



*If we believe,
we will achieve.*

Chalkwell Hall Junior School

London Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3NL

T: 01702 478570

E: office@chalkwellhall-jun.southend.sch.uk

W: www.chalkwellhall.co.uk

Headteacher: Andy Newnham

2nd March 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

RE: Consultation on proposed two-week October half-term break

We are seeking your views early on a proposal to introduce a two-week October half-term break for Chalkwell Hall Junior School for academic year 2027-28. This is part of a wider consultation across all Tenacitas Trust schools.

Our aim is simple: to support the best possible conditions for pupils to learn and thrive. A slightly longer mid-term break in the autumn could benefit pupils and families, while maintaining strong routines and outcomes.

Why we are considering this

The autumn term is the longest and most demanding period of the school year. A short additional break can support children to rest, reset and return energised for learning. Schools in our wider region already using this model report pupils returning more settled, focused and ready for the busy run-up to Christmas.

Benefits for pupils

A mid-term reset supports:

- stronger focus and motivation
- reduced fatigue later in the term
- improved readiness to learn
- positive wellbeing and routines

Some schools adopting this approach have also seen fewer seasonal illnesses immediately after the break, helping to maintain good attendance.

Benefits for families

We recognise the demands of family life. A two-week October break can offer:

- more flexibility for family time
- opportunities to plan childcare and shared care more easily
- potential access to lower-cost travel options
- quieter periods for days out and activities

We also acknowledge this may pose challenges for some families, especially around childcare. Your feedback is important and will help shape our decision.

Protecting learning time

No learning time will be lost and pupils will meet the learning time required by the Department for Education.





Chalkwell Hall Junior School

London Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3NL

T: 01702 478570

E: office@chalkwellhall-jun.southend.sch.uk

W: www.chalkwellhall.co.uk

Headteacher: Andy Newnham

*If we believe,
we will achieve.*

For those schools that need to add time across a day or week to meet DfE learning requirements, there are various approaches that can be used. Rather than applying a single trust-wide model, we will work with each school and empower them to select the most suitable local approach. The preferred option is a small increase in the length of the school day, but schools may propose a different model. Any model must protect the minimum amount of required learning time.

At Chalkwell Hall Junior School the preferred approach would be a small increase to the length of the school day. One model under consideration would involve a school day of 6 hours and 40 minutes, which exceeds the Department for Education's expectation of a 32.5-hour week.

If the proposal goes ahead this could mean a school day running from:

8:30am to 3:10pm in Years 3&4

and 8:40am to 3:20pm in Years 5&6.

Final arrangements would be confirmed once all consultation feedback has been reviewed.

Have your say

Please share your views using the following link: [Parent Consultation Survey](#)

The consultation will close on **13th April 2026**. We will communicate the outcome with you.

Thank you for your continued support. Working together, we can continue to create the best possible environment for our children to learn and flourish.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Newnham
Headteacher





*If we believe,
we will achieve.*

Chalkwell Hall Junior School

London Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3NL

T: 01702 478570

E: office@chalkwellhall-jun.southend.sch.uk

W: www.chalkwellhall.co.uk

Headteacher: Andy Newnham

Parent FAQs – Proposed Two-Week October Half-Term

Introduction

We are consulting on a proposal to introduce a two-week October half-term break across Tenacitas Trust schools.

Our focus is to provide the best possible environment for pupils to learn and thrive. A slightly longer break in the middle of the autumn term may support pupils to rest, return refreshed, and sustain strong learning throughout the term. We know family circumstances vary, so your views are important before any decision is made.

Pupil Wellbeing and Learning

Why consider a longer October half-term?

The autumn term is the longest and most demanding part of the school year. A slightly longer mid-term break allows pupils to rest, reset and return ready to learn, particularly ahead of the busy run-up to Christmas.

Will pupils lose learning time?

No. Learning time will be adjusted to ensure we meet the requirements set by the Department for Education.

How will schools make sure learning time is protected?

If needed, a small increase to the length of the school day is the preferred approach. However, schools may propose an alternative method that fits their local context. Any model must protect the minimum learning time required.

Will this affect pupils' progress?

No. We expect pupils to benefit from being rested and ready to learn, which supports focus, engagement and progress.

Family Life and Practicalities

How could this support families?

A two-week break in October can offer:

- more flexibility for childcare and shared care
- potential access to lower-cost travel options
- quieter times for days out and activities
- more balanced family time across the term





*If we believe,
we will achieve.*

Chalkwell Hall Junior School

London Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3NL

T: 01702 478570

E: office@chalkwellhall-jun.southend.sch.uk

W: www.chalkwellhall.co.uk

Headteacher: Andy Newnham

Will this create childcare challenges for some families?

We recognise that childcare can be a challenge for some families. Part of this consultation is to understand views so we can plan effectively and consider support where appropriate.

Will holiday dates at Christmas or summer change?

No. We are not proposing any changes to Christmas or summer holiday dates.

School Day and Calendar

How will any missed time be made up?

No learning time will be lost. A small increase in the length of the school day is the preferred model to meet DfE requirements. Schools will have flexibility to suggest an alternative pattern where appropriate.

Will every school have the same timetable?

Schools will be able to propose the model that best fits their context, provided minimum learning time requirements are met.

Does this mean school days will become significantly longer?

No. Any change required is modest and will not significantly affect daily routines.

Wider Context

Are other schools doing this?

Yes. A growing number of schools and trusts in our wider region already have a two-week October half-term, with positive feedback from pupils, parents and staff.

Why not make this change sooner?

We are consulting now to allow time for planning. If approved, the change would start in the 2026–27 academic year.

Consultation and Decision-Making

How can parents and carers share views?

You will receive a link to share your feedback online.





Chalkwell Hall Junior School

London Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 3NL

T: 01702 478570

E: office@chalkwellhall-jun.southend.sch.uk

W: www.chalkwellhall.co.uk

Headteacher: Andy Newnham

*If we believe,
we will achieve.*

When will the decision be made?

After the consultation closes. Families will be informed in good time before the 2027–28 academic year.

If parents disagree, will the change still happen?

We are genuinely consulting and will consider all feedback, including any concerns raised. A final decision will be made once all views have been reviewed.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and share your views. Your feedback plays an important part in shaping school planning and ensuring we continue to deliver the best for our pupils and families.

