



# NEWS & VIEWS

Achievement &amp; Enjoyment

Headteacher Mr S Bowsher



## Mr Bowsher's Headteacher Comment:

It has been a brilliantly festive week at Larchwood, with lots of learning and celebrations taking place across the school. The atmosphere has been full of excitement and joy, and it has been wonderful to see the children so engaged in the festivities. One of the highlights for Mrs Jaycock and I was our pupil panels where we spoke to children from Year 1 to 6 about reading. They were all so passionate.

Another highlight were our two sing-a-longs for children from Year 2 through to Year 6. These events were a real pleasure to share with families, and it was lovely to see so many of you joining us. We even had members of the public stopping at the gate to listen and enjoy the festive songs, which created a truly community feel. Thank you also for your generosity with the cover design donations and our collection – together we raised a fantastic £180 for Crisis.

Wednesday truly felt like “Christmas at Larchwood”. The school was filled with colour and sparkle as children proudly wore their Christmas jumpers, and there were plenty of smiling faces throughout the day. Christmas dinner was once again delicious and very much enjoyed. In the words of one Year 1 child, it was “the best school dinner ever”! The day ended on a high with our three Christmas discos, which were full of energy, dancing and festive fun. Thank you to the LPPA for all the help with these events.

Yesterday brought yet another exciting treat, as Don Rae visited to perform his Christmas pantomime, with help from our talented Year 5 pupils. As you can imagine, it was hugely entertaining, packed with wonderfully bad jokes, brilliant acting and enthusiastic singing. It was a fantastic end to a memorable festive week at Larchwood.

We have a number of exciting things happening in the new year and many of these are on the Diary Dates below. I am particularly looking forward to the ‘come dine with me events’ that we have scheduled where you will be able to come in and have lunch with your child.

On the last page there are flyers for the Essex Libraries Winter Reading Challenge. Any child who completes this and brings the certificate to show me will receive a Headteacher’s Award. There is also a flyer from the Essex mental health team about some very useful webinars for parents.

We will also be hosting Clare Baker who is the new Healthy Family Support Practitioner and has worked in the Brentwood area for 5 years. She works for the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service and will be offering a parent support drop in at Larchwood on 8<sup>th</sup> of January at 9am.

She is able to offer advice/signposting on a wide variety of areas to support your child, such as signposting for SEND support and Social Emotional Mental Health Needs as well as other areas of support you may need or questions you may have.

All that remains is for me to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Enjoy your time off whatever you are doing, keep reading and we will see you back in school at 08.30 on Tuesday 6 January.



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## Pickleball Event

On Friday 12th December, Chris from Education Group delivered engaging 45-minute pickleball sessions for each Years 3, 4 and 5 class. Pupils learned about pickleball's origins in the USA, its rapid growth, and how UK participation compares. Sessions focused on safety, equipment and core skills, with an emphasis on **CONTROL**. Activities progressed from rolling the ball, to controlled racquet work, rallying, and team-based drills developing teamwork and communication. Many pupils achieved rallies of over 100 hits. The sessions finished with fun team challenges, showcasing excellent skill, enthusiasm and learning. We look forward to playing in the playground at lunchtime next Year.

## Reception Applications for September 2026

Just a reminder, the closing date for applications for children starting school in September 2026 via the Essex website is 15 January 2026 and can be done [here](#).



## Mr Bowsher's Superstar Award

George in 3LM for his determination, positivity and demonstrating all of our school values.



## Stars of the Week

RA	RE	1B	1G	2C	2P	3LM
Archil	Florrie	Amara	Matas	Jessica	Ryan	Leon
3T	4CH	4J	5L	5P	6H	6R
Hamdaan	Harrison	Freya	Daniel	Freya	Betsy	Joshua



## Reading at Home

Well done all the 4 and 5 times readers. Keep it up over the Christmas break.

