BRAYS SCHOOL
FAMILY NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN TERM 1, 2026

Welcome to our latest edition of the Brays School Family Newsletter.

A NOTE FROM KARI, EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

What a fantastic first half of the Autumn Term it has been at Brays. As a school community, we have truly embodied the FET value of 'working together with purpose' as we have adapted to our new leadership model. Change on this scale is never easy, and I would like to sincerely thank our pupils, families and staff for their patience, support and commitment throughout this period. Following a significant number of leavers in Summer 2026 and the arrival of many new colleagues this term, over a fifth of our school community has changed. Despite this I could not be prouder of how everyone has come together.

This half term has also been an opportunity to celebrate the FET value of 'nurturing potential'. I am delighted to congratulate **Julia, Faz, Salma, Jenny and Hayley** on their well-deserved promotions. We have also been pleased to welcome **Fatima** and **Nargis** as Lunchtime Supervisors, alongside **Jose, Faizah and Zofia,** who have joined us as Teaching Assistants. While we still have vacancies for two full-time Teaching Assistants, Lunchtime and Personal Care Assistants, and a term-time part-time Administrator role to be advertised soon, I am incredibly proud of the dedication, resilience and positivity shown by our entire team.

I hope you enjoy reading all about how we have continued to maintain our high aspirations and here's so a super Autumn 2.

Best wishes,

Kari

A NOTE FROM JULIA, HEAD OF SCHOOL

I am incredibly proud and privileged to be the Head of School at Brays. At the heart of everything we do are our Brays values and that **#BraysBelonging where everyone TREKS together #teamwork #respect #equality #kindness #safety** is not just something we talk about, but something that is experienced every day by our children, families, staff and multi-agency partners.

Together, we can continue to build a school community where everyone feels they belong, are valued for who they are, and are supported to flourish.

Kind regards,

Julia

MP JESS PHILIPS VISITS BRAYS

We were delighted to welcome our local MP, Jess Phillips, to Brays School to see the fantastic work that Cheeky Cheetahs have been doing with School Food Matters.

Jess got stuck in alongside the children, helping to plant new seeds and learning more about their growing project. Over the summer, Brays pupils successfully grew their own produce, which they then sold at the Farmers' Market.

The visit was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the children's hard work, enthusiasm, and growing knowledge of healthy food and sustainability. Well done to everyone involved!



FOND FAREWELLS TO NURSE JO

Last term we said a big thank you and good luck to our school nurse, Jo, as she begins an exciting new role.

Jo has been a huge part of the Brays community, supporting our children, families and staff with kindness, care and dedication. We are incredibly grateful for everything she has done and know she will be amazing in her new position.

We will miss you, Jo, and wish you every success and happiness for the future! #braysbelonging



PHYSIOTHERAPY DAY

On 8th September we celebrated the Brays Physiotherapy Team: Anshu, Steph, Jude and Sajida as part of World Physiotherapy Day 2026. At the beginning of a school year with over 20 new pupils their first half term has been busy. Brilliant #teamwork making sure that our children were #safe to be in school with the right equipment.

World
Physiotherapy Day
8 September 2026



A WONDERFUL ROALD DAHL DAY!

As part of our Year of Reading celebrations, we enjoyed a fantastic Roald Dahl Day, with staff and pupils dressing up as their favourite Roald Dahl characters.

Throughout the day, children explored *The BFG, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *James and the Giant Peach.* Cheetahs visited Giant Country and tasted snozzcumbers and frobscottle, Cubs explored a giant dream catcher, Jellyfish, Worms, Turtles and Bees enjoyed fizzy burp drinks and made chocolate treats and sweets, while Swifts explored crystals, insects and peaches inspired by *James and the Giant Peach.*

There was lots of excitement across the school as the children fully immersed themselves in the stories through sensory exploration, creativity and play. We had a truly wonderful day celebrating reading together and sharing the magic of Roald Dahl's stories.







ABM CATERING AND IDSSI LEVELS

We are very excited to share that ABM are now providing healthy meals for the pupils. No matter which IDSSI level your child is on, they can enjoy a delicious, balanced meal that has been prepared to meet their individual needs.

