

Spring Term Newsletter 2

March 2026



**BROOKTHORPE
HALL SCHOOL**

Message from the Headteacher

Following such a busy term, I would like to apologise for the slight delay in producing our newsletter for Term 4. Nevertheless, I want to take this opportunity to share a host of activities and special events that positively contribute to our wider curriculum which brings great depth and experiential learning for all of our pupils.

World Book Day: 5th March

The whole school celebrated world book day by dressing as their favourite characters and lower phase pupils enjoyed creating bookmarks, clay book corners, masks and book covers. I had the great pleasure of not only judging the potato head competition but also who was caught reading in the most unusual and surprising places. Congratulations to Jenson, Poppy and James for their photos of them reading in the most unusual places and to Kitty, Will and Noah for their wonderful potato head creations! Thank you to our English Lead, Louise Taylor, for leading and organising another successful world book day event.



Incredible Futures Event: 13th March

Brookthorpe Hall also held our inaugural Incredible Futures Event where local post-16 providers and local organisations set up stalls to provide pupils with vital information about what their future next steps could look like. It was also a pleasure to welcome pupils from our sister school, Bankside School, to this event. I would like to thank our Careers Lead, Emma Watkins, for organising and leading this extremely successful event.

PSHE and Wellbeing

Pupils and staff have enjoyed celebrating Eid al-Fitr and the Chinese or Lunar New year. Celebrations included sampling a range of different cuisine and broadening our understanding of different cultures and beliefs to our own.

Our PSHE Lead, Emma Prendergast, also organised a wellbeing day for pupils and staff. During this day all pupils engaged with a variety of wellbeing activities which included paint decorating and even yoga!



Jon Bell (Headteacher)

World Book Day



World Book Day at Brookthorpe Hall School was another big success. Students came together in the hall to participate in a range of activities designed to embrace the love of reading. It was fantastic to see them enjoying our new selection of reading books in our 'Reading Nook' and making bookmarks, masks and getting creative with modelling clay. Students embraced the 'Dress a Potato' competition, and we saw some amazing book character creations. It was tough to judge but the winners were Mog the Forgetful Cat, Dragon Fruit and Mr Darcy himself! We hope to continue this focus on reading with more activities throughout the year, as we celebrate the National Year of Reading





We have had another brilliant term in Acorn's class. We have enjoyed being historians looking at toys from the past and present, as well as artists exploring different mediums.



In English this term we have implemented Colourful Semantics to help us write complete sentences. So far, we have been working on including a who and what doing into our sentences. Acorns class have explored a few different texts in English this term, but *Where's My Teddy* by Jez Alborough stuck out as a favourite. We especially enjoyed designing and making our own teddies out of felt.



Our maths this term has been varied across the class. Some of us have worked extremely hard picking up new methods for addition, subtraction or multiplication. While some of us have been sharing our knowledge of shape.





Acorns class have also enjoyed all the different celebrations this term, including...

Chinese New Year,



World Book Day,



and Careers Week!



We look forward to seeing Acorns class back after the half term to start enjoying our new topic Wonderful Weather!

Beth (Acorn Class Teacher)
Monali, Emma, Jamie and Erin(LSAs)

Larch Class



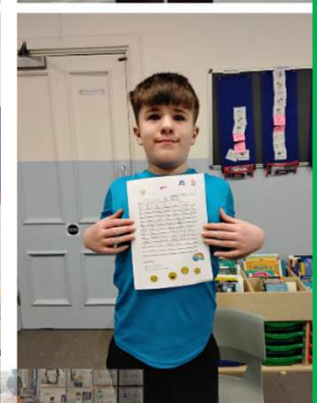
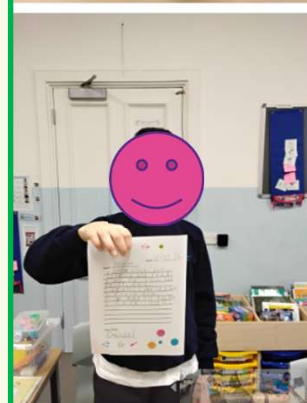
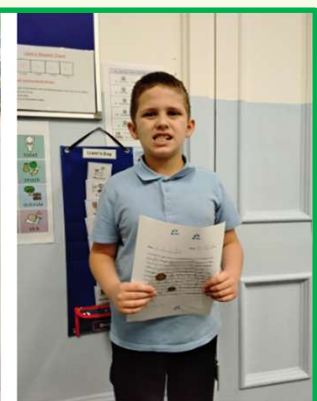
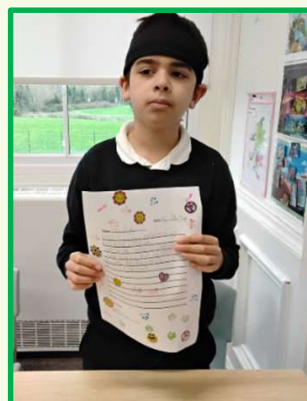
As Spring started to spring, Larch Class kept busy learning about Skeletons and The Stone Age. We made human skeletons out of salt dough and learned that some funny bone names. We made caves from clay for our mini cave people to hide inside.



