



Blackgates Primary Academy

# SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER EDITION

Friday 12 December 2025

## Principal's Message

This week we have seen Early Years and Year 1 & 2 perform the Christmas Nativity. The children performed beautifully and clearly enjoyed singing and using actions to portray the Christmas story. Reception, Years 1,2 & 3 visited Leeds Library to watch a Christmas Storyteller Show. Our children loved this and were extremely well behaved and polite. There has been a real dip in attendance recently due mainly to a lot of flu viruses and sickness bugs. Please remind your children to wash hands regularly and put hands over mouths when they cough. We will reinforce that at school too. I hope you are feeling in a festive mood - we definitely are here at Blackgates. Mrs Julie Coulson



## Important Dates:

Training days: 2025/2026

Friday 22 May  
Monday 20 July  
Tuesday 21 July

## Dates for your Diary

### Trips

Tuesday 16 December - Y4 Ice Skating LCC  
Wednesday 17 December - Y5 Ice Skating LCC

### Christmas Nativities/Concerts

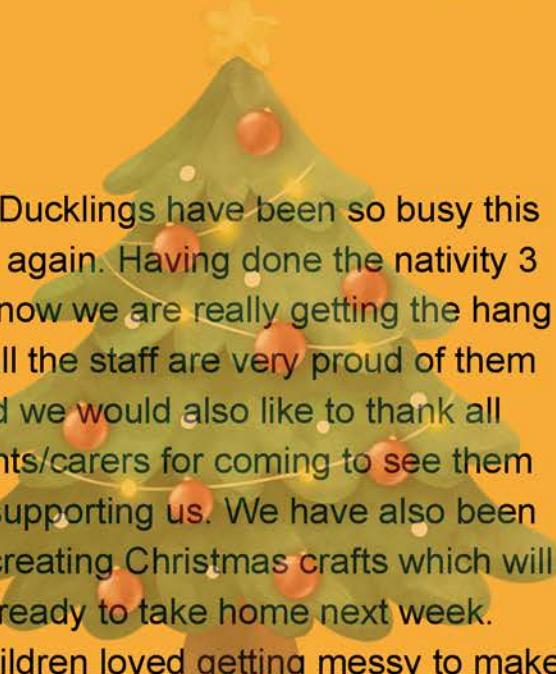
Y3, Y4, Y5 & Y6 - Christmas Carol Concert -  
Monday 15 December 5pm- 6pm  
Christmas parties  
Monday 15 December - Y4 & Y5  
Tuesday 16 December Robins & Y1  
Wednesday 17 December Ducklings/  
Nursery & Y6  
Thursday 18 December Y2 & Y3

## Notices

We are pleased to welcome Helen Turpin as our new Family Support Worker across the Leodis academies. Helen brings over 20 years of experience supporting children and families, with particular expertise in Early Years. She will be at Blackgates most mornings, greeting families at the gate. With a strong background in SEN, SEMH, and Safeguarding, Helen is committed to building positive relationships with families to ensure children thrive. We're excited to have Helen join the Blackgates community!



## Ducklings



Little Ducklings have been so busy this week again. Having done the nativity 3 times now we are really getting the hang of it, all the staff are very proud of them

and we would also like to thank all parents/carers for coming to see them and supporting us. We have also been busy creating Christmas crafts which will be ready to take home next week.

The children loved getting messy to make this this Christmas gift.

# Nursery



Nursery has been a very busy place to be this week! The children had a fantastic time dressing up in costumes and performing in our Nativity performances for friends, family and our school community. Thank you so much to everyone who was able to attend!

We were so proud of them all!

We have been practising looking for our own names, writing our names and thinking about what sound our names begin with. The children have also had lots of fun creating their own special Christmas tree paintings using forks! Their final pieces will be coming home on the front of their cards.

The children have also begun making their very own party hats ready for our Nursery Christmas party next week! We're all so excited that Christmas is nearly here!

# Robins

On Thursday Year 2 had the privilege of attending a Christmas show at Leeds Central Library. It centred around 2 elves who were trying to save Christmas by cheering up a grumpy storyteller. The children really enjoyed themselves - the show was tuneful, fun and interactive. It really got the children in the Christmas spirit!



# Doves



Our children had a wonderful time visiting Leeds Central Library, where they were captivated by The Elves and The Storyteller - a magical, interactive performance filled with songs, laughter, and enchanting storytelling. It was a joy to see their faces light up as they joined in with the fun. I am also incredibly proud of their fantastic nativity performances this week. The children spoke their lines with such confidence, and their singing was simply beautiful. They worked so hard and shone so brightly on stage. A very proud teacher indeed!



