



The Basildon Lower Academy Newsletter

6th January 2026

Dates for the Diary

First Day of Spring Term

Tuesday 6th January 2026

Year 7 AP1 Assessments

Monday 12th - Friday 16th January 2026

Year 8 & Year 9 Progress Review Event

Thursday 22nd January 2026: 3.30pm-6.30pm

Holocaust Memorial Day

Tuesday 27th January 2026

Half Term

Monday 16th - Friday 20th February 2026

Student Value of the Term

KINDNESS IS EVERYTHING

House Points - Week Beginning 6th January



105,574
ALI



98,854
SEACOLE



85,474
AUSTEN



78,256
HAWKING

Leadership Message - Supporting Student Wellbeing

At Basildon Lower Academy, the wellbeing of every student is a top priority. We understand that feeling safe, supported, and ready to learn is essential for success. To help achieve this, we follow the Trauma Perceived Practice (TPP) approach, as recommended by Essex County Council. This is a whole-staff strategy that guides how we interact with and support students, ensuring that every child is met with understanding and care.



We also provide a dedicated Wellbeing Room, managed by our experienced Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA), which is open every day. This space is available for students who need extra support—whether that's reintegrating after a period of absence or managing challenges within the classroom. The room offers a calm and safe environment with a trusted adult, where students can regulate, reflect, reset, and return to learning. In some cases, this may include an adapted timetable to help ease the transition back into school life.

C.O'Keefe - Assistant Headteacher & SENCO

Parent Drop In - Thursday 8th January

This week's Parent Drop In will be on Thursday 8th January between 10am and 11am.

There will be no need to book an appointment, just sign in at reception and staff will be happy to show you to the venue. There is no set topic for the drop in sessions, if we are not able to answer any specific questions, we will follow up and then feedback to you. Please note, if your matter is of a confidential nature, we kindly ask that you call the school to arrange a separate appointment, as parent drop-in sessions are not intended for one-to-one discussions.



Parent/Carer Updating Contact Information

Please ensure we have current contact information on file for you, including home address, mobile phone number, and email address. If any of your details have changed, email us at admin@basildonacademies.org.uk with the updated information.

Home Learning

If you have any queries regarding home learning, including access issues or, to celebrate the work your child has completed at home, please visit the [Contact Us](#) page via the Basildon Lower Academy website and select the option for Home Learning/Homework.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding our students is at the forefront of everything we do. Parents and carers can access information via the following link www.escb.co.uk which offers guidance and signposts to resources on various safeguarding issues. Please contact our safeguarding officers if you have any concerns about your own child or another student at the Academies.

www.basildonloweracademy.org.uk/safeguarding

Student Nurse Drop In

If students are worried about their health, would like a confidential chat or would just like to find out more about how our school nurse can help them, the nurse can be found:

Every Thursday
Breaktime

Location: The Lower
Academy SEND
Department



Young Minds

[Young Minds](#) is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. Just as people's bodies can become unwell, people's minds can become unwell too.

Young Minds offer information to young people and children about mental health and emotional wellbeing. If you need to talk, they can let you know about organisations that listen, plus they offer online support and info.



Free Fruit at Breaktime



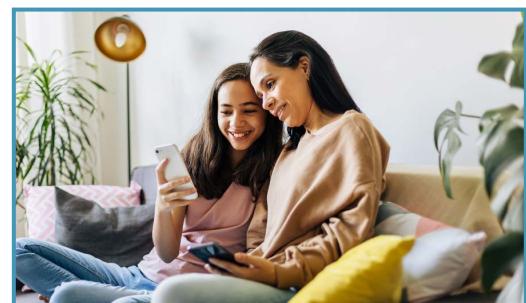
Students can choose an item of fruit from the till area in the Dining Hall at breaktime each day.