We've been working really hard in Maths completing some Independent Learning, Learning with Laura and a Tuff Tray task each lesson. Tuff Tray activities have included, building 3D shapes, measuring objects, building whole circles to explore fractions, and of course some Easter themed trays; building a bunny and Easter egg grid references.

During our English lessons we've been reading *The Uncorker of Ocean Bottles*, we thought about the job of an Uncorker as part of Careers Week, learned what the key words mean and practised answering 'Wh' questions about the story.

On top of all that, we've written a letter of kindness to celebrate PSHE day, made chapatis and learned about Eid, we've also been writing words in Playdoh and writing words on small stickers to practise our neatest handwriting!





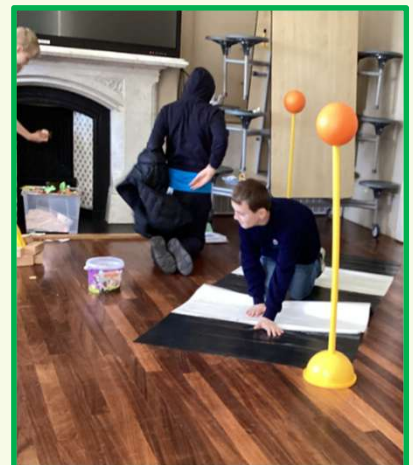
This term, the children have been engaged in a range of exciting learning experiences across the curriculum.

In **English**, we have been using the text *The Hodgehog* to inspire our writing. The children have worked hard to create their own non-chronological reports, developing their ability to organise information and present facts clearly.

We were also fortunate to welcome volunteers from Wildhogs Hedgehog Rescue, who provided a fascinating insight into how to care for hedgehogs. This real-life experience helped deepen the children's understanding and enthusiasm for the topic.

In **Geography**, the children have been learning about different biomes around the world. They now have a better understanding of how climate and environment shape these regions and the living things within them.

In **Science**, we have been exploring human and animal skeletons. The children have learnt about the structure of skeletons and their importance in supporting movement and protecting vital organs. Overall, it was a term full of curiosity and learning





In English we studied “The Hedgehog”. We learnt that hedgehogs are nocturnal and that they eat all different types of insects and berries. Pupils worked hard on sequencing the main events in the story and describing different characters within the book. Thanks to Jenna for organising a great talk from “Wild Hogs”. This gave everyone a great insight into the life and times of hedgehogs.

In maths we have been learning about number combinations to 10. We have also started a daily arithmetic challenge which gives pupils the opportunity practice their number operation skills. Excitingly, we have lots of new maths resources which are helping us to have more practical lessons which are based on real life learning challenges.

Palm class enjoyed the wonderful PSHE and mindfulness day. It allowed everyone to take some time to relax and re focus. Palm pupils enjoyed doing yoga with Jurell. They also enjoyed the plate painting activity. At the end of the session both Robbie and Abi had the confidence to go and thank our visitor.



During February, we all took measures to keep ourselves safe. We watched a range of videos about washing our hands for 20 seconds. We practiced washing our hands as part of the lesson. We used warm water and nice smelling bubbles which added to the fun aspect.

