



Newsletter

Dear parents/carers,

The Red Balloon of the Air Community has been busy during the first half-term of this year as everyone settles back into the routine of lessons, sessions, and activities. We have welcomed some new learners to RBAir over the past few weeks, and it has been great to meet them and their families and help them settle in.

I would like to share with everyone that RBAir is celebrating its **15-year anniversary** this academic year.



Red Balloon of the Air is, and has been, a safe place for young people to re-engage with learning and become part of a compassionate and supportive community for 15 years. During that time, we have witnessed, and been privileged to see, so many young people achieve their goals and move forwards in their lives.

We are currently planning a variety of celebrations and will be incorporating some fundraising activities, as we want to improve our art facilities here at Willow Lodge so that we can develop and grow our arts offer for learners. It will be an amazing opportunity for all of us to come together and celebrate the success of the provision, while also enjoying some good times raising money for our new art space.

Wishing you all an enjoyable and relaxing half-term break.

Hannah Curry
Head of Centre

Assessment Week



Learners preparing for summer exams will take part in 1-hour online assessed tasks in each of their subjects from **Tuesday 17 November to Thursday 19 November.**

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 19 January and Wednesday 20 January 2027** and will be held in-centre, where the final exams will take place.

The subject for your January mock paper will be decided by teachers, based on what offers the maximum benefit for your overall development. The main focus is to introduce you 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 9 March to Thursday 11 March 2027.** During this period, learners will complete one full paper for all subjects to be examined in the summer of 2027. 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:

Monday 30th November - Wednesday 2 December between 4:00 and 6:00 pm.

Invitations to book an appointment with a teacher will open to parents and carers on **Monday 16 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.

R B A R Centre News

Upcoming Events



Willow Lounge

We're looking forward to our next Willow Lounge session on **21 October from 2:00 - 3:30pm**, which will have a spooky theme, complete with pumpkin carving, fire pit and toasting marshmallows. Halloween outfits are optional!

The Animal Experience

Tuesday 10 November, 2:00-3:00pm

The Animal Experience will be returning to Willow Lodge with some of their rescue animals for another interactive visit.



🎄 End-of-Term Trip to WildWood, Ely

Dates TBC

Join us for a lunchtime pizza followed by a Christmas film to celebrate the end of term.



Details of upcoming activities will be emailed to families, with sign-up available through Arbor. And, as always, if your young person has an idea for an activity they'd like to try, we'd love to hear it!

Activities in the Community Room

In the Community Room this half term, we've had a different activity set out each week for the young people to dip into. A wonderful menagerie of origami animals filled the space in the first week. Following this, we baffled our brains with cube puzzles and optical illusions; the young people demonstrated excellent visualization and spatial awareness.

To turn our hand to something creative and artistic, various autumnal activities, including leaf printing, filled the space with gorgeous, colourful creations.



Last week saw a Community Lego Build cover the main table; it was fun to see a mini world grow across the five days with plenty of humour injected into our Lego world. To round the half term off, we have a mask design activity... so get ready to transform for half term!

RBAir Clubs

We currently have a range of clubs running for our learners, designed to be fun, inclusive, and shaped around your interests.



Games & Gaming CLUB

Mondays, 1:15-2pm, Community Room

Our Games & Gaming Club is a fun and welcoming space where young people can relax, socialise, and enjoy a variety of games. From board games and card games to console and PC gaming, members can develop teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and strategic thinking skills while having fun with others who share similar interests. The club encourages friendly competition, creativity, and positive social interactions in a supportive environment.

Making & Modelling

Thursdays, 1:10-2pm, Community room



Making and Modelling Club

Thursdays 1:10pm to 2:00pm in Willow Lounge

- Clay modelling
- Wood whittling
- Cake decorating and more...

Our Making & Modelling Club is a creative and hands-on space where learners can design, build and create a variety of projects. From model-making and crafts to construction challenges and creative inventions, members will develop practical skills, problem-solving abilities and imagination while working on fun projects. The club is open to all abilities and provides a relaxed environment to explore new ideas, learn techniques and share creativity with others. Come along, get creative and bring your ideas to life!

Healthy Lunch Club

Wednesday, 1:10-2pm, Bay kitchen

Join our Nutritional Lunch Club and discover the joys of cooking! Learners will create delicious, nutritious dishes while learning essential food preparation skills, kitchen safety, healthy eating principles, and teamwork.



PSHE: Autumn 2

If you have any concerns or questions about any of the topics we'll be working on, please do not hesitate to contact jaclyn.paules@rbair.org.uk, our Head of PSHE. Jackie will be happy to talk to you and guide you through the sessions in more detail.

Lower Key Stage 3 learners will cover Healthy Lifestyles

- **Dental Health**
- **Understanding the Risks and Effects of Caffeine**
- **Understanding the Risks of Nicotine**
- **Understanding the Risks of Alcohol**
- **First Aid for Mental Health:** What is mental health and wellbeing, the role of mental health first aid, non-judgemental listening, where to go for support with mental health.