Aspire - Believe - Achieve

Online Safety Hub: Modelling Healthy Digital Habits to your Children

In today's digital age, technology permeates every part of our lives; therefore, it's vital young people learn responsible digital citizenship. Children learn through observation, so it's essential parents lead by example and model healthy online habits themselves. [Click here](#) to access information and support relating to modelling healthy digital habits to your children.

The Online Safety Hub is an online resource with lots of expert advice and guidance to help find out how to keep our young people safe online. You can access it for free here: [Online Safety Hub - The Basildon Academies](#)



NHS Guidance: Is your child too unwell for school?

As seasonal illnesses become more common, the NHS offers clear guidance to help parents and carers decide when children should stay at home and when it is safe to return to school. The advice covers common conditions such as coughs, colds, sickness, diarrhoea and fever.

You can view the full NHS guidance here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>



Candy Cane Lane Christmas Fayre Raises Over £1,000 for Fairtrade Foundation

Our Candy Cane Lane Christmas Fayre, held at the end of last term, was a hugely successful and festive event, welcoming large numbers of families into school to celebrate the season together.

This year's fayre was spread across multiple venues, including the sports hall, main hall, dance studio and atrium, creating a lively atmosphere throughout the school. Each space was filled with activity, festive cheer and a strong sense of community.

We are delighted to share that the event raised over £1,000 for our chosen charity, the Fairtrade Foundation, thanks to the generosity and support of everyone who attended.

The school choir set the festive mood with a performance of Christmas songs in the hall, while families enjoyed a wide range of attractions. These included a popular raffle with fantastic prizes, a Santa's Workshop where guests could purchase balloons, cards and sweets.

The sports hall and dance studio were filled with student-led stalls, showcasing creative and inventive games designed and run by students in their tutor groups. Activities such as crazy golf, bowling, hook the duck and a 'stick the nose on the reindeer' game, featuring a reindeer model created by students, were enjoyed by all ages, with many prizes won throughout the evening.

Feedback from guests was overwhelmingly positive, with comments including:

"It is so, so, so amazing!"

"It was amazing, great prices, amazing deals and incredible sweets."

"I've enjoyed it here so much."

"The food is amazing."

"I loved the raffle – it's been my favourite."

"The hot dogs were banging."



The fayre had a wonderful festive atmosphere, and students worked incredibly hard designing games and products for their stalls, demonstrating creativity, teamwork and commitment.

A huge thank you to all students, staff, families and supporters who helped make the Candy Cane Lane Christmas Fayre such a memorable and successful event.



Careers Drop Down Day

During the final week of term, students at the Lower Academy took part in three Careers Drop Down Days, designed to support their development and help prepare them for future education and employment.

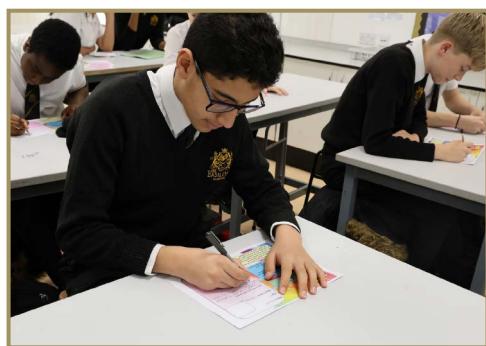
Across the three days, students engaged in a range of activities focused on building key employability and communication skills, while encouraging ambition and aspiration. Activities such as The Job Game and Saving Money helped students develop a better understanding of the world of work, financial responsibility, and the importance of making informed choices about their future.

Students also explored important workplace expectations, including attendance, punctuality, and reliability, helping them to understand what employers look for and how positive habits developed now can support long-term success.

The Careers Drop Down Days concluded with a large interactive quiz, allowing students to consolidate their learning and reflect on the knowledge and skills they had developed throughout the programme.

Careers Days form part of the Academy's ongoing commitment to preparing students with the confidence, skills, and understanding needed to make informed decisions about their future pathways.