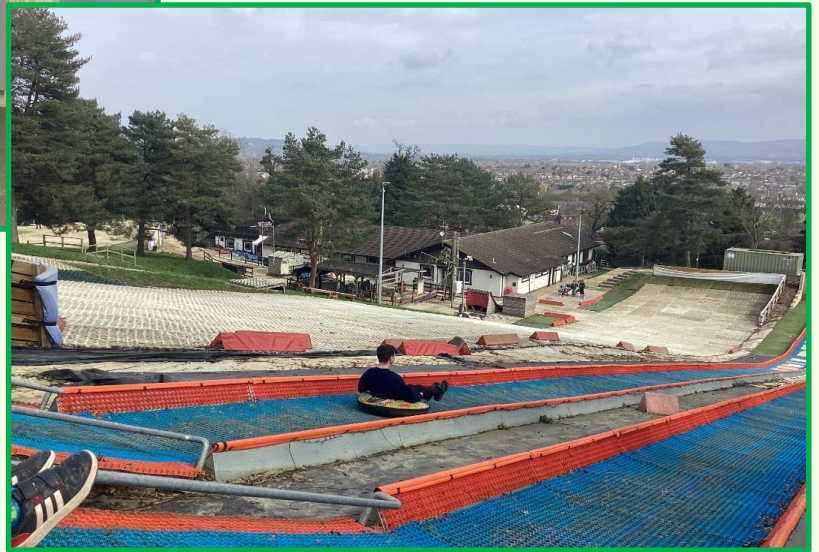
We have resources to set up a learning lab which will support the handwriting programme. The resources will be fun to use but they will help us to develop our careful hand movements and to develop fine strength and muscle control.

Pine Class



Pine Team did us proud for the Easter egg design competition with Robyn getting 1st place for the staff entry, Noah received 2nd place, and Odin received 3rd place for their amazing designs. Well done, Pine team!!!

The students had an amazing Outdoor Education reward trip to the Ski Centre, where the students had the opportunity to work on their social skills, and test their nerve as they went down a very steep slope on their tubes. They had great fun.



The students enjoyed an enriching few weeks, celebrating Eid with our staff members, attending the school disco and dancing until it was time for lunch, playing news sports with Jurell in PE and learning about money by playing some extremely competitive games of Monopoly.

This term we will continue with our English class reader, *Podkin One Ear* and we will be introducing our new Independent Living Skills curriculum which all of Pine class will enjoy.

Yew Class

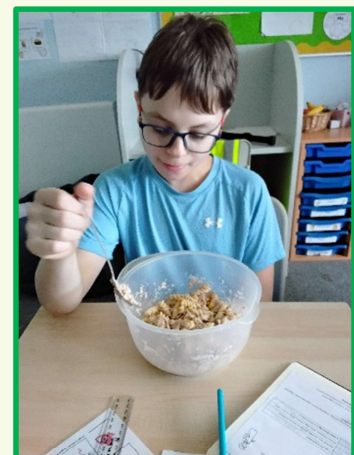


Yet another very busy and fun-packed term for Yew class! Back in March, we had World Book Day when we had a fabulous time decorating our potatoes, making character masks, following live author and illustrator lessons and sharing stories from books we like!



We also used our observational skills to look at flowers, and how they are made up of different shapes and colours. We used our learning to create flowers from paper, then to print cherry blossom using recycled materials.

In our Careers lessons we have been thinking about independent living skills, so during our cooking sessions, we designed and made our own international salads, using ingredients such as pasta, noodles, tuna, peppers and even soy sauce! We tasted and evaluated each one – they were delicious! We even washed and tidied up our equipment afterwards!



Upper Phase Maths & Science



Maths

This term has been another successful one at Brookthorpe Hall, students have made excellent progress in their maths mastery skills and the enthusiasm to learn continues to go from strength to strength. In maths this term, we have continued to focus on the Functional Skills Maths pathway with students across upper phase sitting and passing Entry Level 1, Entry Level 2 and Entry Level 3. Currently the school has a 100% pass rate at Entry Level 1, 92% pass rate at Entry Level 2 and 100% pass rate at Entry Level 3.

Students have spent this term reinforcing their non-calculator processes of the 4 operations, building knowledge of rounding, and estimating and solving problems involving fractions and shape. Moving onto next term students will continue to move through the curriculum, and we hope to enter more students for their next Functional Skills exam. We spent careers week exploring careers in maths and what qualifications are required to pursue a career in maths, students also focused on everyday life experiences like budgeting and mortgages.



Science

In science this term we have put a focus on experiments and learning science through practical. Upper phase students this term have made lava lamps, diffusion of skittles in water, understanding polymers through putting pencils through a bag of water and how heat can change the structure of glass. We also explored careers in science and what students need to pursue these careers.

Russell – (Head of Maths/Science)

Carina, Michaela, Sue, Cat, Claire and Leanne (Learning Support Assistants)

Upper Phase Wider Curriculum



COOKING

In cooking, we have been embedding independent living skills by tasking the students to decide on a meal they wanted to make. They then wrote a list of ingredients and researched a recipe. They were able to then take this list of ingredients to Stroud Tesco and navigate through the store buying what they needed. Each student had a budget of £10 so had to choose the most cost-efficient ingredients. When they had finished, we used the self-scanning tills which they all had a go at and enjoyed. We then went back to school, and they were able to make their food in the kitchen, following their recipe and eat it for lunch.



