

Balksbury Federation

Across the Playground

Friday 24th October

Sports Leader Stars

Mr Bensaid has had an incredibly busy week reviewing all of the applications for our Year 6 Sports Leader programme.

Our Sports Leaders have the exciting opportunity to work alongside Mr Bensaid to support and lead various federated sporting events. These include Sports Day, competitive matches, and Sports Festivals.

In their role, Sports Leaders are taught key leadership skills such as:

- Leading groups confidently
- Communicating effectively with their peers
- Promoting fair play and inclusivity in all activities

The children are expected to be positive role models for the federation at all times, demonstrating responsibility, teamwork, and respect in everything they do.

To apply to become a Sports Leader, Year 6 children picked up an application pack, sought a reference and explained how



their skills, qualities and previous experience make them suitable for the role.

This year, we received an impressive **57 applications.** Reflecting on the process, Mr Bensaid said:

'I have been extremely impressed with the quality of applications submitted this year. It is clear that a huge amount of time and care has gone into each one. A huge well done to everyone who applied.'

The next challenge was to shortlist the 57 applicants for interview – no easy task! As part of the shortlisting process, Mr Bensaid met with Miss Thompson who carefully read each of the applications, without knowing the name of the child on the form.

After much thoughtful discussion, 30 children were selected for interview. The interview panel consisted of Mr Bensaid, Miss Thompson and Mrs Farrell.

Following the interviews, Mrs Farrell commented:

'The children we interviewed this week demonstrated such maturity. I felt extremely proud of each and every one – all of whom reflected our federated values in their responses.'

The panel were thoroughly impressed with the thoughtfulness and care shown by every child in their application.

After much deliberation, a final 16 Sports Leaders were chosen (going over the original number of 12) and will begin their training after half term. A huge well done to all those who took part. We are extremely proud of you.

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

https://www.balksburyfederation.co.uk/contact-us/

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Open Morning for Year 2 Parents

We will be hosting open mornings for our current Year 2 parents to look around our Junior School. These will be held on Tuesday 4th November, Wednesday 5th November and Thursday 6th November. Please contact the Junior reception to book your space on a tour.

A reminder that if you are a Year 2 parent and you are planning for your child to attend the Junior School in Year 3, you must re-apply for their place.

Applications open on the 1st November 2025, and close on the 15th January 2026.

https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions

Secondary School Applications

If you have a child in Year 6, applications for Year 7 2026/2027 are currently open. A reminder that the national application deadline is on 31st October 2025.

Please visit Hampshire School Admissions

Please visit Hampshire School Admissions to apply for your child's place.

https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions

Scooters

You may have noticed Mr Frowd and Mr MacKay hard at work at the front of the infant school. They are making way for brand new scooter storage. We can't wait for the children to use this wonderful new addition to the federation. Remember if you are scooting to school, please don't use scooters on school grounds. Adhering to this rule ensures the safety of our children.

Parents' Evening

We are very pleased to be holding face to face Parents' Evenings on Monday 10th November and Wednesday 12th November

Parents' Evening is now bookable via **Arbor**. Please use the web browser, not the app. Bookings are now open and will close at **10:00am on Wedenesday 5**th **November**.

A reminder that due to Parent's Evening there will be **no after school clubs** W/C Monday 10th November. Pick Up Club will run as usual.

Don't forget

parents' evening!

Dolce Special Lunch

We are excited to share with you Dolce's next themed lunch. After half term, 5th November, Dolce will be cooking up a delicious Fireworks and Bonfire Night Themed Lunch. You can order this via SchoolGrid.



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Balksbury Presents Christmas



Christmas Cards

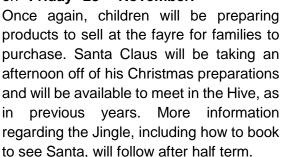
We have been blown away by the number of Christmas Cards already ordered via Arbor. Thank you to all of those families who have already placed an order.

For a donation price of only £5, you can purchase a pack of 10 Christmas cards, carefully crafted and hand signed by your child. Each comes pack envelopes ready to post!

