



John Blow Primary School

Weekly Bulletin

Friday 18th September 2026



Update to parents

Our Reading Journey

We are continuing to place reading at the heart of school life and are really pleased with the strong start we have made this year. In EYFS and KS1, children take part in daily phonics sessions using Little Wandle, developing their decoding skills, fluency and confidence as readers. In KS2, every child in Years 3–6 has a daily reading session, with a focus on developing fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and a deeper understanding of what they read. Every child is reading every day in school.

To support this, we ask that children read at home at least three times a week. We are currently trialling a bookmark system to record reading at home. Please record each reading session on your child's bookmark, as classes will be awarding Dojos for reading at home. We have deliberately moved away from reading journals during this period, as we did not feel that they were having the positive impact on reading that we wanted. We had received comments in the past suggesting that children had not been heard reading for long periods of time because there was no journal evidence. This is not the case in our school. Children are reading every day, and we want our teachers' time and energy to be focused on the teaching of reading, rather than on completing paperwork about it.

We have also introduced our new Friday Book Club, giving children an opportunity to simply enjoy books together. This was a real highlight for many children when we reflected on their first week of school during our mentoring sessions, and it has been fantastic to see children sharing stories, talking about books and enjoying reading with their friends. We have shared some photographs on our website so that you can see the Book Club in action!

Ultimately, it is all about developing a love of reading. We want children to become confident, fluent readers who read because they enjoy it, are curious about the world and want to discover what is inside the next book.

Meet Our School Council

A huge congratulations to our newly elected School Council!

EYFS	Finley & Eden
Y1	Elodie & Louie M
Y2	Tommy W & Lottie
Y3	Ellis W & Hallie
Y4	Arlo Goor, Hugo & Grace
Y5	Dahlia & Amilia
Chair	Lottie Y6
Vice	Imogen Y5

The children have been putting our British Value of democracy into action, with pupils having their say and choosing representatives for their classes. Our new councillors have already been busy making plans for the year ahead.

They have chosen to support the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance through a Help Heli – Wear Something Yellow Day on Friday 6th November. They are also planning a 'Be Kind' compliments initiative, a recycled-material Art Sculpture Competition from 21st January to 12th February, and a playground fundraiser on Friday 19th March. We are looking forward to seeing their ideas come to life!

Meet Our Reading Ambassadors

Congratulations also to our new Reading Ambassadors!

EYFS	Heath & Evie
Y1	Edward & Olivia
Y2	Theia & Logan
Y3	Josie, Izzie & Jak
Y4	Ellis, Eleanor & Robin K
Y5	Georgia, Emily & Imogen
Y6	Lottie

Our Reading Ambassadors will be helping us to celebrate and promote a love of reading across school. They have already got off to a fantastic start by stamping and delivering the new books from our Book Bus to their classes, making sure they are ready for everyone to enjoy.

We are looking forward to our ambassadors sharing recommendations, celebrating great books and helping to keep reading at the heart of school life throughout the year.

The Summer Reading Challenge at Collingham Library

A massive thank you and well done to everyone that took part in the Summer Reading Challenge at Collingham Library this summer. As well as taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge, many of you also played with the lego and games, took part in the treasure hunt and got creative with our crafts. We hope you had as much fun as we did!

Across our prize draws we have drawn 5 prize winners in total. For the John Blow Exclusive Prize Draw, we are pleased to announce that our winner is Florence S. Congratulations and well done to Florence! Next up is the October Half Term where we'll be sure to put on some spooky crafts and a Halloween Treasure Hunt, so keep an eye out for an announcement nearer the time!

From the staff and volunteers at Collingham Library

Birthday books - Help us grow our love of reading!

As part of our continued focus on developing a strong reading culture at John Blow, we are introducing a new, optional birthday tradition.

We know that children often like to bring sweets or a little treat into school to celebrate their birthday. From now on, we would love families to consider donating a book to their class library instead. This could be a favourite book your child has enjoyed, a new book, or simply a story that you think other children in the class would love.

We will provide each child with a special John Blow birthday book label to place inside the cover. Throughout the year, we will celebrate these books in class and share them with the children, creating a growing collection of stories and books chosen by our own school community.

We know that reading is about so much more than learning to read. Reading develops language, vocabulary, knowledge, imagination and children's ability to understand the world around them. Research from UCL has found that children who read regularly for pleasure make stronger progress in vocabulary and even mathematics, while the benefits of good reading habits can continue well into adulthood.

At a time when children's reading for pleasure remains a national concern, we want to make reading something that is visible, valued and genuinely enjoyed in our school.

We hope lots of families will get behind this simple idea. One birthday, one book, one more child discovering a story they might love. Together, we can build a school where books are everywhere and where children grow up knowing that reading is something to enjoy, not simply something we have to do.

Morning Drop-Off Reminder

A quick reminder that adults should not cross the green gates when dropping children off in the morning. This applies to both playgrounds.

We encourage the children to develop their independence by coming into school and settling themselves into the classroom, and this also helps us to maintain appropriate safeguarding procedures at the start of the school day.

Once the gates open at 8.40am, staff prioritise welcoming the children into their classrooms and helping them to settle ready for the day ahead.

If you need to speak to your child's class teacher, please do so **from 8.30am in the morning**, or contact them via email. This ensures that teachers are able to give you the time and attention needed without taking their focus away from the children.

Please remember, this only applies to morning drop-off.

School Census Day – Thursday 1 October

We need your help!

Thursday 1 October is School Census Day, and we are asking families of children in EYFS, KS1 and children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) to choose a school dinner on this day wherever possible.

We have three meal choices available each day, giving children plenty of choice and helping them to enjoy a school dinner that they will want to eat. Of course, children can still bring a packed lunch if they prefer, but ordering a school dinner on Census Day really does help our school.

