

Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you are all keeping well and looking forward to a well-deserved half-term break after a busy first half of the term. There has been a wide range of activities and projects across RBAir, and I'm pleased to share some highlights, along with important updates and key dates for your diaries. This includes information for students preparing for exams later in the year.

Willow Lodge Updates

A huge amount of work has taken place over the past few months, particularly during the summer holidays, and I'm delighted to share that it is now all complete! We now have two new teaching spaces in what used to be the garage, now called The Garden Rooms, as well as a new therapy room and dedicated Maths and Science rooms.

The exterior of the building has a fresh new look, complete with two bright balloon-red doors that give Willow Lodge a cheerful welcome. In addition, we have carried out extensive work in the garden, including the addition of a canopy, creating a flexible outdoor space that can be used in all weathers.



Assessment Week



Learners preparing for summer exams will take part in 1-hour online assessed tasks in each of their subjects from **Tuesday 18th to Thursday 20th November 2025**. These assessments focus on topics covered so far in the course, and no extensive revision is required.

Each learner's timetable will be available on Arbor, and **Link Mentors** will go through it with learners so everyone knows what to expect and what to have ready for their assessments.

Assessments take place instead of regular lessons during these times, and staff will be on hand to support learners throughout. These tasks form part of our graduated approach, giving learners a gentle introduction to assessment conditions so they feel confident and prepared for their final exams.

Mock Exam Dates

As in previous years, we will be holding mini mocks early in the Spring term. These will take place on **Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th January 2026** and will be held in-centre (either at Willow Lodge or Danbury), where the final exams will take place.

The subject for the January mock paper will be decided by teachers, based on what offers the maximum benefit for the learner's overall development. The main focus is to introduce them to the experience of what it's like to sit an in-centre exam, and to get used to arrangements such as using extra time or taking brief rest-breaks.

A **full mock period** will take place from **Tuesday 17th to Thursday 19th March 2026**. During this period, learners will complete one full paper for all subjects to be examined in the summer of 2026. These full mocks will give learners a greater sense of the exam season and the support that will be in place for them.


Parents Evenings

Parents' evenings will take place from:

Tuesday 2nd to Thursday 4th December 2025,
between **4:00 and 6:00 pm**.

Invitations to book an appointment with a teacher will open to parents and carers on **Monday 17th November** via **Arbor**.



To book an appointment, please log in to Arbor. By default, all appointments will be conducted via telephone,  so please include the best number to reach you in the notes section. If you would prefer a video call via Teams, please indicate "video call" in the notes section and provide the best contact number.

Reporting this academic year

You will receive a written academic report at the end of each term (December, March, and July). Reports will be accessible via the Parent Portal app on Arbor, following an email notifying you of their availability.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns about your young person's learning sessions, please book a slot at your next parents' evening or get in touch, and we will arrange for the relevant teacher to give you a call.

Curious Connections: A Culinary and Cultural Journey Across Asia

Both online and in-person, staff and students have been enthusiastically taking part in our virtual adventure, *Race Around the World* - or more accurately, around Asia! So far, we've explored the vibrant cultures and landscapes of Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, with the majestic Himalayas next on our itinerary.



Along the way, we've delved into fascinating topics such as:

- The intensifying urban heat on Japan's Kanto Plain
- The geopolitical significance of Korea's 38th parallel, which divides North and South
- The lifeblood of Vietnam: its rivers, central to both historical and modern-day life

Meanwhile, our in-person group added a delicious twist to the journey by preparing traditional Asian treats. From crafting crisp Kappamaki (cucumber sushi rolls) to mixing refreshing Subak Hwachae (a Korean alcohol-free fruit punch), students showcased their culinary talents with flair. The Admin Team was treated to two beautifully garnished mocktails - complete with fresh fruit and a shimmering slice of ice!

During the Health Based PE section of the afternoon, the focus has been on social engagement and the importance of enjoying being active. A mixture of throwing and catching games, skipping ropes and resistance bands have given the group a chance to experiment with movement whilst having fun. They have demonstrated patience, teamwork and enthusiasm. We have seen lots of laughter whilst the students build new friendships - a brilliant start!

R B A R Centre News

Willow Lodge

Enrichment

At the heart of every thriving learning environment is the opportunity to grow beyond the basics - and that's exactly what our enrichment activities are all about!

This term, we've been thrilled to see learners dive into a wide variety of hands-on, minds-on experiences designed to spark curiosity and build skills that last a lifetime. Our enrichment opportunities give learners the chance to explore new interests, discover hidden talents, and connect with their peers in meaningful ways.