ART

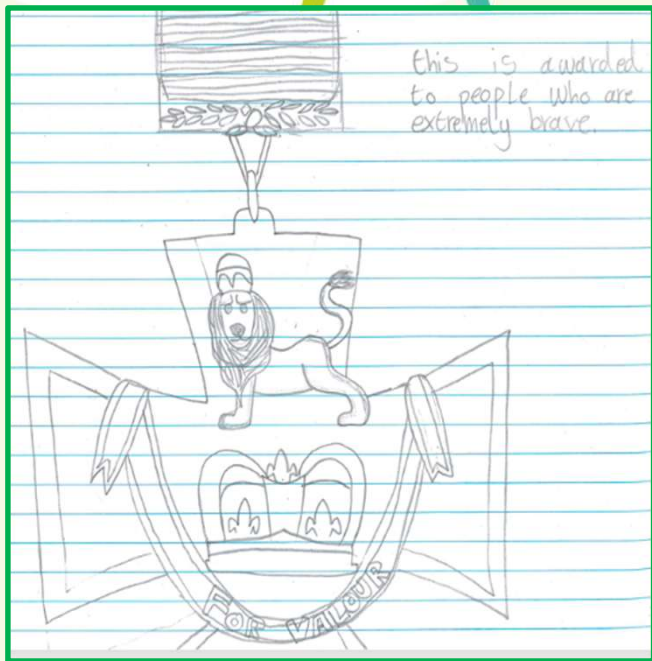
In Art, the students were learning about shading and depth in pictures. We celebrated Eid in Art classes, in which we made colourful decorations using paint, glue, colours. They also started to look at balance in pictures and why this is pleasing to the viewer. They were able to build their own structures of 3D physical Art showing balance in their composition.

Upper Phase Wider Curriculum



HUMANITIES

The students have continued with History this half term in Humanities, following on from looking at the First World War they started to learn about the second world war. They tied this in with citizenship and independent living topics by researching and learning about the impact on the wider community during the War and the ways in which people were able to help with the war effort. They also were able to look at some specific life stories of people who won The Victoria Cross medal.



Computing Update

In computing this term we have been focusing on data in both our upper and lower phase. Lower phase have been predominantly looking at how we can identify characteristics and features, before sorting and grouping these pieces of data into different categories. This has involved looking at objects we encounter daily, but also there has been scope to venture into the interests of our pupils exploring the features of characters in some of their favourite games such as Minecraft.

Our upper phase have also been looking at data, however they have been looking at how data can be inputted and formulated within Microsoft Excel, learning and utilising formulae within different contexts. Starting off with creating their own 'calculator' able to answer questions regarding a times table of their choosing, getting to the point this could be applied practically in a scenario that they worked in a bakery, and had to use the spreadsheet to calculate the amounts of ingredients needed to make half, double, and triple batches of various sweet treats!

PSHE Update

Last term was a busy term for PSHE. We had fun celebrating Eid and also held a PSHE day, about Mindfulness and Wellbeing.

Students were able to take part in a number of different activities, including yoga, letter writing and creative expression. Students also took part in a pottery painting workshop which they all thoroughly enjoyed. Each student was able to take their painted plate home.

During the celebration of Eid, some classes made chapatis, an Asian tradition, in their classrooms, which was great fun.

As part of our termly topic, which was Independent Living Skills, Upper Phase students obtained an AQA Unit Award Scheme qualification in Basic Cookery Skills, which involved planning three meals, organising their ingredients, making the bake, as well as learning about kitchen healthy and safety / hygiene.

Lower Phase focused on the importance of having daily routines and what that looks like, both morning and night. Some students also obtained AQA Unit Award Scheme qualifications in Basic Computing Skills, which involved online grocery shopping, planning a route and writing an email.

This term, we are focusing on Self Care, which will include learning about dental health, nutrition and the importance of sleep / physical exercise.



Physical Education Update

This term in PE has been full of energy and enthusiasm across the lessons as we have explored different skills that are required when playing rugby.

In the Lower Phase, pupils have been enjoying learning and playing tag rugby. They have been developing key skills such as passing, evasion, decision making, and teamwork, while also building their understanding of the main rules of the game. It has been fantastic to see their confidence grow as they work together as well as communicating effectively.