The number of children taking school meals on Census Day is an important part of the information we submit, and this information contributes to future funding and financial planning for school. The more accurate our numbers are, the better we can plan and protect the funding available to support our children.

So, if your child is happy to have a school dinner, please order one for Thursday 1 October and help us on Census Day!

Please check your Arbor information

Please also take a moment to check that the information we hold on Arbor is accurate and up to date, particularly your contact details and information relating to Free School Meals/Pupil Premium eligibility.

If you think your child may be eligible for Free School Meals, please complete the Nottinghamshire County Council eligibility check. Registering for benefits-related FSM can also ensure that the school receives the additional funding it is entitled to.

Nottinghamshire County Council – Free School Meals and Pupil Premium check:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-meals/free-school-meals-and-milk>

Thank you for helping us make the most of the funding available to support our children.

A reminder about attendance

Attendance matters. Every day counts.

Regular attendance is essential to children's learning, progress and wellbeing. It is also an important part of how our school is judged by Ofsted. We cannot afford for attendance to slip. Poor attendance affects individual children and, when attendance is a wider concern, can have an impact on the school's overall effectiveness and inspection judgement.

We therefore expect children to be in school every day unless they are genuinely unwell or there is another exceptional reason for absence.

Term-time holidays will very rarely be authorised. This is in line with the direction from the Department for Education and the national attendance expectations. Where a term-time holiday does not meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances, it will not be authorised and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be requested.

We understand that family circumstances can sometimes be difficult. However, our responsibility is to ensure that every child receives the education they are entitled to and does not miss learning unnecessarily.

Please help us by prioritising school attendance. We cannot afford to let standards slip.

Dogs on the School Site – a reminder

To help keep our school site safe and welcoming for everyone, we ask parents and carers not to bring dogs onto the school premises, including at morning drop-off and afternoon collection times. This does not apply to assistance dogs.

We recognise that many families enjoy walking to school with their pets; however, some children may be frightened of dogs, and animals can present additional risks in a busy playground and around entrances where large numbers of children and families are gathering.

Allergy safety is also an important consideration. From September 2026, Benedict's Law has strengthened the responsibilities of schools in England to take a whole-school approach to allergy safety. Allergies are not limited to food, and national guidance highlights the need for schools to consider potential allergen exposure associated with animals.

We therefore ask that dogs are kept off the school site and away from busy entrance and exit points wherever possible. Please also do not leave dogs tied immediately outside school gates, where they may restrict access or come into close contact with children.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe, inclusive environment for all of our pupils.

Look at what we have been up to in school:

Follow this link to see what we have been up to across school following a wonderful start to the 2026-2027 academic year!

<https://www.johnblowprimaryschool.co.uk/gallery/?pid=46&gcatid=73&albumid=280>

Class pages

We are starting to populate class pages with photographs – keep checking in for updates!

<https://www.johnblowprimaryschool.co.uk/page/?title=Class+Pages&pid=45&action=saved>

Above and Beyond

Each week we celebrate children who go Above and Beyond in their learning or actions around school, this week we were pleased to celebrate with the following children:

Our focus value this week was: *We show respect*

EYFS	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Zachary Sam X 2 Joseph Heath Finley	Daisy Lachlan Henry Elodie Ethan	Eliza Finn Logan Jack	Harvey Charlotte Rowan-John Annabel Artie	Ellis Grace Harry T Robyn	Gabriel Stanley Zachary Greta Michael	Iris H Heidi James

John the Bear!



This week, Finley B has been selected from the box of nominees to look after John for the week!



Key dates and upcoming events

Autumn Term 1 – 2026-2027 Bulletin Dates

w/c Monday 21st September

Monday 21st September

- Year 5 Viking experience day
- No mentoring due to Viking day
- 8.50am, EYFS phonics drop-in session in hall

Tuesday 22nd September

- Assembly – Taking responsibility for our choices / actions, BC

Wednesday 23rd September

- Assembly – British Values, Rule of Law & Fairness, KTB

Thursday 24th September

- Assembly – Share a Story, EM

Friday 25th September

- Assembly – Above & Beyond, Responsibility Awards, BC

w/c Monday 28th September

Mentoring – British Values

Monday 28th September

- Mentoring

Tuesday 29th September

- Assembly – Perseverance, keep improving, ER

Wednesday 30th September

- Assembly – British Values, Individual Liberty, expression & choice, BC

Thursday 1st October

- Assembly – National Poetry Day, BB
- National Poetry Day

Friday 2nd October

- Assembly – Above & Beyond, Perseverance Awards, BC
- World Smile Day

w/c Monday 5th October

Mentoring – Protected Characteristics

Monday 5th October

- Mentoring

Tuesday 6th October

- Assembly – Teamwork, TS
- LKS2 Trip to Magna

Wednesday 7th October

- Assembly – World Mental Health Day (10th October), BC
- 3.30 – 4.15pm, Start of Choir Club, Lucy Reid

Thursday 8th October

- **AUTUMN CENSUS DAY**
- Assembly – Share a Story, EH
- Whole School Dance Workshop

Friday 9th October

- Assembly – Above & Beyond, Teamwork Awards, BC
- KS2 Netball Competition

w/c Monday 12th October

Mentoring – Protected Characteristics

Monday 12th October

- Mentoring

Tuesday 13th October

- Assembly – British Values, Respect & SEND, EH

Wednesday 14th October

- Assembly – A reflection of this half-term, BC
- Y2 Trip to Yorkshire Wildlife Park

Thursday 15th October

- Merit Assembly (invitation only)
- Wear What Makes You Feel Wonderful Day
- FOJBP Disco

Friday 16th October

BBC Concert Orchestra performing in school (children only)

3.30pm – End of Autumn Term 1