



Balksbury Federation

Across the Playground

Friday 14th February

Happy 1st Half Term

Just like that, another half term has reached an end and it is time for a week break. We wish all of our families a restful half term and look forward to seeing you on **Monday 24th February**.

Easter Hamper

Our fantastic Easter Hamper will be on sale once again, soon after half term. You will be able to buy tickets for £1 by the Hive, before and after school.



World Book Day

The federation will be celebrating World Book Day on the Thursday 6th March. Children are invited to dress as their favourite character from a book, or wear something comfy and cosy to read in. Dolce will be providing us with a delicious World Book Day themed lunch which can be ordered via SchoolGrid. More information regarding the day can be found by clicking the link below:

<https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/balksbury-inf-hants/UploadedDocument/ce3fb9cc-fd75-44ca-84aa-ee94d8c22c1e/world-book-day.pdf>

Annual County Inspection

Last Wednesday we were visited by our Local Leadership and Learning Partner from Hampshire Education Authorities. The visit took place across a day and looked at many aspects in both schools including the quality of teaching, behaviour and leadership.

We were extremely proud of the children and how well they represented the federation during the visit and wanted to share some key points that were highlighted.

'The federation has highly effective leaders, who accurately identify priorities for teaching and learning'

'There is a clear vision for the learning environment with rich vocabulary and reading at the heart of each classroom'

'Learning behaviours are excellent'

'A culture of continued improvement and collective teacher effectiveness ensures teaching and learning remain a focus'

'All pupils, including those with SEND make good progress from their starting points'



For feedback, compliments and comments, visit our **Contact Us** page on our website or email one of the admin offices.

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Clubs



The children have been full of excitement about the after-school club allocations which were sent home this week. The allocation slips have some handy information regarding any required equipment and key dates.

Clubs will commence the first week back after half term W/C Monday 24th February. We cannot wait to immerse the children into their new clubs, learning new skills, keeping active and making new friends.

Please can we politely remind parents, the deadline for paying for paid clubs is Friday 28th February.

If your child will not be attending their club you must inform the school office in line with our safeguarding procedures.



Parents' Evening

A little reminder that parents' evening will be on Monday 17th March and Wednesday 19th March. More information to follow after half term.



Anti-Bullying and One Kind Word Day 2025

Last Friday, the children took time to work collaboratively to celebrate Anti-Bullying and One Kind Word Day. Throughout the week the children enjoyed assemblies around the theme of kindness and all enjoyed the story 'We're all Wonders' by R.J Palacio. The children worked together to create two fantastic displays in each of our schools as a reminder to *'throw kindness like confetti'*. Our Anti-Bullying leaflet for families can be found by clicking the link below:

<https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/balksbury-inf-hants/UploadedDocument/d3a3a10f-6fb2-4b97-b785-0fb6cfd21d7b/say-no-to-bullying.pdf>



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Classroom News



Across the Playground

Year 1

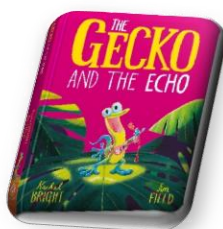
In Year 1, we have been learning lots of new information about animals! During our **Science learning**, we have been busy studying mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians to identify their similarities and differences. As part of this learning, we visited the federation's **pond** to observe fish moving around in their aquatic habitat. Our Science learning also inspired us to make bird feeders so that we could watch different birds from our classroom windows. In **English**, we have been working hard to plan and write our own narratives based on the text 'The Gecko and the Echo' by Rachel Bright.



Year 2

Year 2 have had a busy half term with lots of fantastic learning across the curriculum. In **Maths**, we have spent time adding and subtracting two digit numbers using dienes, both concrete and pictorially. It has been brilliant seeing the children apply what they know to help solve word problems. Our topic in Science has been looking at **plants**. We have set up an investigation to see whether plants grow healthier in the light or in the dark. We are waiting for our broad beans to burst from the soil and observe the differences in appearance and growth over the next 5 weeks.