Class	Table shows numbers of children and percentages who read from <b>Monday 15 December to Friday 19 December</b>			Percentage Read 4 & 5 times %
	Less than 4	4	5	
RA	6 (28%)	5 (20%)	13 (52%)	18 (72%)
RE	5 (20%)	4 (16%)	16 (64%)	20 (80%)
1B	6 (21%)	7 (24%)	16 (79%)	23 (79%)
1G	5 (17%)	9 (31%)	15 (52%)	24 (83%)
2C	5 (17%)	3 (10%)	21 (73%)	24 (83%)
2P	8 (30%)	6 (22%)	13 (48%)	19 (70%)
3LM	8 (26%)	5 (17%)	17 (57%)	22 (74%)
3T	8 (27%)	6 (20%)	16 (53%)	22 (73%)
4CH	6 (22%)	7 (26%)	16 (52%)	23 (78%)
4J	0 (0%)	5 (16%)	26 (84%)	31 (100%)
5L	0 (0%)	4 (15%)	23 (85%)	27 (100%)
5P	0 (0%)	11 (38%)	18 (62%)	29 (100%)
6R	3 (10%)	4 (13%)	23 (77%)	27 (90%)
6H	2 (7%)	5 (18%)	21 (75%)	26 (93%)
Total				83.9%



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# Diary Dates

Friday 19 December	Break up
Monday 5 January	Staff training day / non-pupil day
Tuesday 6 January	Pupils return to school
Thursday 8 January	Healthy Family Support Drop in 09.00
Thursday 15 January	Early Years writing workshop for parents 14.30
Friday 23 January	Digital Leaders trip to BETT exhibition
Tuesday 27 January	Tag Rugby tournament
Tuesday 6 February	Don Rae Chinese New Year - Year 1 and 2
Wednesday 11 February	Year 6 trip to St Martins to watch 'We Will Rock You'
Wednesday 11 February	Parent Consultations 15.30 – 18.00
Thursday 12 February	Parent Consultations 16.30 – 19.00
Friday 13 February	Break up for half term
Tuesday 24 February	Choir to the O2 for Young Voices
Tuesday 3 March	Year 1 'come-dine with me' (tbc)
Friday 6 March	Larchwood World Book Day
Friday 27 March	Break up for Easter



# Weekly Attendance

## Weekly Attendance – week commencing Monday 15 December 2025

Class	RA	RE	1B	1G	2C	2P	3LM	Whole school
Attendance	99.6%	89.3%	94.7%	94.7%	97.6%	93.0%	97.7%	
Class	3T	4CH	4J	5L	5P	6H	6R	95.3%
Attendance	99.6%	95.6%	98.4%	91.7%	97.3%	95.5%	99.0%	

1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
3T	6R	4J



# Yearly Attendance

## Yearly Attendance – from 1 September 2025

Class	RA	RE	1B	1G	2C	2P	3LM	Whole school
Attendance	93.9%	92.5%	97.1%	96.4%	98.0%	94.8%	96.1%	
Class	3T	4CH	4J	5L	5P	6H	6R	95.6%
Attendance	96.8%	95.2%	96.0%	96.6%	96.2%	93.0%	96.7%	

1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2C	1B	6R



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Essex County Council Libraries

10 January to 22 February 2026

**Winter Reading Challenge**

Children across Essex are being challenged to read and get creative at their local library this winter!

Explore our Pawfessionals' amazing careers as you progress through the challenge.

Choose from twelve fun activities to complete. For each one, you'll get a sticker! Complete six, and you'll receive a certificate and get to enter our prize draw for the chance to win some incredible goodies!

Plus, you can join in with themed events and activities at the library!



Find out more about how to take part in this free activity on our website: [libraries.essex.gov.uk](http://libraries.essex.gov.uk)



**Click Here**  
OR USE THE QR CODE BELOW TO SIGN UP AND FIND OUT MORE

**FREE PARENT WEBINARS**

supporting your primary aged child with mental health and wellbeing  
Provided by Essex Mental Health Support Team  
[esst.comhft.nhs](http://esst.comhft.nhs)

Do you need help supporting your child?  
We offer a variety of online workshops.

Coming up in January, we have:

- Helping Your Child with Fears & Worries 7th January 10am
- Practical Tools to Support Your Child's Sleep 12th January 10am
- Understanding Anxiety & Emotional Based School Avoidance in Primary School 20th January 6.30pm



