



YEW TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Yew Tree Times

Latest News

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## LA SEND Transformation Work...

If you have a child with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) then I am sure, at times, you have been frustrated with delays or limitations in the system when trying to secure the appropriate support for your child. Like parents/carers, we feel this too as professionals!

The Secretary of State for Education, Bridget Phillipson, has spoken very publicly about the challenges facing the SEND system across the country as the current model simply isn't working. I can also say, from first hand experience of having been headteacher in 3 different local authorities, that the challenges we face are not limited to Sandwell.

Whilst there is still a long way to go, and it will take some time before we feel the benefit, I am pleased that Sandwell LA have been doing a lot of work behind the scenes in the last 6 months or so to try and face these challenges head on. This includes work to improve communication & efficiency, to ensure sufficiency of spaces in special schools and to support mainstream schools in meeting the huge demand of need it has. We will update you as and when there are more specific changes to note.

Despite us being awarded a national Inclusion Award last summer, we are constantly evolving and developing our provision (e.g. The Tree House) to support our children. The LA are also doing the same and you can read more about our offer, and the LA's local offer, on our website [HERE](#).

*Mr Jamie Barry*



**Our attendance TARGET is 96%.**

*"Be in to win...!"*

This week, you will have received a mid-year report which includes your child's attendance.

However, please remember you can check their live attendance data at any point by clicking the Arbor logo.



### BEING A PARENT

We recognise and understand how tricky it can be being a parent/carer. Unfortunately, there is no manual or rule book which helps you navigate all the ups and downs of parenting.

However, please remember you have access to a wide range of services and organisations to help make this journey easier. We signpost to lots of services, from both within and outside of Sandwell, on our website [HERE](#).

We are fortunate, in Sandwell, to also have Sandwell Family Hubs which offers a range of activities, courses and support. The 'mobile library' visits us each month to help you access services more easily so do look out for the next date.

Sandwell Family Hubs have also created a guide to support parents/carers [HERE](#). Please get in touch if we can help in any other way.

### NURSERY ADMISSIONS 25/26

This is a final reminder that the deadline for applications for our Nursery class, to start in September 2025, is:

**FRIDAY 28<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY**

Please ensure your applications are with our office on time to have the best chance of securing a place.

### SAFER TRAVEL

Don't forget that Y5 or Y6 children, with [Safer Travel](#) consent, will be allowed to walk home after clubs (ending at 4.30pm) again from next half term.

This is because nights will get lighter as spring approaches. Please do talk to your child about going straight home if walking.

### STAFFING NEWS

We are sad that Ms Barnes will be leaving our lunchtime supervisor team just before Easter. However, we are delighted that we have appointed Ms Manola Wooldridge to join our team, as her replacement, in April.

Also, as we have communicated on Dojo, please note that our teaching assistant, Ms Lauren Read, will be known as Ms Higgins with immediate effect.

### HALF TERM COMMUNICATION

As we have half term next week, please note that staff will not be able to reply to Dojo messages. We shall be monitoring our office email address for any urgent messages.

However, as we have mentioned, please remember our website contains signposting to various services and organisations if needed.

### TERM TIME LEAVE REQUESTS

As you will be aware, in line with our [Attendance Policy](#) & national guidance, we can only authorise leave of absence from school where it meets the criteria for exceptional circumstances.

If you do need to request leave of absence for your child, please complete the correct form from the office (rather than send an email or Dojo).



### SANDWELL CHOICES

The Choices programme is aimed to help families make memories together. Healthy Sandwell, which runs the scheme, will support the whole family to create lifeline habits to live a happier life.

By booking activities, you can spend quality time with your children whilst discovering new activities and food.

The Choices programme is completely FREE to families (as your children go to a Sandwell school) and can be booked [HERE](#). If you have any questions then email [Choices\\_Sandwell@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:Choices_Sandwell@sandwell.gov.uk)

### INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SESSIONS

From the summer term, we are making changes to how we charge for instrumental provision (if your child has these lessons at our school).

Instead of charging parents/carers half termly in advance, we shall now be asking for **payments for the term in advance**.

We regret if this adds any pressure to families but, unfortunately, the current system has resulted in inconsistent groups and children 'dropping out' too frequently. This makes it much harder for the instrumental teachers when planning their sessions and ensuring progression for children.

DATE	EVENT	DATE	EVENT
13.02.25	Non-uniform day - £1 per child	06.03.25	Boys football match – 3.00pm
13.02.25	Break up for <b>HALF TERM</b>	07.03.25	Chit Chat session – 9.00am
14.02.25	School <b>CLOSED</b> – INSET DAY	10.03.25	DECCA assemblies – AM
24.02.25	Start of <b>SPRING 2</b>	10.03.25	Boys' football match (home)
25.02.25	Nursery dinosaur experience day	17.03.25	Girls' football match (home)
27.02.25	Young Voices concert – PM	20.03.25	Family Hubs bus on site – 3.30pm
28.02.25	Deadline for YN 25/26 applications	21.03.25	Comic Relief (Red Nose) day
03.03.24	Y4 air pollution workshops	21.03.25	Deadline for SUMMER club apps
05.03.25	Y1 class assemblies - PM	30.03.25	Mother's Day
06.03.25	World Book Day – come dressed up!	31.03.25	Girls' football match (home)
06.03.25	Theme Lunch Day – World Book Day	31.03.25	Annual voice surveys - OPEN