



# NEWSLETTER

30<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2026

## A MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Families,

What a week of celebration at Laurance Haines! Our winter bedtime stories event last night was a heartwarming success, and it was lovely to see so many families attend, share books together, and enjoy a hot chocolate. Thank you to everyone who joined us.

This year is the National Year of Reading, and we're committed to taking part as much as we can. Today, we were thrilled to welcome author Sarah Ziman, who shared her poetry writing journey with our children. They thoroughly enjoyed their workshop with her and were truly inspired. Please look out for events at school and at the Watford Library.

Speaking of inspiration, I have been amazed by some of our children's writing recently. Yesterday, Genesis in Year 4 showed me her book of poetry and stories, and it was an absolute delight to read. The talent and creativity in our school never ceases to impress me. Please take some time to read one of Genesis's poems below:

### I See Train

I see Train,  
I see Train,  
Mind the gap,  
Mind the gap,  
Stand by the yellow line,  
Stand by the yellow line,  
If you want to be safe,  
If you want to be safe.  
By Genesis

What I love about this poem is how cleverly Genesis has used structure and metre to make the words feel and sound like a train. She has written these at home and told me how much she loves to write.

Finally, I want to thank our families for your continued support in ensuring that Laurance Haines is a truly inclusive school. It was lovely to talk to so many of you yesterday. Your partnership means everything.

You see me. You hear me. I belong.

Jo Ball

Headteacher



# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

I am thrilled to let you know that we have been awarded the Herts Shining Communication Award, a recognition that celebrates schools demonstrating outstanding practice in supporting children with speech, language, and communication needs. This award highlights settings that create communication-rich environments, use evidence-based strategies, and ensure every child is equipped to communicate with confidence.

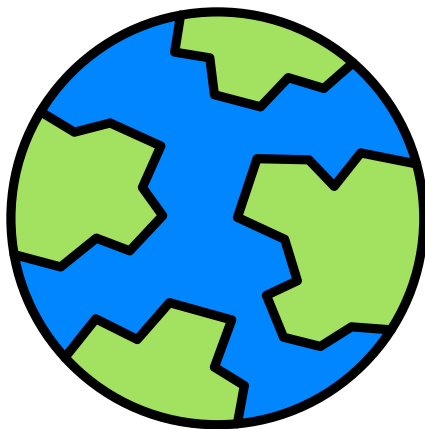
A key strength identified in our assessment was the expertise of our staff. Our team is trained in a wide range of speech, language, and communication (SLC) needs, and they bring a high level of knowledge to their daily practice. This training enables staff to adapt teaching, remove barriers, and provide targeted support that helps children thrive.

We were also praised for our effective use of visuals and scaffolds, which support understanding, independence, and access to learning. Alongside this, our strong focus on vocabulary development ensures pupils experience rich language and have meaningful opportunities to practise new words across the curriculum.

Our targeted interventions were recognised as another strength, offering tailored support for children who need it most. Moving forward, our development focus is to refine how we track small steps of progress, allowing us to monitor impact even more closely.

We are proud of this achievement and remain committed to being a communication-rich, inclusive school.

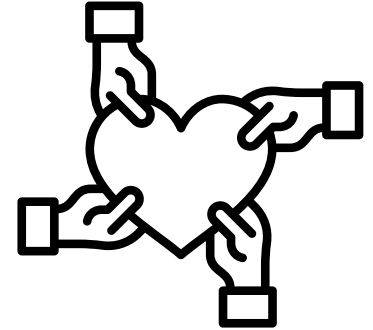
Michelle Connell  
SENCO



# SEND NEWS

Please find the link below to the DSPL9 Parent and Family Newsletter.

[DSPL9 Parent and Family Newsletter](#)



## WORLD HIJAB DAY

It has been so lovely to see so many of our children and adults coming into school today to celebrate World Hijab Day. This has been a wonderful opportunity for children to learn about the hijab, develop empathy and celebrate diversity, identity and the empowerment of women and girls. This has been a voluntary opportunity for children to experience and reflect and to feel included and supported.





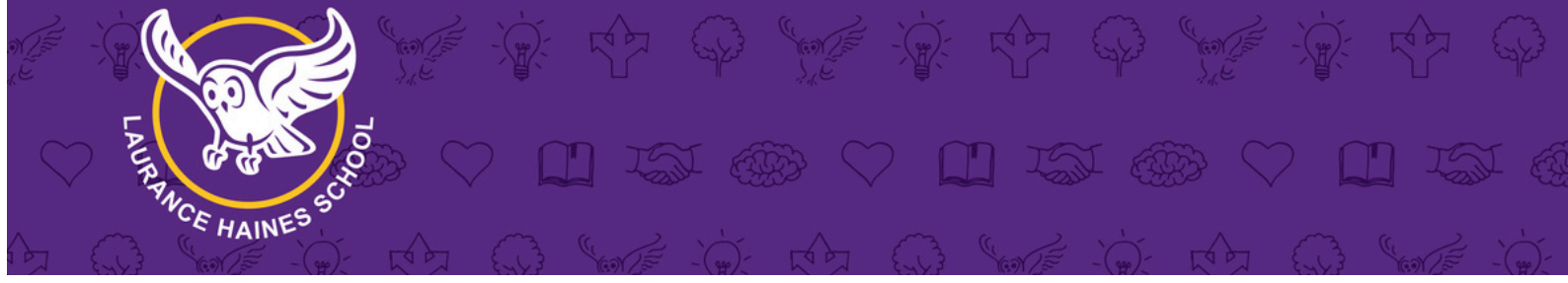
# WINTER BEDTIME STORIES



Thank you so much to everyone who joined us for our annual Winter Bedtime Stories event last night. The turn out was fantastic and so many of you commented on how much you enjoyed sharing stories with your friends and families.