The children have all enjoyed learning about the **seaside** and looking at the changes and similarities with the seaside today and in the past. They couldn't believe what the swimming costumes looked like 100 years ago! Thank you to all those who bought photographs in of the children on the beaches – some serious sandcastles have been built! We have also learnt about instructions, both in English with making topiary trees and in Computing with directing our BeeBots.



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Classroom News



Across the Playground

Year 4

Year 4 have had a fantastic spring term. In **Design and Technology**, we have been learning all about electrical components and have enjoyed exploring and making electrical circuits before creating our very own working **torch**. In **English**, we have been working hard to write our own **dragon narratives** and look forward to publishing them. We cannot wait to read the final stories once they are finished. We have loved outdoor P.E and putting our **dodgeball skills** to the test and in gymnastics we have created our own impressive routines combining different rolls such as a straddle and barrel roll and perfecting a shoulder stand and bridge. Whilst in **science**, we have been learning all about sound which certainly went off with a bang. Using musical instruments, we have explored how vibrations were created to make sound, what was the best insulator for sound was and what happens to sound the further away you are from the sound source.



Year 5

In Year 5, we have welcomed the new year in with some fantastic learning. In **Maths**, we have explored factors and multiples and how to apply them within worded problems. In **English**, we have read the book 'Varmints' and have written a balanced argument deciding whether nature should make way for industrialisation. This has linked to our RE topic of stewardship, where we have learnt about what stewardship is and how we can be stewards to the world around us. In Outdoor PE, our focus has been on **Handball** - we have even managed to compete in a Year 5 inter-house tournament! Within our Science topic of Properties of materials, we have tested whether some materials are effective insulators and conductors.



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The Reading Corner



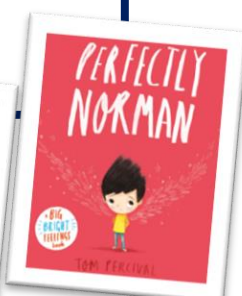
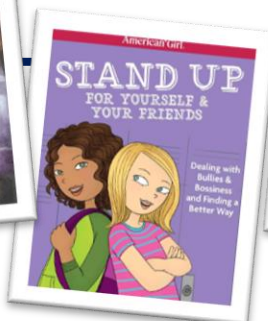
Focus Bookshelves

One Kind Word

Words have a lot of power. Kind words make people feel happy, while unkind words can make people feel bullied and miserable. In Barksbury Federation we try hard to use kind words and do not tolerate any form of bullying.

There are some lovely books in both libraries about being kind and what to do if you are being bullied.

Why not try **Stand Up For Yourself and Your Friends**, **The Station Cat** or **Perfectly Norman**?



Spotlight on...

Gillian Cross

Gillian Cross has been writing for over 30 years! She is probably best known for her **Demon Headmaster** books. This tells the story of a very scary headteacher, but Gillian is keen to point out that she does not base her characters on real people. In her spare time, Gillian likes to play the piano, go swimming and spend time in her garden.



World Book Day

6th March

This year, we are inviting our children to celebrate World Book Day by either:

Dressing up as their favourite character from a book.



or

Wearing something comfy or cosy to snuggle up with a book.

Don't forget you can order a special World Book Day lunch via SchoolGrid! Scan the QR code below for more information.



Lola recommends Polar Lands, which can be found in our Infant School Library! She has been enjoying this as her library book and says she has 'learnt lots of new facts'.

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ESafety

Minecraft was originally released more than 15 years ago.



Minecraft is one of the most recognisable video franchises in the world.

Minecraft is played by millions of people, in every country and territory, including **Antarctica** and **The Vatican City!**

What is Minecraft?

An online game where players can build their own 'Worlds' using different blocks and go on adventures.

It is like online LEGO®.

The game lets you play alone or with friends.

There are 2 different modes:

- **Survival mode** – players must forage for food and fend off enemies with a variety of weapons
- **Creative mode** – a more open-ended experience. Players can create and explore with endless possibilities

What do you do in Minecraft?