"I really enjoyed the Careers Drop Down Days because they taught us the essential skills we'll need for the jobs we aspire to." Rohle.T – Year 8



Essex Sexual Health Service Webpages Dedicated to Secondary Parents & Carers

The Essex Sexual Health Service has a website dedicated to parents and carers. Parents can find a wealth of resources, including FAQs, insights into RSE, and advice on how to have those important conversations.

www.essexsexualhealthservice.org.uk/parents-and-carers/



Department for Work and Pensions Inspire Year 7 Students in Careers Sessions

During the last week of term, Year 7 students took part in engaging Careers and Aspirations Workshops delivered by Andrea and Gill from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

The sessions, part of the Academy's ongoing careers education programme, encouraged students to start thinking about future possibilities and the steps they can take to achieve their goals. Andrea and Gill guided students through discussions about personal strengths, interests, and the diverse opportunities available to them as they grow.

Students were encouraged to reflect on what they enjoy, the skills they already have, and how these might connect to future careers. The workshops highlighted the importance of planning, resilience, and confidence, helping students gain a clearer picture of how their learning links to real-world opportunities.

A strong theme throughout was the value of communication and self-belief as essential skills for future success. The DWP representatives also emphasised that learning from mistakes is a positive part of the journey toward achieving long-term goals.



Festive Creativity Shines in Art Christmas Competition

Well done to all the students who took part in last term's Art Christmas Competition.

The creativity, effort, and imagination shown across all the entries were truly impressive, making the judging process both enjoyable and very challenging.

We are delighted to announce our three wonderful winners: **Ajay.B (R9X1)**, **Millie.S (R8X1)**, and **Vanessa.G (R8X)**. Their artwork stood out for its originality, attention to detail, and festive spirit, and they should be extremely proud of their achievements. All participants received prizes in recognition of their hard work and creativity.

A huge thank you to everyone who entered and took the time to share their artistic talents with us. Your hard work and enthusiasm helped make this competition a great success.

Keep up the fantastic artwork, continue to be creative, and we look forward to seeing even more amazing pieces in the future!



Celebrating Creativity in French

The French department is delighted to share the success of our festive cultural display of Christmas cards, created by talented students in Years 7, 8, and 9.

Congratulations to our award winners:

- Raffiat M. (9E1)
- Harsimran.K (9E1)
- Edona.D (9X1)
- Gers.D (7Y1)
- Scott.J (7S2)
- Layla.H (7U1)

A big well done to all participants for making this display so special!



End of Term Rewards Trips to the Cinema

During the last few weeks of term, students were treated to a special end-of-term rewards trip to the local Vue Cinema in Basildon.

One tutor group from each year was selected to attend the trip, having earned the most credits during the term. This reward recognised their consistent effort and positive behaviour.