It really highlighted what we do best here at Laurance Haines - bring people together and share in that community feeling.

Mrs Ball read a very funny book called Shhh! By the authors Sally Grindley and Peter Utton and Mrs Goss read a lovely book called Boldest White written by Ibtihaj Muhammad.



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

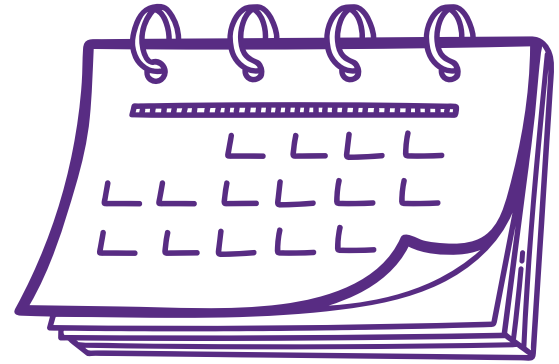
Please look on the school website for all term dates of the  
academic year 2025/2026

## January 2026

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January - Holocaust Memorial Day  
Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January - World Hijab Day  
Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January - Author Visit

## February 2026

Week beginning 9<sup>th</sup> February - Feel Good Week  
Week beginning 9<sup>th</sup> February - Parent Consultations  
Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February - Safer Internet Day  
Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February - Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February - Half Term - No School  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February - Chinese New Year  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February - Ramadan  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February - Community Iftar



## March 2026

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March - Celebrating SEND Day  
Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March - World Book Day  
Week beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> March - Eid Picnic  
Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March - Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April - Easter Holidays - No School



Please don't forget to book your slots for parents evening. An email was sent out on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January to guide you on how to book.





# READING PAGE



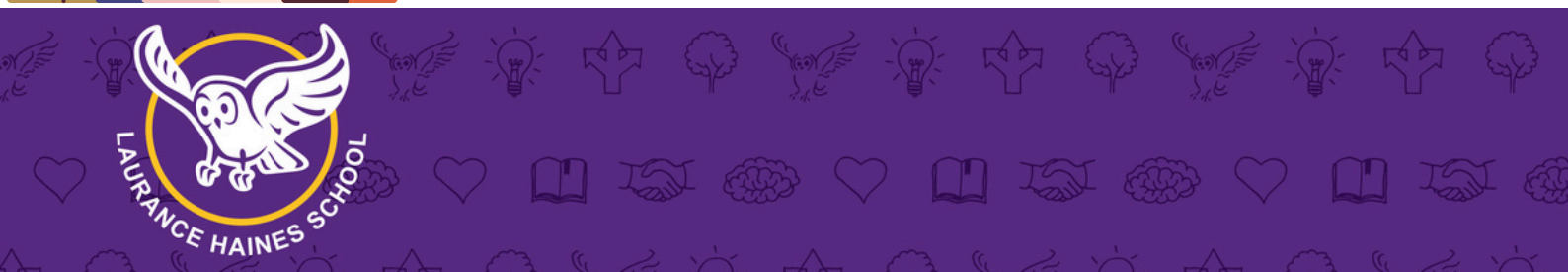
National Year of Reading LHS Launch

As mentioned above and in my spotlight last week, 2026 is the National Year of Reading. We want to mark the beginning of this year with a launch morning in school and everyone is invited! We will host a Reading Breakfast and Assembly for all children and parents to join us for, so please come along if you can!

KS2 (Year 3, 4, 5 and 6) will be on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February: Reading Breakfast followed by Assembly at 9.15am-9.30am.

KS1 and EYFS (Reception, Year 1 and 2) will be on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February: Reading Breakfast followed by Assembly at 9.15am-9.30am.

We are so excited to share this year with you and really increase everyone's love of reading in every way we can; this is just the beginning! So come along and find out how you can get involved and continue to grow yours and your child's pleasure for Reading!





# Kids Swimming Lessons Merchant Taylors School

## Term 1b

## Now Enrolling



Age 3+ | 4 Per Class | Stages 1-7 | Monthly Assessments

**Term Dates:** 28th February - 16th May

**No Swimming:** 28th March - 11th April (Easter Holidays)

**Availability:** Saturday 14:00 - 14:30 | 14:30-15:00 | 15:00 - 15:30

**Abilities:** Water Confidence | Beginner | Improver | Advanced

**Cost:** £85.50pp | £9.50 per lesson

### Join Online:

[www.swimxcelerate.co.uk/join](http://www.swimxcelerate.co.uk/join)

### Further Enquiries:

Nathan Williams | Programme Manager

[nathan-williams@swimxcelerate.co.uk](mailto:nathan-williams@swimxcelerate.co.uk)



@swimxcelerate



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**SwimXcelerate**  
Swim Academy



# SAFETY AROUND OUR SCHOOL

Laurance Haines School has received a number of letters from local residents living in 'Rose Gardens' expressing their on going safety concerns for irresponsible and unsafe parking around our school.



A few reminders for our school community;

**STAY  
SAFE**

DO NOT PARK ON PAVEMENTS

DO NOT BLOCK DRIVEWAYS



DO NOT PARK ON DOUBLE YELLOW LINES

Please be more considerate when parking for drop off before school and after school and use designated parking spaces over the bridge



The best solution is to  
WALK TO SCHOOL

