- Mr soutter		All
Tuesday 17/02/26	**Half- Term**			
Tuesday 24/02/26 **9:00-9:30am**	Housing Q&A session	Cardinal Hume Centre- Housing advisors	Q&A session -moving from temporary to permanent accommodation? -Housed far away from school? -Overcrowded?	All
Thursday 05/03/26 **9:00-9:30am**	Understanding early writing development	Essendine Primary School Miss Tracey (AHD)	-What early writing is -Fine motor and gross motor skills -Examples of real early writing stages	EYFS KS1
Tuesday 10/03/24 **9:00-9:30am**	Writing strategies at home	Essendine Primary School Miss Tracey (AHD)	-How to encourage talk before writing -Modelling writing in everyday life -Phonics in writing — what "using sounds" looks like -Creating a writing-friendly home environment	EYFS KS1
Tuesday 17/03/26 **9:00-9:30am**	Writing in the classroom- parent child workshop	Essendine Primary School Miss Tracey- Miss Robinson (AHD)	- Writing at Essendine - Visit classes and work with your child	EYFS KS1
Tuesday - 24/03/26 **9:00-9:30am**	Kensington Palace		-Introducing the Kensington enrichment project -Q&A	All

Attendance

Please find below our school attendance record for all classes-January 2026

Group	% Attend
2M	84.8
Nursery	84.9
Reception	91.1
4B	91.7
6T	91.9
5S	92.9
1R	95
3J	94.8
6C	97.1
Totals	91.6

Well done to 6C for scoring best attendance of the month with a record of 97%!



Whole School Events

Sakura Cherry Tree Project We were delighted to receive two beautiful Sakura cherry trees as part of the Sakura Cherry Tree Project. They have now been planted in our science garden with the help of our Head Boy and Head Girl, making it a truly special moment for our school community. We hope these trees will grow and flourish for many years to come, becoming a lasting symbol of learning, care for the environment, and new beginnings. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the Sakura Cherry Tree Project for this wonderful opportunity.



Year 5/6 Football Competitions

Children from across Years 5 and 6 have taken part in football competitions at Paddington Rec. All of the teams represented the school brilliantly and demonstrated the 4Bs – whether they won, lost or drew. Well done to all involved and thank you for the staff who took them along and coached them!

















MAIDA VALE LIBRARY

MAIDA VALE LIBRARY CLASS VISITS – Spring term

Monday 9th February 2-2.30 – 6T

Monday 2nd March 2-2.30 – 6C

Tuesday 3rd March 2-2.30 – 1R

EYFS Nursery/Reception

































In Reception we have been reading the Three Billy Goats Gruff. We have been looking at farm animals and the produce they make. We made sandwiches using cheese and butter from cows! In Art we have been looking at the artist Andy Warhol and making our own portraits based off his work. In maths we have been learning about capacity and enjoyed exploring this in the water tray.

In Nursery, we have been exploring fairy tales. We've particularly been enjoying the 'Three Little Pigs' and love to chant, 'I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down!'

The children have been reading books, dressing up, drawing the characters and re-creating the story using arts and crafts.






Castle

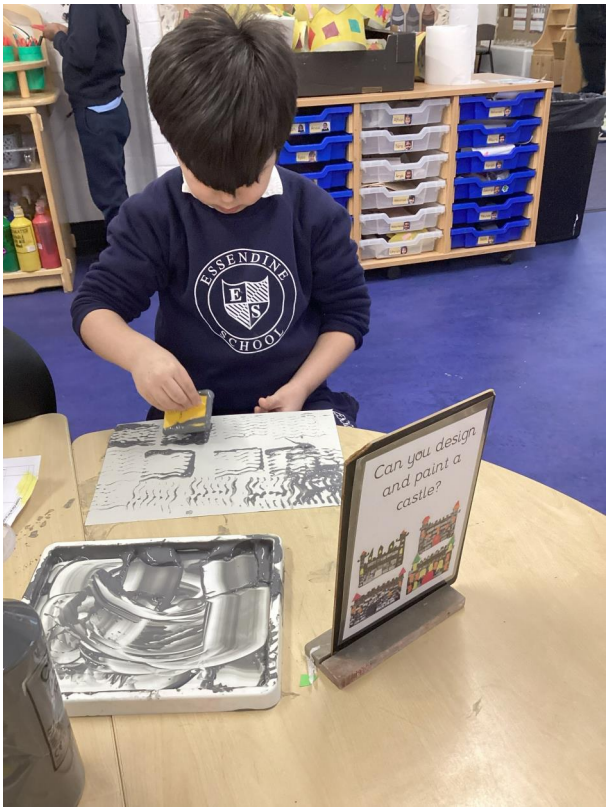

Castle


Castle




Can you make a crown?