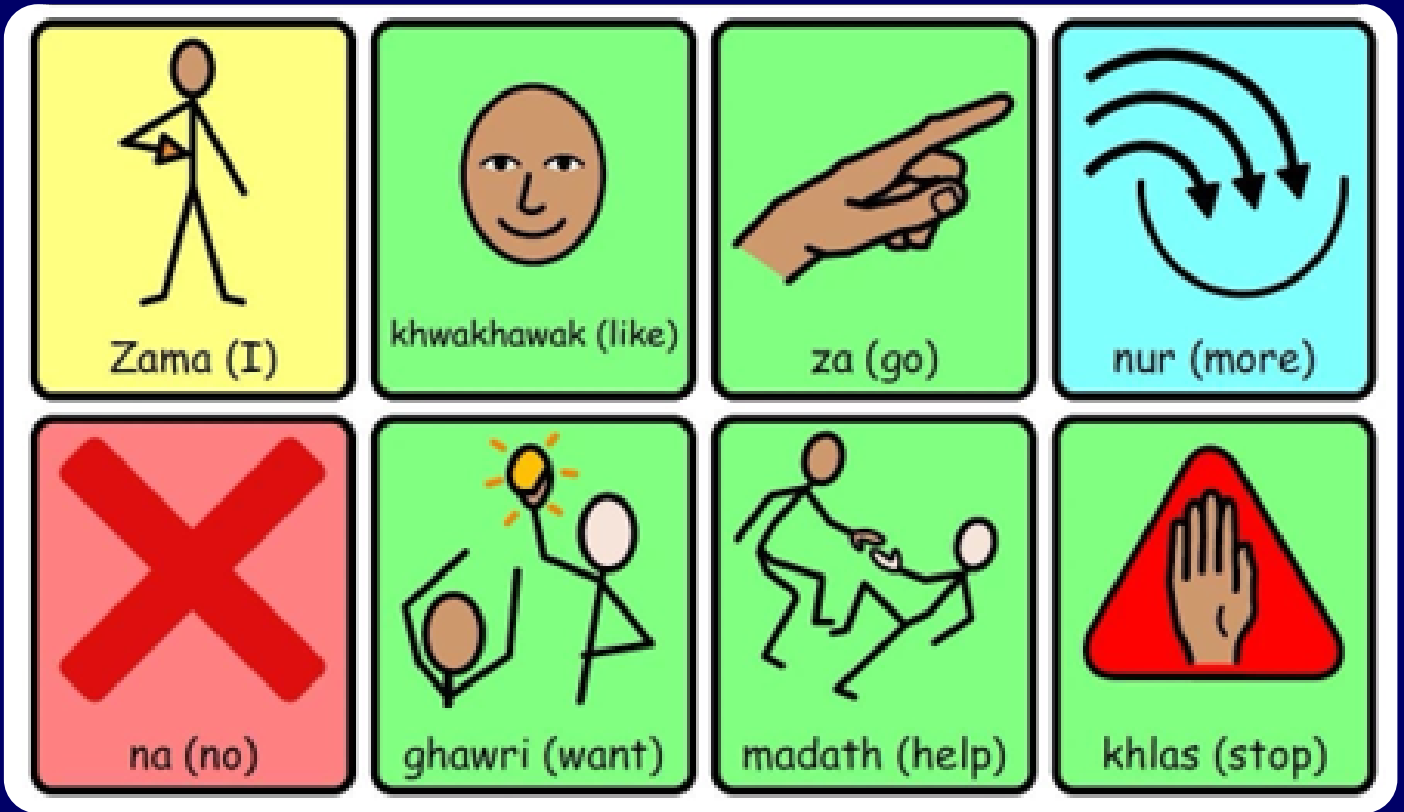
We understand that sometimes you may wonder why we can't offer your child particular foods. For some of our pupils, texture, size and consistency is important for their safety. **The IDSSI framework** helps us to make sure that the food and drink offered to pupils aligns with their Speech and Language Report. Foods that are not suitable may be difficult to chew and swallow which could increase the risk of choking. If your child requires an up-to-date assessment, let your class teacher know and we can look at making a referral.

TRAILBLAZING INCLUSION WORK FROM BRAYS

Having consulted with the NHS and existing organisations we found out that dual language core boards are not a resource that currently exists so this half term we launched our Core Symbol Boards in a range of community languages.

These boards include the first 8 core symbols that are used regularly across school to support communication with our learners. By using the same symbols at home in your family's native language, children can experience greater consistency and develop their communication skills across different environments.

We currently have boards available in Mirpuri, Bangla, Somali, Polish, Punjabi, Urdu and Pashto (as shown below).



PUBLISHED RESEARCH

In keeping with the inclusion agenda we were delighted to read the most recent piece of research published by The Chartered College of Teaching. Our very own Farzana Chowdhury and our Trust reading lead Paula Russell had our evidenced based approach to early reading and phonics peer reviewed and published.