There is no story or objective in Minecraft. Children can create whatever they want from a small farm to an enormous skyscraper.

The game has a survival experience, where characters have a health bar that can take damage from falling, being attacked or forgetting to eat! The health bar is filled by eating food that has been foraged or farmed.

The survival elements of the game can be ignored or turned off in the game settings, leaving just the building elements.

What is the age rating?

This depends on which version of the game is being played.

Some versions of the game are 7+ and parents need to be aware that there is a mild amount of violence, with players being able to attack and kill animals and monsters in the game.



The standard version of the game is 13+.



Children are not asked for proof of age when they sign up.

However, when setting up an account, the player will be asked for their birthday. If the game registers that the player is under 13, then certain elements of the game are locked, for example changing settings, making purchases, playing Minecraft Realms or chatting in scrolls.



What are Minecraft Realms?

Minecraft Realms is a subscription service that allows players to set up their own servers. These servers are private and whoever 'owns' the server can invite up to 10 players to join.

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Is Minecraft safe?

Some versions of Minecraft are generally safe for children, especially those rated 7+.

However, there are things every parent should be aware of:

Multiplayer Mode



In this mode, players can play with people around the world and use the chat feature to communicate with each other. This could put a child at **risk of being exposed to inappropriate language or content**

Whispers

These are private messages that can be sent from one player to another. Other players cannot see what is being said. This could put a child at **risk of receiving upsetting comments or unwanted contact**

Public Servers

The platform has public servers that can be accessed by anyone with an account. This could put a child at **risk of receiving upsetting comments or unwanted contact from unknown people**

In-Game Purchases

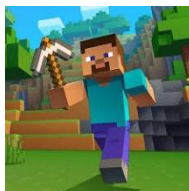
The game offers the ability to exchange real money for in-game currency or items. This could put a child at **risk of spending large amounts of real money, building up a debt**

Sharing Content

The game offers the ability to create and share content with other players. This could put a child at **risk of being exposed to inappropriate content**

Voice Chat

Those playing on game consoles such as Xbox or PlayStation, have access to in-game voice chat. Voice Chat is not available in the PC version of the game, however other platforms like Discord may be used when playing. This could put a child at **risk of receiving upsetting comments or unwanted contact from unknown people**



Keeping safe

- **Switch off or customise the chat feature** to stop your child from communicating with others
- **Talk with your child** about who they are playing with and/or chatting with in the in-game chat. Make sure they know to tell you if they see something upsetting
- **Manage multiplayer mode** so that other players cannot access your child's builds
- **Enable profanity filter** to stop your child seeing inappropriate language on public servers
- **Find child-friendly servers** so that inappropriate content is reduced
- **Set time limits** so that your child does not spend hours playing on it
- **Set up parental controls on the device** your child is using as well as those in the game
- **Check which tutorials are being used** – some of these tutorials/videos can include inappropriate language or content
- **Know how to block or report** a concern about a player

For a step-by-step guide to Minecraft parental controls, click on the link below

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/minecraft/#:~:text=Minecraft%20parental%20controls%20aren't,solid%20background%20behind%20the%20text.>

If you are worried about what your child is doing online or need further advice, please speak to one of our DSLs who will be able to help you.



Or find further tips and advice on our website <https://www.balksburyfederation.co.uk/esafety-2/>

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CSL Messages



Community Cupboard

At Barksbury Federation, we are very aware of the continuing rise of the cost of food and utility bills. This may be having an impact on your family and if it does, we would like to help.

At Barksbury, we have our 'Community Cupboard' stocked with food and toiletries.



Breakfast Packs

We are also able to offer a Breakfast pack to any family to ensure everyone has a good start to the day.

Our breakfast packs contain cereal, jam or chocolate spread, a bottle of squash, a box of cereal bars and a voucher to purchase fresh produce. If this is something we can help with, please contact us.