Christmas Cards can be ordered via Arbor until Thursday 13th November.

Christmas Jingle

Preparations are in full swing ready for our Christmas Jingle on Friday 28th November.



Dress Down for Jingle

On Friday 14th November we welcome children to come to school in Dress Down and bring a donation for the Christmas Jingle.

This year we are looking for donations of:



New or good condition unwanted gifts which would make a nice present for adult family members



- Children's gifts
- Bottles for our tombola
- Chocolate (boxes, bars)

Christmas Carols

Once again, Balksbury Federation have been invited to take part in a Christmas Carol Service at St Michael's Church on the 15th December. Children will have the chance to sing the carols they have learned in assemblies and celebrate together.

The church have informed us that due to the limited capacity at the church, we are unfortunately unable to invite parents to attend. We will, however be taking lots of pictures to share with you in Across the Playground.

Christmas Jumper and Lunch Day

This year, Dolce will be cooking up a delicious Christmas dinner for our children on Tuesday 16th December.

On this day, children are invited to wear a Christmas jumper to school. More information will follow after half term.



Christmas Discos

It wouldn't be Christmas without a Disco! The children will have their Discos on Wednesday 17th December this year. Children are invited to wear their party clothes into school on this day.

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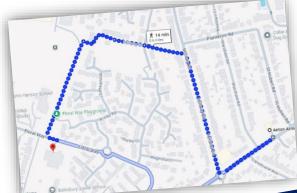
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More Morning Parking...

Thanks to our Pub Pals!

A huge thank you to the **Anton Arms**, and the **Chesnut Tree** who have both agreed to allow our families to use their car parks in the morning to support with school drop off.

Their support means that more of our families have the option to **park and stride** at school **drop off time**. **Please respect** the landlord's wishes and **do not use the car parks in the afternoon**.



The Anton Arms

The Anton Arms is a short 10 minute walk away. The postcode for the Anton Arms is **SP10 2JN**.



The Chesnut Tree

The Chesnut Tree is a short 15 minute walk away. The postcode for the Chesnut Tree is **SP10**3LL.



Why Park and Stride?

Quality Time

Each of the walks are around 15 minutes, which is the perfect amount of time to have a quick chat before school.



Health Benefits

Our families who park and stride each morning instead of driving from either of the sites, will add 75 minute of walking to their week.



Choosing to Park and Stride helps reduce traffic around the school, making it safer for everyone.

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Classroom News



Across the Playground

Year R

This term, our Year R children have been on a magical journey through Traditional Tales, exploring beloved stories through creative and hands-on activities. We began with The Three Little Pigs, where the children-built houses using straw, sticks, and Lego bricks for printing, showing impressive independence as they began writing words using their growing phonic knowledge. Next, they dived into The Three Billy Goats Gruff, sculpting trolls, designing bridges with various materials, and role-playing outdoors with largescale constructions. They even brought the story into music, singing 'Who's that trip-trapping over my bridge?' with instruments to add rhythm and drama. Most recently, we explored Gingerbread Man, inspiring wanted posters for the runaway biscuit and beautifully decorated playdough gingerbread men. It's been a joyful term filled with storytelling, creativity, and imaginative play!









Year 3

Year 3 have had a magical start to our new English unit! To kick things off, we ventured into the forest for a fairy talethemed scavenger hunt, discovering hidden stories among the trees. Using our senses, we collected rich and descriptive vocabulary inspired by the sights, sounds, and smells of the woodland. It was a wonderful way to spark imagination and set the scene for some informative diary entry writing ahead! In Science this half term, we have been exploring skeletons and movement. We've been learning about the different types of skeletons animals have, and how our bones and joints help us move.