KS1 -Years 1 and 2

Year 1 have begun their exciting new topic, **Animal Kingdoms**, where they are learning about different animals, their habitats and how they are classified. Year 2 have started their new topic, **Kings and Queens**, exploring monarchy past and present through engaging lessons and rich texts.

As part of their learning journey, Year 2 have already enjoyed a visit to Maida Vale Library to support their reading and research skills, and Year 1 are looking forward to their own library visit later this term.



Paddington Rec Walk

In Year 1, the children are learning about postcards. Some of the children visited the park and are going to write postcards sharing their experience with their families. They had lots of fun exploring the gardens and taking pictures of each other on the iPads! They took it in turns to pose in front of the flowers.







Lower KS2-Years 3 and 4

Year 3 and Year 4 have enjoyed an action-packed month of learning. Both classes returned to Forest School, continuing to develop their outdoor learning skills and confidence. Year 3 further enriched their learning about the ancient Egyptians with a visit to the British Museum, bringing their history topic to life.

A number of pupils from both Year 3 and Year 4 were selected to take part in an exciting athletics event at Moberly Sports Centre, where they demonstrated excellent effort and enthusiasm. Both classes have also visited Maida Vale Library to continue borrowing books and nurturing their love of reading.

Cricket coaches from Lord's have continued their work with Year 4, while Year 3 have begun their swimming lessons, developing important life skills and confidence in the water.








7
ACTIVE



This week, Year 3 and 4 had a fantastic time at Forest School. They explored the natural environment by measuring and comparing different leaves and fallen branches, helping them practise their maths and observation skills in a reallife context. They also enjoyed exploring mud and using natural materials to create and build their own imaginative designs. Some even found a worm and other mini beasts!















Upper KS2-Years 5 and 6

It has been another exciting month of learning beyond the classroom. Year 6 enjoyed a fascinating visit to the TfL Museum, where they took part in Citizenship activities and met representatives from the police, fire service, ambulance service and other emergency services, helping them to deepen their understanding of public services and community responsibility. Year 5 visited Moberly Sports Centre for a day of athletics, demonstrating fantastic teamwork and perseverance across a range of events.

Year 6 have also begun their inspiring *Go Live* project, working with a theatre group to create their own original piece of theatre based on hopes and wishes for the future. We are really looking forward to seeing how this develops — and are especially excited for their upcoming trip to see *The Lion King* next week.

Both the girls' and boys' football teams took part in separate competitions at Paddington Recreation Ground, showing great determination, resilience and sportsmanship throughout.


ELIZABETH LINE
UNDERGROUND
The tide turns
London's transport plan
Commuter or tourist, resident or visitor, everyone wants to get around London quickly, easily and safely. An integrated system of buses, tubes, trains, boats, cycle paths and walking routes sounds ideal. The last decade has seen major new investment to support an integrated transport strategy for the Capital.
The Mayor of London was first elected on 1 May 2000. His team began to tackle London's clogged-up system through a new transport authority, Transport for London.
Transport









Volunteers

A big thank-you to the team of volunteers from Vodafone who came in and cleared out an unused small room to make way for a new intervention space. This area is now being prepared specifically for ELSA Intervention, and we're excited about transforming it into a calm, welcoming and purpose-built environment where pupils can work on emotional literacy, self-esteem, managing feelings and other key life skills. The transformation is already underway and the space will become a valuable addition to our support offer.



School Council Updates

School Council Visit: Kensington Palace Q&A

Last term, our School Council had the exciting opportunity to meet with a representative from Kensington Palace and interview them about the palace's history. They will be sharing what they learned in assembly later this term. Here are some of their fascinating findings:

When was Kensington Palace built?

Kensington Palace began as a small suburban villa called *Nottingham House*, built in 1605. In 1689, new monarchs William III and Mary II chose it as their country retreat. Over time, Stuart and Georgian monarchs transformed it into the palace we know today.

How old is Kensington Palace?

If we count from 1689, when it became a royal palace, Kensington Palace is now **336 years old**.

Who named it Kensington Palace?

The surrounding area was known as *Kensington Village* in the 1600s, which is where the palace gets its name.

How long did it take to build?

The palace has never really stopped being built or changed. The first building phase finished in 1605, but monarchs have continued to alter and develop it over the centuries. Some parts were damaged during World War II, and there was also a fire in 1963, leading to further restoration.

How has the architecture changed over time?

In 1689, William III and Mary II asked Sir Christopher Wren to design plans to transform the house into a palace. Queen Mary took a very active role in the project, helping to shape its development.

How many rooms are there in Kensington Palace?

There are around **36–40 rooms**.