If we can supply you with any of these items or advice on where you can get more support, please get in contact with either of our Community Support Leads, Mrs Cheryl Grinham or Mrs Emma Whatley via our confidential email

community@barksbury.org

Federated Parent

Coffee Cake and Chat

What is it?

Coffee, Cake and Chat is an informal morning for parents and carers across the Federation to come together.

Why?

It is an opportunity to get to know other parents/carers that you may not usually speak to. You may be surprised at how many families are dealing with similar issues and it's sometimes comforting to be able to find out that 'you're not the only one'.

We occasionally have speakers in from various agencies, to offer support and advice. Previously, we had Aimee from MHST (Mental Health Support Team), who gave some great advice on anxiety.

Mrs Grinham and Mrs Whatley are also able to advise on many topics, such as, emotional and behaviour support, signposting to different agencies, financial support, School attendance or just have a chat about general day to day struggles.

There doesn't even have to be a reason for coming along, just a chance to have a bit of a catch up and it is also a great opportunity to come and sample some of Mrs Grinham's baking!! She makes amazing cakes!!

Where?

Head over to the **Junior School reception** and you will see signs directing you. The Junior School reception is at the bottom of the long drive by the pond and tree.

Our next Coffee, Cake and Chat will be

Thursday 6th March 2025

at 8:45am-10:15am

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CSL Messages

Parenting Workshops



Parent workshop
'BIG EMOTIONS'

No one gives parents a handbook. Children provide parents with different challenges every day.

Join us for an informal parenting workshop led by the Primary Behaviour Service on **'BIG EMOTIONS'**.

Adults only, no children can attend.

Thursday 6th March 5.30-7.30pm
St John the Baptist Primary School, Floral Way,
Andover SP10 3PF

Please register your interest with your school office
by Monday 24th February

Parent Workshop
'ANXIETY'

No one gives parents a handbook. Children provide parents with different challenges every day.

Join us for an informal parenting workshop led by the Primary Behaviour Service on **'ANXIETY'**.

Adults only, no children can attend.

Thursday 13th March 5.30-7.00pm
St John the Baptist Primary School, Floral Way,
Andover SP10 3PF

Please register your interest with your school office by Monday 24th February
This workshop is the perfect follow on from the Big Emotions workshop on 6th March

For workshops at St John the Baptist, please register your interest via community@balksbury.org.

NEW FOR 2025

Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

HAMPSHIRE CAMHS

INFORMATION & ADVICE SESSION

10am - 2pm

Wednesday, 5 March 2025 and then every first Wednesday of the month

The Arc, Jewry Street Winchester SO23 8SB

This is an opportunity to come and chat to our CAMHS clinicians, ask questions, get advice and resources.

hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk

P.A.C.E. 2025
PARENT & CARER EVENTS

Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

2025 PACE Events

Free health & wellbeing events for all parents & carers who support or work with young people

DATE	LOCATION
Thursday, 23 rd January 2025	Alton Alton Maltings, Maltings Close, Alton, Hampshire, GU34 1DT
Thursday, 27 th February 2025	Basingstoke Queen Mary's College, Cliddesden Rd, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 3HF
Thursday, 26 th June 2025	Andover Winton Community Academy, London Rd, Andover, Hampshire SP10 2PS
Friday, 7 th November 2025	Lyndhurst Lyndhurst Community Centre, Central Car Park, High Street, Lyndhurst SO43 7NY

BOOK YOUR SESSION SPACE AT:

hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/events

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House Points and Tokens



House Points

The House with the most points across the Federation to date is: Walbury.



Walbury



Tokens- Infants

The class with the most tokens in the Infant School to date is: Kingfisher.



Tokens- Juniors

The class with the most tokens in the Junior School to date is: Olive Class.



Achievements from Outside of School

A Big well done to Violet!

Thank you to Violet's Mum for sending in this picture of Violet who has been really enjoying Dog Man at home. Violet we are so very happy to hear that you are enjoying your Dog Man book collection. We cannot believe that you have started the sixth book already.