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Classroom News



Across the Playground

Year 6

We've had a brilliant start to this academic year in Year 6, filled with exciting learning and impressive achievements! In Maths, the children have tackled long division with determination, working together understand the method and carefully checking their answers; their perseverance has truly impressed us. In English, we explored persuasive writing by crafting heartfelt letters from Rock to Scissors, pleading for the life of poor Paper! The creativity and persuasive flair on display were outstanding. P.E. lessons have been full of energy and teamwork. The children have shown incredible skill and enthusiasm in tag rugby, and it's been a joy to see them collaborate and support one another. This spirit of collaboration has continued in gymnastics, where pupils have worked together to create some fantastic routines and displays.











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Currículum Corner

New Instruments

Across the federation, children have enjoyed exploring and experimenting with our new: African drums, keyboards, steel drums, tuned bells, and our class packs instruments. percussion These resources have enriched our music learning journeys. At the start of each unit, we introduce these instruments to expose children to a variety of musical styles and cultures, encouraging them to express themselves creatively. They also play a key role in our final performances, allowing children to showcase their learning and musical growth in a vibrant and engaging way.



Spotlight - Year R

The Year R children have been exploring the enchanting world of traditional tales, immersing themselves in stories filled with magic, rhythm, and repetition. Through familiar phrases like 'I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down,' 'Who's that triptrapping over my bridge?' and 'Run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man,' they've been developing their understanding of language patterns and storytelling structure. To deepen this learning, they've used musical instruments and their voices to express rhythm and tone, linking their storytelling to musical knowledge and creative expression.



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Spotlight - Year 6

This term, Year 6 have been delving into the rich textures of Baroque music, with a particular focus on the concept of ground bass. During a recent lesson, Miss Smith recently had the pleasure of observing their creative process as they composed their own ground bass sequences using glockenspiels. The session was highly interactive, beginning with children writing their compositions using letter names before confidently transferring them onto a stave using traditional musical notation. The children's to apply notational knowledge so effectively was impressive, showcasing a deepening understanding of musical structure, theory, and expression. It was a joy to see their musical creativity flourish in such an engaging and imaginative way.



Test valley Brass

This year, we were thrilled to welcome back Test Valley Brass back for a special workshop with our Year 3 children. The team delivered an engaging session, introducing a variety of brass instruments available for private tuition here at Balksbury from Year 3 onwards. Children had the chance to explore the unique sounds and roles of each instrument, sparking lots of excitement and curiosity. The highlight of the workshop was when children got to play alongside the musicians, experiencing the joy of live music first hand. It was a fantastic opportunity to inspire budding musicians and celebrate the power of performance.

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The Reading Corner



Focus Bookshelves

Family

A family can mean a lot of different things. It could be a group of people that live together, people who love each other or people who look after each other. Some families are big with lots of people and some are small with only 2 people. Whatever the size of your family, all families are special and are there to support and love you.



Author Spotlight Oliver Teffers

Oliver Jeffers was born in Australia in 1977 and his first book How to Catch A Star is based on when he was stargazing from a jetty. He has also written We Are Here and Lost and Found. Not only does he write books, Oliver also illustrates them. He was the illustrator of the utterly fabulous The Day the Crayons Quit.





Recommended Reads

This week our recommended reads come from Year 2.



'I chose this book to take home because I love reading about animals. I like learning about different species and this book tells you what animals eat and what they need to live. I definitely recommend it!'

'I love this book because it's all about cats! I love reading non-fiction, especially if it is about cats. I think the picture on the front is funny too. This book helped me learn about what breed my cats are.'



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ESafety

Sharing Images Online



Increasingly, children are using phones and tablets to take photos/videos and share them online.

While this can be fun, sharing images can also be risky.

Children can share images across any app, site or game, including during a livestream. Images can also be shared across devices using offline services like Airdrop or Bluetooth.

Young people are becoming used to sharing and documenting their lives online. It is very easy to hit the 'send' button before actually pausing to think about the consequences.

But once it's out there, it's out there. Once an image has been shared, you can never be sure who has seen it, saved it or shared it.

Why do children share photos and/or videos?

There are a variety of reasons - some of them quite naive and exploratory and others as a result of threats or coercion.

Common reasons are:

- Peer pressure
- As a dare or joke
- To increase their self-esteem
- Being friends with someone and fully trusting them



What are the risks?