What animals were kept in the palace zoo?

The palace once had a small zoo with animals such as Bengal tigers and civet cats. These were later moved to the Tower of London.

How many visitors does Kensington Palace have each year?

Approximately **420,000 visitors** visit the palace annually.



Children's University

Warm Greetings from your Current Board of Trustees!

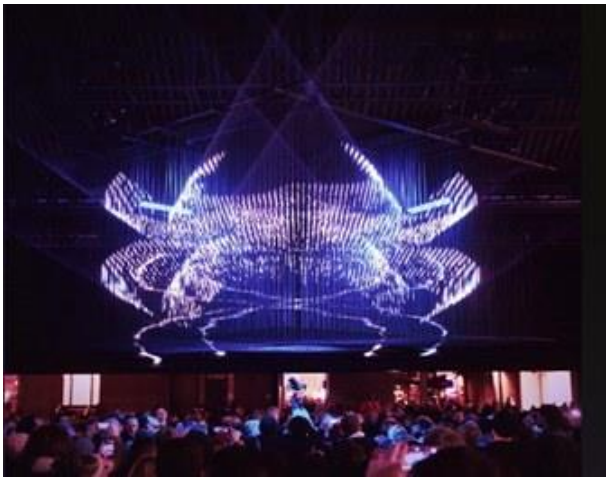


We are responsible for collecting the extra-curricular hours for your class and finding events that you could attend outside of school. This month we have celebrated Class 5S achieving the most hours and given a special mention to Adriana(4B) and Danyal(5S) for their amazing efforts.

Looking for a different event to attend this week-end? Why not go to the 'Winter Lights Festival' at Canary Wharf. It is **free** and on from 5-10 pm until the 31st January. You will be able to view sixteen spectacular light installations by artists from around the world.

Click on the link below for more details:

Winter Lights at Canary Wharf 2026 | Official Event Guide



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!



Contact Us

junioradventuresgroup.co.uk

0333 577 1533

@junioradventuresgroupuk

@junioradventuresgroupuk

SCAN ME

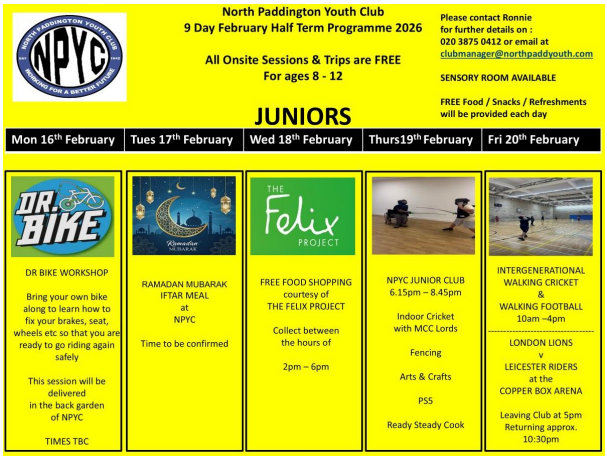
Scan here to see
JAG in action

Junior
Adventures
Group

North Paddington Youth Club

North Paddington Youth Club North Paddington Youth Club runs a range of half-term events for children and young people. They also host Thursday evening clubs for children aged 8 years and over. For more information, please visit or contact them at **229 Lanark Road, London W9 1EA**, or call **020 3875 0412**









North Paddington Youth Club
9 Day February Half Term Programme 2026

All Onsite Sessions & Trips are FREE

For ages 8 – 12

JUNIORS

Please contact Ronnie for further details on : 020 3875 0412 or email at clubmanager@northpaddyouth.com

SENSORY ROOM AVAILABLE

FREE Food / Snacks / Refreshments will be provided each day

Consent forms will be available one week before the trips are due. **Booking is required**. You can do this by seeing a member of staff at the Youth Club or sending an email to clubmanager@northpaddyouth.com

There is no need to book a place for any of our onsite sessions. Just turn up and complete a Membership Form to become a member.

It's FREE to join!!

As we will be arriving back home from some of the trips late at night and for safety reasons, we will be providing a drop off service in our Minibus to your home address.
This service is for Westminster members and local surrounding boroughs only

If you need any additional support in travelling to and from any of our sessions or cannot travel independently, please see a member of staff for further details on how we can support you.

North Paddington Youth Club is an inclusive Club, so all children and young people are welcome to participate in any of our sessions. If you require additional support to make this happen, please see a member of staff.

FREE FOOD SHOPPING ON WEDNESDAY 18th FEBRUARY. THIS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES TO TAKE HOME FROM 4pm – 6pm

City of Westminster · The Felix Project · Mayor's Fund for London · John Lyon's Charity · Feeding Britain