Meanwhile, the Upper Phase have been focusing on fitness testing linked to the different components of fitness. Pupils have taken part in a range of activities designed to measure areas such as speed, power, endurance, flexibility, co-ordination and agility. We have made sure to record results with the aim to retest in a new term.

Well done to all pupils for their hard work and positive attitudes in PE!

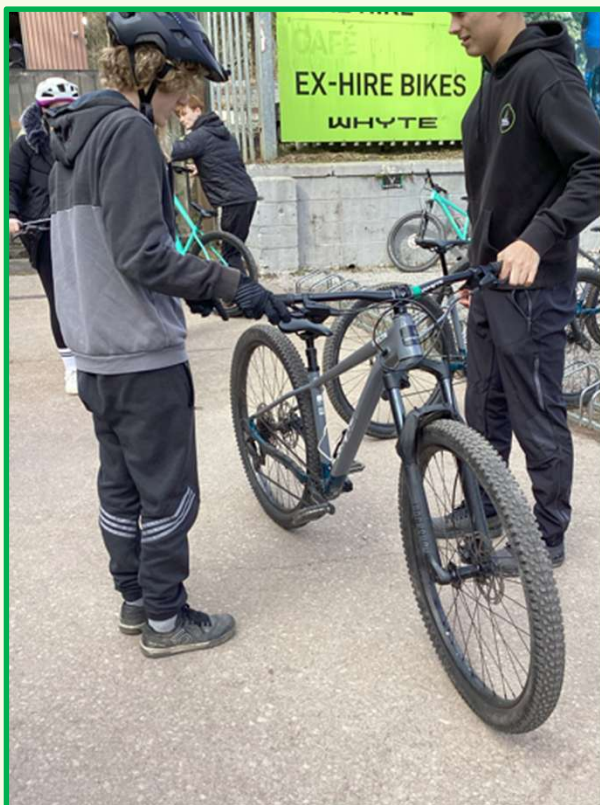
Outdoor Education

It was a short half-term but we packed a lot in at the Wilderness Centre and beyond...

Lower Phase were focusing on their Wild Passports, in particular going out on various nature walks and identifying all the signs of Spring - I'm very sorry if the students are coming home smelling of garlic, there's a lot of wild garlic at the Wilderness Centre! The term finished with Easter Egg hunts and a brilliant trip to Gloucester Ski Slope where we had loads of fun whizzing down the hill in the inflatable tubes!

Upper Phase focused on more navigation skills including mapwork and using a compass, but we have also been looking at route-planning, risk assessing, and making a kit list. We've done some brilliant walks throughout the Forest of Dean and some of the students think they're ready to head out totally unsupervised... Bodes well for DofE expeditions! The Upper Phase reward trip was a day's mountain biking at the Forest of Dean Cycle Centre and both groups did superbly well! Cedar and Elm class in particular smashed it and went down Green, Blue and even a Red trail!

Well done everyone for your efforts, as always thank you to the LSAs for their support and to parents for making sure that students arrive with sensible clothing. As we head into the warmer months can I please ask that students are bringing water bottles, sun cream and hayfever medication should they need it!



Careers Education

We held our first Careers week this term, where we had employers come in to talk to our students about their jobs, they spoke about being self-employed, qualifications and their career paths. We had an Occupational Therapist, Removals Company, The Army and the local Community Police. Students had the opportunity to listen and ask questions.

Our first Incredible Futures Event was a great success with all students having the opportunity to take part and pose questions to the colleges and Post 16 Providers that attended, students were able to take away literature about courses that were available and talk to employers. The free gifts that were handed out were a big hit. It was great to see parents and carers at the event, and we are hoping to build on the event for next year and continue to give students the opportunity to visit local colleges and employers throughout the rest of the school year.

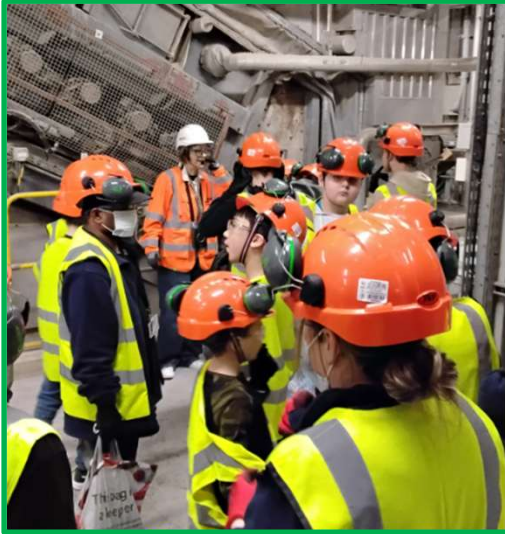


We had our second visit to the HALT Project at Cheltenham Animal Rescue Centre, where students learnt about how to look after cats and dogs, the rabbits and feed them. Pickles the rabbit was a favourite and so was Yoda the French Bull Dog. We are hoping to continue working with them to provide more students with an opportunity of working with animals.