# Penguins

On Thursday Year 2 had the privilege of attending a Christmas show at Leeds Central Library. It centred around 2 elves who were trying to save Christmas by cheering up a grumpy storyteller. The children really enjoyed themselves - the show was tuneful, fun and interactive. It really got the children in the Christmas spirit!



# Nightingales

Year 3 had a wonderful day on Friday. They loved visiting Leeds Central Library and watching The Elves and the Storyteller performance. Everyone showed great listening skills and audience participation.



# Ravens

This week the children have been investigating into how sugary drinks can affect our teeth. They have been observing how eggs change in orange juice, Pepsi, vinegar and other liquids to see the impact they have on the egg shells. So far the shells have changed colour, texture and some feel completely different too!

If you have any photos of your children cooking at home, please email them to school, we would love to see them.

Thank you



# Falcons



**Year 5 enjoyed bringing their Greek vases to life by painting their designs on their clay pots.**

**We have also really enjoyed our gymnastics unit in PE where we have been developing skills such as balancing, cartwheels and round offs. Next week, we are looking forward to our Christmas party on Monday, and ice-skating on Wednesday.**



# Hawks

## Robinwood Residential – What an Amazing Experience!

Last week, Year 6 had the most incredible time away at Robinwood! It was wonderful to see the children stepping outside their comfort zones and taking on activities they were initially worried about.

From soaring down the zip line, braving the giant swing, and tackling the climbing wall, to working together during the piranha pool challenge and canoeing on the lake, every child showed resilience, courage, and fantastic teamwork.

Myself, Mrs Elston, and Mr White were so impressed with every single child – their determination and support for one another made us proud. It truly was a memorable trip full of laughter, learning, and adventure!



Check out this app it is called Lumi Nova - it is for children aged 7-12 to help them to learn how to manage and reduce symptoms of anxiety. It is free in certain areas including Wakefield. Click on the link below.

[Lumi Nova - Free for families in Wakefield — Lumi Nova: Tales of Courage](#)

Get instant access to a fun digital therapy app to help your child self manage their worries.

- 7-12 year olds (mild to moderate anxiety)\*
- NICE Recommended
- Evidence Based

# **Stars of the week**

*Week ending 05.12.25*



# **Stars of the week**

*Week ending 05.12.25*



**Congratulations to all of our Stars**





Our new website is now live please take a look at

[www.blackgates.org.uk](http://www.blackgates.org.uk)

We are also on Social media please search for us and give us a follow and like.



Is your child due to  
start primary  
school in  
2026?



Applications are open for Reception  
places to start in **September 2026**  
You can apply online until **Thursday 15 January 2026**

[www.leeds.gov.uk/apply](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/apply)



## COULD YOU SPOT A LOAN SHARK?

A loan shark may pretend to be a friend but can become aggressive if you miss payments

They can charge high interest and don't give paperwork

They may threaten or bully you or your family

If you need help, contact

**Stop Loan Sharks**

in confidence

**0300 555 2222**

[stoploansharks.co.uk](http://stoploansharks.co.uk)



@SLSEngland @StopLoanSharksEngland  
#SLSEngland #StopLoanSharksEngland

**STOPLOANSHARKS**  
Intervention . Support . Education



Principal: Mrs J Coulson

Dear parent/guardian,

As you may be aware your child's school has a milk scheme, administered by Cool Milk. Mid-morning milk provides a much-needed nutritional boost and keeps children hydrated between breakfast and lunch. Children receive free milk until the age of 5. After that, they can continue to reap the benefits of fresh mid-morning milk at a subsidised\* cost.

If you'd like to opt in and have not already done so, simply register your child at [www.coolmilk.com/register](http://www.coolmilk.com/register). Your child(ren) will continue to receive free milk whilst under the age of 5 and Cool Milk will get in touch with further information by email shortly before their 5th birthday.

For children who are already over 5, it's not too late - our scheme is flexible! As well as being able to register and make payment straight away, you can join and cancel the scheme at any time. We offer yearly, termly and half termly payment periods and a recurring payment option to give you one less thing to remember.

If you already have an online Cool Milk account for a sibling, you can manage your account, make payment and add extra children by logging in at [www.coolmilk.com/parents](http://www.coolmilk.com/parents).

Should you have any questions or need any help, send us a message at [www.coolmilk.com/contact](http://www.coolmilk.com/contact) or give us a call on the number listed below - we're here to help!

Kind regards,

*Cool Milk*

tel: 0800 321 3248  
[www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com)



SCAN TO REGISTER

\*Milk for under-5s is fully funded by DHSC via the Nursery Milk Scheme. Milk for over-5s is subsidised by DfE via the School Milk Scheme.

Cool Milk at School Ltd | Cool Milk House | Kingsley Park | Kingsley Road | Lincoln | LN6 8TA | tel: 0800 321 3248 | [www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com)



Dear Parent

Find below the term dates for the 2026/27 academic year for the Leodis Academies Trust schools.