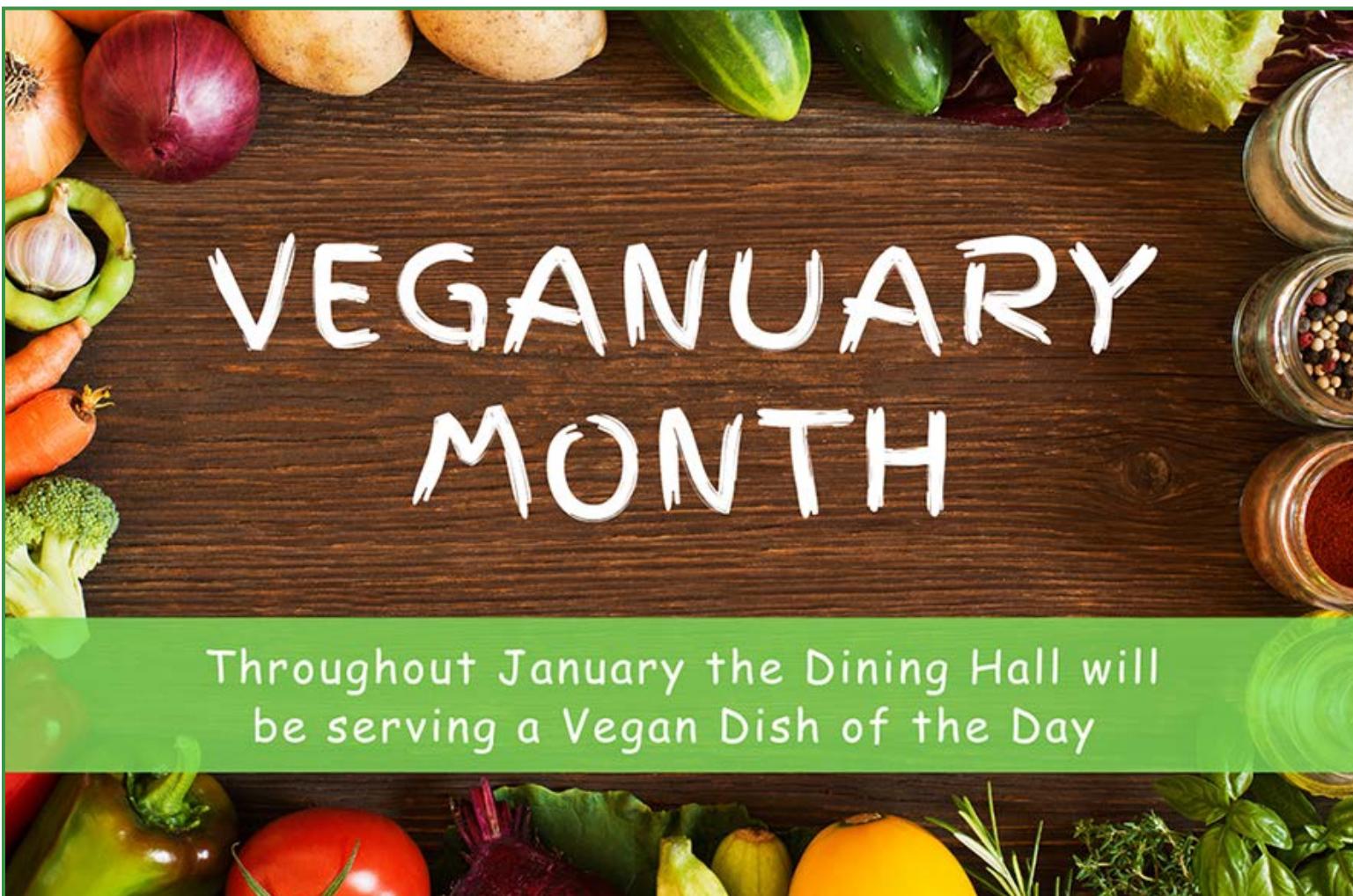
Students enjoyed a festive cinema experience, watching the seasonal favourites Elf and The Grinch, helping to celebrate the end of term in a fun and relaxed way.



Well done to all the tutor groups who earned this reward; a fantastic achievement and a great way to finish the term.

VEGANUARY MONTH

Throughout January the Dining Hall will
be serving a Vegan Dish of the Day



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- Graduate schemes
- First jobs
- Careers events
- CV workshops
- Youth Friendly Employers
- AND MORE!



youthemployment.org.uk/createyourfuture



Educational Psychology Parent Helpline

Essex County Council are pleased to announce the launch of their new support offer for families.

The EP Parent Helpline offers advice, support, and signposting for parents and carers. It is a confidential, safe, and private service, and no referral is needed — just book an appointment in advance.



Easy to Access: The booking is designed to provide an easier and more convenient experience.