Lower Key Stage 4 learners will cover Healthy Lifestyles

- **Fair and Equal Opportunity for Good Health**
- **Substance Use and Assessing Risk**
- **Substance Use and Managing Influence**
- **Basic Life Support:** How to carry out a primary survey, place an unresponsive casualty, who is breathing normally, into the recovery position, know when and how to deliver CPR to an unresponsive casualty who is not breathing normally, use an automated external defibrillator (AED).
- **First Aid for Mental Health:** What is mental health and wellbeing, the role of mental health first aid, non-judgemental listening, where to go for support with mental health.

Post-16 learners will cover Healthy Choices and Safety

- **Making Healthy Choices and Preventing Illness:** Understanding healthy lifestyles and how to maintain physical wellbeing.
- **Staying Safe:** Recognising risks and making informed decisions to protect personal safety.
- **Travel in the UK and Abroad:** Staying safe when travelling independently and understanding rights and responsibilities.
- **Parties and Nights Out:** Managing risks associated with alcohol, drugs and drink spiking.
- **Addiction and Dependency:** Understanding the impact of substance misuse and how to access support.
- **Basic Life Support:** Learning essential first aid skills, including CPR, the recovery position and AED use.
- **First Aid for Mental Health:** Understanding mental wellbeing, supporting others and seeking appropriate help.

Upper Key Stage 3 learners will cover Healthy Lifestyles

- **We All Have a Right to be Well**
- **Making Choices about Diet and Exercise**
- **Food for Thought**
- **The Sleep Factor**
- **Basic Life Support:** How to carry out a primary survey, place an unresponsive casualty, who is breathing normally, into the recovery position, know when and how to deliver CPR to an unresponsive casualty who is not breathing normally, ensure the safety of ourselves and others.
- **Mental Health First Aid:** What is mental health and wellbeing, the role of mental health first aid, non-judgemental listening, where to go for support with mental health.

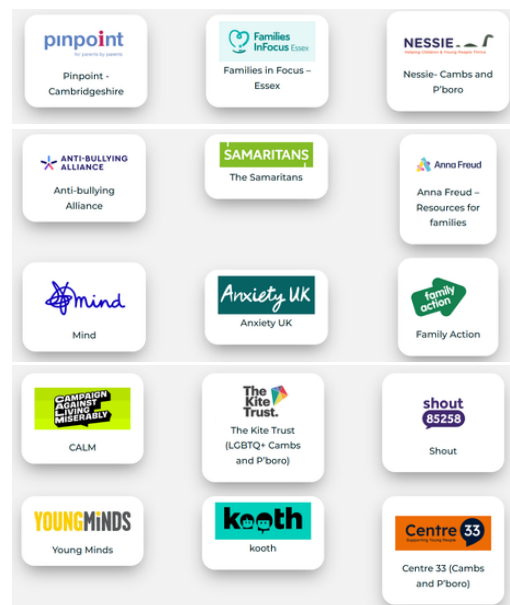
Upper Key Stage 4 learners will cover Increasing Independence

- **Health: From Here to Where?** Exploring the influence of social and environmental factors on health and ways in which societal changes can impact health and health behaviours.
- **Supporting Good Health:** Exploring ways a person can contribute to their own and others' health and wellbeing in different contexts and ways of promoting improved health at a community level.
- **Exploring Donation:** The steps involved in blood, organ and stem cell donation, how it might feel to be a part of the donation process, and the importance of donation for individuals and society.
- **Donation and Choices:** Choices available when it comes to donation, some of the considerations involved in an individual's choice to donate and the law around organ donation in England.
- **Basic First Aid:** How to carry out a primary survey, place an unresponsive casualty, who is breathing normally, into the recovery position, know when and how to deliver CPR to an unresponsive casualty who is not breathing normally, use an automated external defibrillator (AED).

Additional Support

We understand that young people and their parent(s)/carer(s) often experience difficult challenges in life, and that finding the right support is not always easy.

Please visit our Additional Support page on our [website](#) for a list of organisations that may be able to help.



Term Dates Reminder

2026-2027

Autumn Term 2026

Monday 7th September – Friday 11th December

Half Term: Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October

Staff Training: Wednesday 2nd September, Thursday 3rd September, Friday 4th September

Spring Term 2027

2027 Tuesday 5th January – Thursday 25th March

Good Friday Bank Holiday: Friday 26th March

Half Term: Monday 15th February – Friday 19th February

Staff Training: Monday 4th January

Summer Term 2027

Tuesday 13th April – Friday 16th July

Early May Bank Holiday: Monday 3rd May

Half Term: Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June

Staff Training: Monday 12th April

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 2 November** and we wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable half term break.