



Providing a life-enhancing education that develops the character, talents and potential of every child

ACHIEVEMENT ~ DIVERSITY ~ RESPECT

Headteacher: Ms Jo Butler

Friday 13 February 2026

**Press release from Cotham School regarding our Playing Fields at Stoke Lodge
Cotham School Playing Fields at Stoke Lodge - Open During February Half Term**

Cotham School is pleased to announce that the gates to our school playing fields at Stoke Lodge will remain open during the school holiday, Monday 16 February - Sunday 22 February 2026

The school made the decision to lock the gates to ensure the safety of our students and staff, and to protect the security of our facilities.

Following a period during which the gates were locked, due to criminal damage, significant disturbances to our site and the delivery of education for our students, we were encouraged that the criminal damage appeared to have ceased.

Today's discovery of further criminal damage, the forcible removal of another fence panel, is deeply concerning. Our staff and students arriving for their scheduled PE lessons were confronted by adults with dogs on the pitches, disrupting the school's lawful use of its facilities. This is wholly unacceptable.

Despite this, we have still decided to enable public access during the half-term period when the fields are not required for school use.

The gates will be re-locked on the morning of Monday, 23 February 2026, ahead of the school resuming use. The school has historically allowed community access to the fields outside of school hours and sports club activities.

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However, we cannot continue this arrangement while the site's security is being compromised and our lawful use of the playing fields is not being respected.

The public is reminded that dogs are not permitted on the fields at any time, and that the claimed Public Rights of Way have no legal standing at this time.

Cotham School

13 February 2026