	<b>First day of the term</b>	<b>Last day of the term</b>
Autumn Half Term 1	Tuesday 1 September 2026	Friday 23 October 2026
Autumn Half Term 2	Monday 2 November 2026	Friday 18 December 2026
Spring Half Term 1	Monday 4 January 2027	Friday 12 February 2027
Spring Half Term 2	Monday 22 February 2027	Thursday 29 March 2027
Summer Half Term 1	Monday 12 April 2027	Friday 28 May 2027
Summer Half Term 2	Monday 7 June 2027	Friday 16 July 2027

**Please note:**

- The August Bank Holiday falls on Monday 31 August 2026. This means the first day of the academic year is Tuesday 1 September 2026. All of the Leodis Academies Trust schools will use Tuesday 1 September as a staff training day, with the term for pupils and students starting from Wednesday 2 September.
- The dates of the two week Easter break are different to those being used by schools following the Leeds City Council term dates. Leodis Academies Trust usually follows the Leeds City Council term dates but for the 2026/27 academic year, it is believed that adopting the amended calendar will lead to better continuity and quality of education around the Easter weekend and two week holiday.
- Usual expectations regarding pupil and student attendance will be in place. Holidays may be granted in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Principal of the school. If parents have already arranged holidays according to Leeds City Council's Easter break, they should contact the school with evidence of the date that the booking was made, which will precede the date of this letter, so that consideration can be given as to whether it will be granted as exceptional.
- Monday 19-21 July 2027 are staff training days and schools will be closed to pupils and students. Any additional training days that will take place throughout the year will be communicated in due course.



We've chosen Arbor to help us manage our school.

Arbor is a simple, smart and cloud-based MIS (Management Information System), which helps us work faster, smarter and more collaboratively as a school. The Parent App and Parent Portal mean we can keep you informed about your child's life at school in a much more accessible way. Log into Arbor to see and update your child's information, get live updates and make payments or bookings on the go!

The Parent Portal works on Google Chrome (computer or laptop) and you can download the Parent App from the App Store or Google Play Store on your phone (Android 5.0; iOS 10.0 and upwards).

**How to get started**

1. Wait for your welcome email from us telling you Arbor is ready - you won't be able to log in before
2. Click the link in your welcome email to set up your password
3. Go to the App or Google Play Store on your phone and search 'Arbor'
4. Click 'Install' on Android or 'Get' on iPhone then open the App
5. Enter your email, select the school, then enter your password
6. Accept the Terms & Conditions and enter your child's birthday

**Need help using Arbor?**

Contact the school office if you have questions about Arbor, the App or Parent Portal. Tell us the type and model of your phone, e.g. an iPhone SE, and include screenshots or screen recordings. To safeguard student data in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Arbor only works directly with schools.

*Some tips to try:*

1. Ensure your username is the email address you use for Arbor. Ask us to check the email address linked to your account.
2. Reset your password from the login page, or ask us to do this.
3. If the login email was sent to you more than 96 hours ago, the password link will have expired. Ask us to send it again.
4. Ask the school office to check that your email address has not been used twice - e.g. on another guardian or child's profile.
5. Enter the birthday of one of your children to log in.
6. Only relatives who are Primary Guardians of a child can access the Arbor App. Ask us to check you can access Arbor.



The smartphone screen shows the Arbor app interface. At the top, it displays the user's name, Holly Cook, and their grade, 9SN. Below this is a 'Notices' section with a message about transportation. The 'Statistics' section shows attendance figures: 80.1% and 71.4%. The 'Activities' section shows a chart for Holly Cook's class. The bottom of the screen features a navigation bar with icons for home, search, and other functions.

## Absences



If you do need to take your child out of school for any reason please can you either show proof of a medical appointment to reception or for a longer absence please fill out a leave of absence form so that we know where they are. It is our legal responsibility to follow up on absences and if we know in advance it saves us from having to contact you.





## BLACKGATES PRIMARY ACADEMY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-26

Holiday	The Academy Closes	The Academy Opens
Summer		Monday 1 September 2025*
Autumn mid term	Friday 24 October 2025	Monday 3 November 2025
Christmas	Friday 19 December 2025	Monday 5 January 2026
Spring mid term	Friday 13 February 2026	Monday 23 February 2026
Easter break	Thursday 2 April 2026	Monday 20 April 2026
May Bank Holiday	Friday 1 May 2026	Tuesday 5 May 2026
Summer mid term	Thursday 21 May 2026*	Monday 1 June 2026
Summer break	Wednesday 22 July 2026*	

### Training Days

- 1 Monday 1 September
- 2 Monday 1 December
- 3 Friday 22 May
- 4 Monday 20 July\*
- 5 Tuesday 21 July\*