- It is easy for people to screengrab and copy images and then send them onto other people
- Once a photo is online people can do what they like – make it into a meme, make money from the image, manipulate the image using software
- Knowing that others have seen embarrassing images can affect a child's confidence and self-esteem
- Unwanted pictures online could affect educational and job opportunities later in life
- Sharing images, can increase the likelihood of a child receiving inappropriate contact from strangers online

Is it illegal?

The law says that creating or sharing explicit images or videos of a child under 18 is illegal, even if the person sharing is a child.

This includes:

- A child taking an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend
- Sharing an explicit image or video of a child, even if it is shared between children of the same age

How can I help my child?

Talk to them

It is important to have open conversations with your child, from a young age, about what they are doing online especially



about the types of content they are sharing.

Start by talking to them about what sort of photos they would feel comfortable posting online. This will give you a chance to see how much they already know about what is and isn't appropriate to share.

Remind them to never post or send anything that contains personal information – their address, photos of themselves in their school uniform etc.

Encourage them to come to you if they're ever asked to share something that makes them feel uncomfortable.

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Help my child has shared an image online. What do I do?

If you or your child are worried about a photo or video that they have already shared, sent or posted online, talk to them.

Make sure they know that you are not angry and do not blame them.

Ask them to explain what has happened, and tell them you will work together to put things right.

It is a good idea to help them remove it from any sites it has been shared on.

You should act especially quickly to remove images containing the following:

- Nudity or suggestive poses
- Details which might identify a child for example, a school uniform
- Details which might identify or embarrass other children

After listening to what they tell you, you may decide that the picture was intended as an innocent joke, or that your child was mimicking something they have seen without understanding the implications.

In this case, talk to your child about being careful about sharing images online in future.

Questions to ask your child before they share an image

- 1. Are you sharing anything that could allow someone you don't know to identify you?
- 2. Are the things you're sharing online going to give people a good impression of you?
- 3. Have you thought about how your post is going to make others feel?
- 4. Would you be happy for your parents, teachers, grandparents, or even everyone in the world to see what you have shared?

If your answer to any of these questions is 'No' or 'I'm not sure' then think again about what you are sharing and why you are sharing it. Is it something that shouldn't be shared at all?

If you are worried that your child has passed on or received an image or film, you can should:

- 1. Ask them who sent it to them
- 2. Reassure them that they are not in trouble
- 3. Do not send the image on or share it with others
- 4. Do not delete it from their phone it may be needed later on
- 5. Only view it if you need to
- If you suspect the image/film has been shared by an adult, act quickly and inform the authorities
- 7. If you suspect the image has been shared as a joke or innocently - and if your child knows the person in the image - you may want to inform their parents as they may not be aware that the image has been shared
- 8. You may need to inform the police or the Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP)

(https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/)

9. Whatever you do, make sure that you tell somebody - do not ignore it!





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 covering a wide range of themes on our website

https://balksburyfederation.co.uk/esafety/

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CSL Messages



Requesting Leave of Absence Half Term Fun

Hampshire have changed The Leave of Absence Form to reflect the change in policy when issuing a Penalty Notice which was stated at the beginning of the academic year 2024.

Schools must issue a Penalty Notice to parents who attempt to avoid penalties by scheduling holidays that fall below threshold, including during weeks containing Bank Holidays and Inset day.

There is no general right to authorised absence for a family holiday. If you take your child out of school without permission the absence will be unauthorised; you may be issued a Penalty Notice, and the Local Authority may consider legal action.

Schools are only able to authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances. In making a request for an authorised absence from school, you will need to explain why the circumstances are exceptional.

If you remove your child for an unauthorised period and it is the belief of the school and Local Authority that you have done this in a way as to avoid being issued a Penalty Notice, the Local Authority reserves the right to authorise the issuing of a Penalty Notice before the national threshold is met.

A Leave of Absence form can be obtained from either Admin office on via our website.

If you would like to discuss anything further please speak to our CSLs in either school.