- Available on alternating Mondays and Tuesdays
- 1:00pm – 5:00pm
- 25-minute appointments bookable via MS Teams
- No more waiting – instant booking confirmation

For booking details and further information, please visit: EP-Parent-Helpline

Further information is available on the Essex County Council Local Offer pages: <https://schools.essex.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send/send-services-and-support/essex-local-offer-website>

Mind - Mental Health Charity

If you or someone you know needs support with mental health, the charity Mind provides helpful information, advice, and practical tips for looking after your wellbeing. For more information please visit: www.mind.org.uk



BASILDON ACADEMIES

WORD OF THE DAY

5th - 9th January 2026

Monday:	Rejuvenate (verb) yeosal in Wolof – to restore energy or freshness. <i>The holidays helped rejuvenate the students for a new term.</i>	
Tuesday:	Illumination (noun) isikhanyiso in Xhosa – spiritual or intellectual enlightenment. <i>The play offered an illumination of Shakespeare's wit.</i>	
Wednesday:	Alacrity (noun) mendjemadësi in Albanian – brisk and cheerful readiness. <i>She accepted the challenge with alacrity.</i>	
Thursday:	Veracity (noun) ճշմարտացիություն in Armenian – conformity to facts; accuracy. <i>The historian's veracity was never in doubt.</i>	
Friday:	Concise (adjective) kondizan in Bosnian – giving much information clearly in few words. <i>His concise summary saved valuable time.</i>	

Job of the Week: Radiologist

What does a Radiologist do?

Radiologists are doctors who interpret diagnostic images such as X-rays, MRI and CT scans, and provide written reports.

Your day-to-day will include tasks such as:

- Using images to diagnose, treat, and manage medical conditions
- Preparing written reports of the results of your examinations
- Examining patient anatomy, pathology, clinical history, and previous imaging
- Offering specialist expertise and guidance to other doctors and staff
- Developing treatment plans for your patients

Labour Market Information

- 237,849
- 4,621 in your local area of Essex
- +7.2% 118,954 jobs
- +11.3% in your region of East of England, an increase of 13,484 jobs



Let's Talk Money

UK annual median:
£74,979

What Qualifications do you need to do this job?

You'll need:

- To complete a medical degree at medical school
- To complete general training, sometimes referred to as a 'foundation programme' or 'residency'
- To complete specialised training in radiology, sometimes referred to as a 'fellowship'

There is a real drive to ensure that TAs are highly skilled and deployed effectively to meet the needs of learners. TAs feel well valued and were able to articulate how they are given opportunities to develop their skills through CPD and often receive public recognition through the 'Star of the week'.



Best Practice with
Teaching Assistants Award

2023-2026

Follow The Basildon Lower Academy on our social media channels



Absence Procedures

Please let us know as soon as possible if your child is unable to attend school, ideally by 8am, by email to lowerattendance@basildonacademies.org.uk or by calling **01268 498881**.



- Parents/carers must contact the school by 8.30am each day their child is absent.
- If no reason has been received for a child's absence, the Academy will initiate first day calling.
- Parent/carers may be asked for medical evidence to support absences after 3 days or reoccurring absence patterns.
- Wherever possible, parents/carers should make appointments outside of school hours. If this is unavoidable students should attend school before and after the appointment.

Please familiarise yourself with our attendance procedures found on the school website within the Parent Information section, so you know who and when you need to contact us. www.basildonloweracademy.org.uk/attendance

Did you know? **90%** of young people with attendance **BELOW** **85%** fail to get good grades.

MISSING 1 DAY A WEEK



LOSING ONE YEAR OF SCHOOL LIFE.

Good attendance means:

Being in school at least **97%** of the time, that's at least **184** days a year.

Target 97%+

175

days are **NOT** spent in school each year.*

* Plenty of time for shopping, holidays & appointments.

143

Days of education

75%

47 days absent

152

Days of education

80%

38 days absent

162

Days of education

85%

28 days absent

171

Days of education

90%

19 days absent

184

Days of education

97%

6 days absent

190

Days of education

100%

0 days absent

SERIOUSLY WORRIED

Very poor attendance has a serious impact & reduces life chances.

VERY CONCERNED

Poor attendance gives less chance of success.

WELL DONE

Good attendance gives the best chance of success.