You can read the research here: **From sensory to symbolic: An inclusive phonics and early reading framework for learners with complex needs : My College**

BRITISH VALUES – RESPECT

As part of our work on British Values, children will be learning about respect by understanding the sacrifices made by others, including those who have served their communities and country.

We will be selling poppies in school at the prices shown below:

- Slap band £1.50
- Paper poppies 50p
- Poppy land yard £2.00
- Poppy pin with fastener £1.00



#BRAYSBELONGING: WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

At Brays, speaking with parents and carers about bruises is part of our shared commitment to the values of Safety and Teamwork. When we notice a bruise, we will always seek to have a positive, two-way conversation.

By sharing information and listening to each other's perspectives, we can build a clear understanding of how an injury may have happened and ensure that every child is safe, supported, and well cared for. This approach reflects:

- Safety – we take all injuries seriously and ensure that concerns are explored appropriately.
- Teamwork – parents, carers, and school staff work together, sharing information openly in the best interests of the child.

These conversations are an important part of #BraysBelonging, where strong relationships between home and school help every child feel safe, valued, and supported to thrive.

CREATIVE SPACE

This half term in the Creative Space we have travelling into the Amazon rainforest in our little orange boat. We have had so many adventures! We started off exploring with binoculars and collecting insects. Then we caught fish in the river and played music underneath the trees. We also met a massive giant and had to help him stand up. He was a bit scary!









EHCP COFFEE MORNING

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent EHCP Coffee Morning. The event provided a relaxed and friendly space for parents and carers to come together, share experiences, ask questions, and learn more about the support available for children with additional needs. It was wonderful to see so many families engaging in discussions, supporting one another, and building connections. These opportunities are invaluable in helping parents feel informed, empowered, and reassured as they navigate their child's educational journey.



A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST

A huge thank you to all our families for your generous donations to this year's Harvest collection, and to St Thomas Church for their continued support. Thanks to your kindness, the Cheeky Cheetahs were able to visit the church and help sort and pack the donated food into parcels ready for distribution to local food banks. The children thoroughly enjoyed taking part and were proud to be helping others in the local community. Thank you, as always, for your wonderful support in making this another successful Harvest collection.







MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

Thank you to everyone in the school community who supported our recent MacMillan Coffee morning.

A great time was had by all and funds raised for such an important cause that touches the lives of so many.

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY

At the beginning of the month we celebrated World Teachers' Day, taking time to recognise our incredible teaching staff. Thank you to the families who took the time to send personalised messages of appreciation. Your kind words meant a great deal. At Brays, we believe that you cannot create a true culture of belonging for children and families unless staff also feel that they belong, are valued and are appreciated. Thank you to all our teachers for everything you do.



CELEBRATING OUR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

In September we celebrated National Teaching Assistants' Day, recognising the incredible contribution our Teaching Assistants make every single day. Our TAs are at the heart of our school helping our children to flourish. We are incredibly grateful for their dedication. We would also like to give a special mention to Hayley, who is a Pearson Silver Winner in this year's national awards. In November, she will attend the national finals where she will discover whether she has been selected as a Gold Winner. We are immensely proud of this achievement and will be keeping everything crossed for her! **Hayley Hanson - The Pearson National Teaching Awards**

CRICKET WORKSHOPS WITH WARWICKSHIRE CRICKET CLUB

The Busy Bees have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in their cricket workshops. They have been developing their ball skills through a range of fun and engaging activities, learning how to throw, catch and control a ball with increasing confidence. The children particularly enjoyed practising their bowling skills and were excited to take turns aiming at wickets. Throughout the sessions, they worked together brilliantly, encouraging their friends and learning the importance of teamwork. It has been wonderful to see their confidence, cooperation and enthusiasm grow as they explored new skills and celebrated each other's successes.

BRAYS ALUMNI – A VISIT FROM A PAST PUPIL

This half term Brays School had a visit from an ex-pupil who was a well-liked and big character around school. Zubair now works with NHS England and supports families who are preparing Education Health Care Plans, EHCPs for their children. EHCPs are so important in ensuring the correct provision and it was fantastic to hear how Zubair supports families as part of the EHCP team. Zubair also reminds us that we should encourage high ambitions for our children. We at Brays School are so proud to have been a part of Zubair's journey.

PARENTS ENJOY INAUGURAL WALK

This half term, we held our first Parent Wellbeing Walk at Sheldon Country Park, and what a lovely time we had! It was wonderful to spend time together outside of the usual school environment, enjoying some fresh air, chatting, laughing and getting to know one another.