Why Enrichment Matters

Enrichment activities aren't just "extras." They play a key role in nurturing the whole person, helping learners to:

- Strengthen critical thinking and problem-solving abilities
- Boost self-confidence through trying new things
- Develop communication and teamwork skills
- Find joy in learning beyond the traditional classroom



WILLOW LOUNGE
WEDNESDAY 22ND OCTOBER
1.10PM - 3.00PM

TOASTED MARSHMALLOWS
AND PARTY GAMES!

THIS IS A RELAXED SESSION - JUST DROP IN
AND HANG OUT WITH OTHERS, PLAY GAMES,
MAKE FOOD, READ, LISTEN TO MUSIC OR JUST
CHILL.

NO NEED TO SIGN UP! JUST POP IN!
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Willow Lounge

We're looking forward to our next Willow Lounge session on

October 22nd from 1:10–3:00pm,

which will have a spooky theme, complete with a fire pit, marshmallows, whittling, and milkshakes!

We also have some great activities planned for the last half term of 2025, finishing with a bowling trip and Nando's (dates to be confirmed). These events will be shared with all learners and parents soon, so please keep an eye out for invitations in the coming weeks.

Danbury

Learners in Danbury have been considering their future placements this term. They have been visiting local colleges and attending open evenings to explore their options.

Some have been looking at the potential of apprenticeships and the benefits of working and furthering their education at the same time. The option of accessible apprenticeships has been very appealing and has given a few of them food for thought.



[Accessible Apprenticeships - ACL Essex](#)

Counselling session for parents/carers

As part of our commitment to parent support we are delighted to offer counselling sessions to parents and carers, with Lucy, a trainee counsellor currently on placement with us for this academic year.

Lucy has successfully completed the academic component of her counselling training and is now gaining practical experience by providing therapeutic support at RBAir.

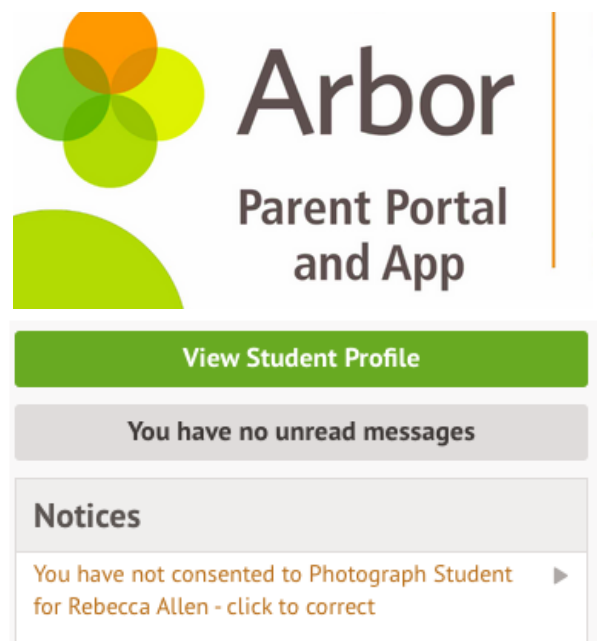
If you are interested in accessing this support, or would like to learn more, please do get in touch with rachel.currie@rbair.org.uk, who can explain how the sessions work and answer any questions you may have.

Consents - Action Required

We're asking all parents and carers to check and update their consent preferences on Arbor. Any consents that still need to be completed will appear as notices on your Arbor homepage. For each request, please select either Give or Decline consent.

If you need to make any changes after submitting your responses, please contact us via Reception at admin@rbair.org.uk, as these updates cannot be made directly through the Parent Portal.

You can view your current consents at the bottom of the View Student Profile section on both the Arbor Parent App and web browser Parent Portal. Please view the attached instructions with the consents that need action.



Term Dates Reminder

2025-2026

Autumn Term 2025

Monday 8th September – Friday 12th December

Half Term: Monday 27th October – Friday 31st October

Staff Training: Wednesday 3rd September, Thursday 4th September, Friday 5th September

Spring Term 2026

Wednesday 7th January – Friday 27th March

Half Term: Monday 16th February – Friday 20th February

Staff Training: Monday 5th January, Tuesday 6th January

Summer Term 2026

Monday 13th April – Friday 10th July

Early May Bank Holiday: Monday 4th May

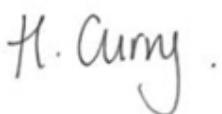
Half Term: Monday 25th May – Friday 29th May

Contact Over the Holidays

Members of the Senior Leadership Team will regularly check their emails, so if there is information to pass on, it will be noted. In an emergency, please follow the guidance given in the Out-of-Office email replies.

We look forward to seeing your young person again online or in person from **Monday 3rd November** and we wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable half term break.

With best wishes,



Hannah Curry
Headteacher