

Dear Parents and Carers,

8<sup>th</sup> October 2024

## **2025/26 October Half-Term Holiday**

Across our Trust, schools have a two-week holiday in the October half-term. We are therefore letting you know, a year in advance, of Brookside's adoption of this trust-wide practice from 2025/26. There are some very clear reasons for this:

### **1. Mental and Physical Well-Being**

A longer break allows everyone the opportunity to recharge and reset. After a busy term, taking an extra week can significantly reduce stress levels, preventing burnout and promoting overall well-being. This in turn impacts upon absences from school. Feedback from Trust schools is overwhelmingly positive. This also allows a good rest before the inevitable challenges that the darker and colder days bring as we build up to Christmas Performances.

### **2. Enhanced Opportunities for Families**

With two weeks off, it will be possible to plan trips and activities during the cheaper off-peak times which reduces the cost considerably. Cost is often the main reason given to us as to why a term time holiday is taken. A longer and cheaper break opportunity in October will mean that families can take time to plan a holiday rather than take term-time holiday.

### **3. Enhanced Opportunities for Staff**

With a two-week break between the first term and the Christmas term - similar to how the Easter and the Christmas break works; staff will also have a time to rest and come back fresher in the Christmas term.

I firmly believe that a two-week break during the October half-term would greatly benefit our school community. Brookside will still be open as a school for 190 days a year, children will not be in school for less time. We will also be looking at offering a limited number of free childcare places for the first week of the October half-term break, as we appreciate that term dates are different to other schools.

This will be taking place in the 2025/26 academic year, NOT this year, where we will have an October break of ONE WEEK only.

If you have any questions, please let me know and I will make sure they are answered.

Yours sincerely,



Brian Walton