Careers Education

Our big visit was to the Local Recycling Centre just off the M5. Lower Phase students learnt about recycling and had a tour of the facility. PPE was worn, they enjoyed the visit , although not the smell!



Horse Riding continues to be a favourite, and our Wednesday group have been working through their AQA Award regarding Horse Care. The Friday group are enjoying learning to groom the horses and enjoy playing with the dogs and cats. It is good to see their riding skills progressing.

The Incredible Futures Careers Curriculum is going well with many students achieving their AQA Awards. Oak Class's Eddie and Oliver have completed Module 1 'Self Awareness' and will be starting Module 2 ' Making Informed Career Choices'. Pine's Archie and James have completed Module 3 'Why Work' and will now start Independent living skills starting with Travel Training.

Lower Phase students will begin Independent Living Skills this term , starting with learning to use a washing machine, how to dry clothes and kitchen cleaning skills. This will also be rolled out to Upper Phase students along with Travel Training next term.

British Microlight Aircraft Association National Youth Week



Severn Valley Microlight Club hosted a Youth Day on Saturday 18th at Over Farm, Gloucester.

The BMAA Focus is to encourage young people into Aviation, you can learn to fly a Microlight at 14 Years, fly solo at 16.

Pilots flew in from over the Southwest and took budding pilots and parents for flights. Talks by Airbus and Saffron regarding apprenticeships.

Of course we had Emma Watkins and Jim Lane who supported the weekend with a Cheeky flight or two.

Zeph went with Reece Keene in his fixed wing Microlight.



Clinical Update



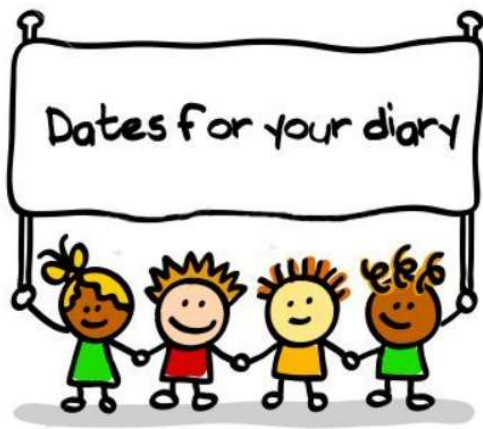
This term we are looking forward to our new Occupational Therapist joining the team - Josie. Her first day at Brookthorpe is 30th April 2026.

We have been trialling new games during quiet lunch. Our current favourite is 'The Sock Game'. This game can be made at home and works on the following skills; turn taking, tactile discrimination, expressive language, manual dexterity.



Please contact
therapy.team@brookthorpehallschool.co.uk
if you would like suggestions that are
tailored for your child.





Term Dates 25/26

Term 1: Mon 1st Sept – Fri 24th Oct 2025

Term 2: Mon 3rd Nov – Fri 19th Dec 2025

Term 3: Mon 5th Jan - Fri 13th Feb 2026

Term 4: Mon 23rd Feb – Fri 22nd March 2026

Term 5: Mon 13th April – Fri 22nd May 2026

Term 6: Mon 1st June – Mon 20th July 2026

Remaining INSET Days 25/26

- Monday 1st September 2025
- Monday 20th July 2026

Term Dates: 26/27

Term 1: Tuesday 1st Sept – Fri 23rd Oct 2026

Term 2: Mon 2nd Nov – Fri 18th Dec 2026

Term 3: Mon 4th Jan – Fri 12th Feb 2027

Term 4: Mon 22nd Feb – Thurs 25th March 2027

Term 5: Mon 12th April - Fri 28th May 2027

Term 6: Mon 7th June – Wed 21st July 2027

INSET Days 26/27

Tues 1st Sept 2026

Mon 4th Jan 2027

Mon 19th July 2027

Tues 20th July 2027

Wed 21st July 2027



BROOKTHORPE HALL SCHOOL



Contact Details

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