The walk was about more than just getting some exercise. It gave parents and carers an opportunity to take a little time for themselves, connect with other families and build supportive relationships within our Brays community.

Supporting our children is incredibly important, but we also recognise the importance of looking after the wellbeing of our parents and carers. Creating opportunities like our wellbeing walk helps us strengthen relationships between families and school and reminds us that nobody has to feel alone.

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us for our very first walk and made it such an enjoyable occasion. We managed an amazing 10,081 steps. We hope our Parent Wellbeing Walks will continue to bring families together as part of #BraysBelonging.







INTRODUCING TOGETHERNESS

We are pleased to introduce our parents and carers to **Togetherness**, an NHS emotional health digital learning hub which families in our area can access **free of charge.** It provides helpful learning and resources around children's development, emotional wellbeing, behaviour and relationships.

There are lots of useful sections for families, including:

- Understanding your child's feelings – support with recognising how your child may be feeling, including emotions and worries linked to school.
- Parenting in a changing world – information around social media, gaming, AI, friendships, big opinions and conflict.
- Toileting support – information to help children build their toileting skills and confidence, alongside a short video addressing common toileting myths.
- Understanding relationships – learning to help strengthen relationships and consider different perspectives.
- Learning through WhatsApp – another way to access bite-sized learning about child development and emotional health from NHS experts.

Parents and carers can visit togetherness on **Pathways library - Togetherness** and use the **Free Access Checker to unlock the free online learning.**

BIRMINGHAM SEND LOCAL OFFER

If you are looking for information or support for a child or young person with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), the Birmingham SEND Local Offer is a great place to start. It provides helpful information about local services, support groups, education, health services, leisure activities, and advice for families of children and young people aged 0-25 years. The website is designed to help parents and carers find the right support, understand available services, and access guidance on topics such as EHCPs, therapies, transport, and preparing for adulthood. You can find out more by visiting the Birmingham SEND Local Offer website: **www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk**.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 2nd November – Return to School
- 6th November – Diwali
- 9th November – Anti-bullying Week
- 11th November – Rememberance Day
- 13th November – Family Lunch for Cubs, Turtles & Jellyfish
- 16th November – Family Lunch for Worms, Cats and Swifts
- 17th November – NHS Flu Session
- 17th November – Family Lunch for Bees, Lions, Cheetah
- 20th November – Children In Need
- 25th November – Curriculum Themed Day Space
- 25th November – School Closes at 1pm for INSET Training
- 27th November – UNISON Stars in our Schools – A celebration of PCAs and LTs
- 4th December – Hanukah
- 10th December:

  AM – EYFS & KS1 Families invited to join for Christmas Crafts

  PM – KS2 Families invited to join for Christmas Crafts
- 14th December:

  AM – Family Christmas Signed Singing: Cheetah, Worms, Bees, Jellyfish & Turtles

  PM – Family Christmas Sensory Signed Singing: Cubs, Swifts, Lions & Cats
- 15th – December Father Christmas in School
- 16th December – Christmas Dinner Day
- 17th December – Carols in the Community
- 17th December – Nativity Play, Busy Bees
- 18th December – School breaks at 1.30pm

TERM DATES 2026 TO 2027

AUTUMN TERM 2026

Term starts: Tuesday 1 September 2026
Half-term: Monday 26 October 2026 to Friday 30 October 2026
Term ends: Friday 18 December 2026

INSET – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS:
Tuesday 1 September and Wednesday 2 September 2026

Half day INSETS – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS FROM 1:00PM
Tuesday 22nd September 2026
Wednesday 25 November 2026

SPRING TERM 2027

Term starts: Monday 4 January 2027
Half-term: Monday 15 February 2027 to Friday 19 February 2027
Term ends: Thursday 25 March 2027

INSET – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS:
Mon 4 January
Monday 11 January 2027

Half day INSETS – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS FROM 1:00PM
Thursday 4 February
Tuesday 16 March

SUMMER TERM 2027

Term starts: Monday 12 April 2027
Half-term: Monday 31 May 2027 to Friday 4 June 2027
Term ends: Wednesday 21 July 2027

INSET – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS:
Tuesday 4 May 2027
Half day INSETS – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS FROM 1:00PM
Thursday 1 July 2027

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If you are on facebook, please like, follow and share our page with family and friends. You'll find us under 'Brays School'.

If you are on X(Twitter), please follow @BraysSchool1.