We hope you continue with your love of books.



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Diary Dates

February 2025

Friday 14 th February 2025	After School Clubs Block 1 Finish
Monday 17 th February 2025 – Friday 21 st February 2025	Half Term
Monday 24 th February 2025	W/C 24 th Feb - Block 2 After School Clubs Start

March 2025

Tuesday 4 th February 2025	Year R- School Nurse Visit
Wednesday 5 th March 2025	Bags2School
Thursday 6 th March 2025	World Book Day & Dolce Book Day Lunch
Wednesday 12 th March 2025	Year 5 Greek Day
Wednesday 12 th March 2025	Year 1 Trip - Army Air Museum
Monday 17 th March 2025	Parents Evening 3:30pm – 6:30pm
Wednesday 19 th March 2025	Parents Evening 3:30pm – 6:30pm

April 2025

Tuesday 1 st April 2025	Year 1 Production 2:00pm
Wednesday 2 nd April 2025	Year 1 Production 2:00pm
Monday 7 th April 2025 – Monday 21 st April 2025	Easter Holidays
Tuesday 22 nd April 2025	INSET Day
Tuesday 29 th April 2025	Year R School Nurse Visit
Tuesday 29 th April 2025	Open Box Year 4 – Vikings

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May 2025

Thursday 1st May 2025	Year 2 Trip- Titanic Museum
Wednesday 7th May 2025 – Friday 9th May 2025	Year 4 Ufton Court Residential
Monday 12th May 2025 – Thursday 15th May 2025	Year 6 SATs Week
Monday 19th May 2025 – Friday 23rd May 2025	Year 6 - Bikeability
Monday 26th May 2025 – Friday 30th May 2025	Half Term

June 2025

Wednesday 4th June 2025	Butterflies Transition Evening 4:30pm – 5:30pm
Thursday 12th June 2025	Open Box Year R – Dinosaurs
Thursday 12th June 2025	Year 3 Butser Farm Visit
Tuesday 17th June 2025	New Year R Children - Butterflies Session 1
Wednesday 18th June 2025	Open Box Year 1 – Moon Landing
Thursday 19th June 2025	Fraser Portraits Class Photos
Thursday 19th June 2025	Year 2 to Year 3 Parents Transition Meeting 3:30pm – 4:30pm
Friday 20th June 2025	Sports Day with Family Picnic 9:00am – 3:00pm
Tuesday 24th June 2025	New Year R Children - Butterflies Session 2
Monday 30th June 2025 – Friday 4th July 2025	Swim Gala Week

July 2025

Tuesday 1st July 2025	Change Up Morning 9:30am – 12:00pm New Year R Children – Butterflies Session 3
Wednesday 2nd July 2025	Year 2 Production 2:00pm
Thursday 3rd July 2025	Year 2 Production 2:00pm
Friday 4th July 2025	Year 2 Country Dancing Festival
Friday 4th July 2025	Block 2 After School Clubs – Finish
Monday 7th July 2025 – Friday 11th July 2025	Arts Week

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Friday 11th July 2025	Arts Festival for Families
Monday 14th July 2025	Balksbury's Got Talent
Monday 14th July 2025	Year 6 Production 6:30pm – 7:30pm
Tuesday 15th July 2025	Year 6 Production 6:30pm – 7:30pm
Tuesday 15th July 2025	Year 2 Fun Day 9:00am – 3:00pm
Wednesday 16th July 2025	Year 2 Graduation 2:00pm – 3:00pm (School Based)
Wednesday 16th July 2025	Year 6 Fun Day 9:00am – 3:00pm
Thursday 17th July 2025	Disco Day 9:00am – 2:30pm
Thursday 17th July 2025	Year 6 Graduation 9:15am – 10:15am (School Based)
Friday 18th July 2025	Children's Last Day
Monday 21st July 2025	INSET Day
Tuesday 22nd July 2025	INSET Day
Wednesday 23rd July 2025	Summer Holidays

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