



Golden Valley Primary School

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*'Sharing Kindness,
Challenging Ourselves and Others,
Achieving Excellence'*

Headteacher: Mr R Riordan BA (QTS) Hons., NPQH

Friday 4th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have all had a wonderful summer and enjoyed some quality time with family and friends, as well as making the most of the lovely weather and the school holiday break.

Staff have had two productive days preparing for the children's return on Monday and completing our statutory training requirements. The sessions have included attendance, communication, safeguarding, allergies, and a valuable presentation from our Mental Health Support Team.

Our site team have also worked incredibly hard throughout the summer break, carrying out classroom redecoration projects and completing the first phase of our exciting new library development. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back and sharing these improvements with the children.

50th Birthday Celebrations

While a great deal of work has been completed over the summer, our new library is not quite finished. We have therefore decided to postpone our 50th Birthday Celebrations until the last Friday of term, when the library will be complete and our Reception children will also be in full time.

The celebrations will include 1970s-themed fancy dress, cakes provided by Aspens, a special assembly, and an opportunity for every class to visit and enjoy the new library.

School Hours Change

Just a reminder that we agreed to change the timings of the school day to support parents with drop off and pick up.

New start and end times for EYFS and Year 1: 8:45am and 3:25pm

Start and end times for KS2: 8.50am and 3.30pm

Academic Calendar

The 2026-27 Academic Calendar is now available on our school website: [Calendar 26-27](#). The calendar includes:

- PE days (please note Year R will not be starting PE until Monday 21st September)
- Week A and Week B timetables
- School holidays
- INSET days



Staff News

We would like to congratulate two members of staff on their recent weddings:

- Miss Anderson (Kestrel Class Teacher) is now Mrs Hughes.
- Miss Neary (WAC Playleader and Year 3 Learning Partner) is now Mrs Steed.

We wish them both every happiness for the future.

FSM Applications

There have been some important changes to Free School Meal eligibility:

- Eligibility has been expanded to include all children and young people living in households that receive Universal Credit.
- Transitional protection ended in July 2026. Since April 2018, this protection allowed pupils who became eligible for free school meals to retain their entitlement even if their family circumstances changed. This arrangement has now come to an end.

All pupils currently in receipt of free school meals will need to reapply or you can use the link to see if your child is now eligible: [Free School Meals Checker - Check Eligibility Online | LGfL FSM](#)

Free School Meals provide eligible pupils with a free school lunch each day and can also generate additional funding for the school through the Pupil Premium, helping to support learning and enrichment opportunities.

If you would like the school to make an application on your behalf, please contact the school office and we will be happy to help.

MHST - Supporting Your Child's Emotional Wellbeing

As we settle into a new school year, parents and carers are invited to join a series of **free online workshops** run by the Mental Health Support Team (MHST). These friendly, practical sessions are designed to help families better understand children's emotions and mental wellbeing. This term's workshops include:

Introduction to Anxiety

Understand what anxiety is, how it can affect children, and discover simple strategies to support your child at home.

Understanding Emotions: Tools to Thrive

Learn more about children's emotions, why they sometimes struggle to manage them, and practical tools to help them thrive.

The sessions are held online, last around one hour, and are open to all parents and carers.

We warmly encourage families to take part. To register, simply complete the online registration form using the link the QR code below:

**To sign up, please
complete a registration
form here:**



MHST Online Session



Birthday Celebration Days

We are excited to introduce a new tradition at school. Children will now have the opportunity to wear their favourite clothes to school on their birthday! We hope this will help children feel extra special on their big day and give their friends and the adults in school the opportunity to celebrate with them and wish them a happy birthday.

A few important points (the boring stuff):

- If a child's birthday falls on a weekend, they are invited to wear their birthday outfit on the Friday before.
- If a child's birthday falls during a school holiday, they may wear their birthday outfit on the Friday before we break up.
- Participation is entirely optional. Children are welcome to wear their normal school uniform if they would prefer.
- If your child's birthday falls on a PE day, please ensure their chosen outfit is suitable and safe for physical activity.

We look forward to helping make birthdays even more memorable for our pupils! 🎂 🎉

Yours sincerely,



R Riordan
Headteacher

DIARY DATES

Please be aware that this list of dates is subject to change, and additional dates will be included when other events/activities have been finalised.

You can view the school calendar online; this contains planned dates for the whole school year: [School Calendar](#)

September 2026	
Fri 4	INSET Day
Mon 7	First day of term
Mon 14	Y2 Parent Meeting
Weds 16	Y1 Parent Meeting Y6 Parent Information Evening
Thurs 17	Y4 Parent Meeting
Fri 18	Y3 Parent Meeting
Weds 23	Y5 Parent Meeting
Tues 29	YR Drop In Session
October 2026	
Thurs 1	YR Drop In Session
Fri 23	50 th Birthday Celebration and Fancy Dress

Further details about most of the events will be given nearer the time where appropriate.