Andover Trees

Awesome Autumn – Storytelling, Pumpkin Carving & Bulb Planting

Date: Thursday 30th October Time: 14:00pm - 16:00pm

Celebrate the wonders of autumn! Children (ages 4+) and their parents will enjoy interactive seasonal storytelling from *Amanda Kane-Smith* of Merry-Go-Round Storytelling, carve their own pumpkins, and plant Wild Daffodil bulbs to bring spring magic.

Details:

- Parent attendance required
- · Games and refreshments included
- Cost: £10 per child with adult (includes pumpkin), £2 per additional person, £1 per extra pumpkin

To Book: abbey.sadler@andovertrees.org.uk



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House Points and Tokens

House Points

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





Tokens - Infants

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



Tokens - Juniors

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





PTA Message





OFFICE OR BY CONTACTING US AT BALKSBURYPTA@BALKSBURY.ORG

The PTA need your help!

The PTA are currently looking for more fabulous prizes for their Christmas raffle. If you are or know of a local business owner who might be able to donate a prize, please contact either of our admin offices. It's all for a good cause!



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Diary Dates

October 2025

Monday 27th October 2025 - Friday 31st October 2025

Half Term

November 2025

Tuesday 4 th November 2025	Openbox Production: Egyptians – Year 5
Tuesday 4 th November 2025	New Year 3 2026/2027 Tours
Wednesday 5 th November 2025	New Year 3 2026/2027 Tours
Thursday 6 th November 2025	New Year 3 2026/2027 Tours
Thursday 6 th November 2025	Fraser Portraits – Individual and Sibling Photos
Monday 10 th November 2025	Parents' Evening (3:30pm – 6:30pm)
Wednesday 12 th November 2025	Parents' Evening (3:30pm – 6:30pm)
Thursday 13 th November 2025	Openbox Production: Early Man – Year 3
Friday 14 th November 2025	Jingle Dress Down Day
Monday 17 th November 2025	Year 5 Trip to Science Museum
Tuesday 18 th November 2025	Year 1 Tree Planting
Monday 24 th November 2025	Year 4 Tree Planting at Bury Hill Meadows
Friday 28 th November 2025	Christmas Jingle (12:00pm – 4:30pm)

December 2025

Tuesday 9 th December 2025	Intergrational Café
Wednesday 10 th December 2025	Year R Nativity (12:00pm)
Thursday 11 th December 2025	Year R Nativity (12:00pm)
Tuesday 16 th December 2025	Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch
Thursday 18 th December 2025	Openbox Production: Christmas Pantomime
Wednesday 17 th December 2025	Christmas Disco
Monday 22 nd December 2025 – Friday 2 nd January 2026	Christmas Holidays

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February 2026		
Monday 9 th February 2026 – Friday 13 th February 2026	Year 6 Residential Trip to Fairthorne Manor	
Friday 13 th February 2026	End of Block 1 Clubs	
Monday 16 th February 2026 – Friday 20 th February 2026	Half Term	
Monday 23 rd February 2026	Start of Block 2 Clubs	
March 2026		
Thursday 5 th March 2026	World Book Day	
Monday 16 th March 2026	Parents' Evening (3:30pm – 6:30pm)	
Wednesday 18 th March 2026	Parents' Evening (3:30pm – 6:30pm)	
Tuesday 24 th March 2026	Year 1 Production (2:00pm)	
Wednesday 25 th March 2026	Year 1 Production (2:00pm)	
Friday 27 th March 2026	INSET Day	
Monday 30 th March 2026 - Friday 10 th April 2026	Easter Holidays	
Apríl 2026		
Tuesday 21 st April 2026	Year 2 Titanic Trip	
Wednesday 22 nd April – Friday 24 th April 2026	Year 4 Residential Trip to Ufton Court	
May 2026		
Monday 11 th May 2026 – Friday 15 th May 2026	KS2 SATs Week	
Monday 25 th May – Friday 29 th May 2026	May Half Term	
June 2026		
Thursday 4 th June 2026	Openbox Production: Moon Landing – Year 1	

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Thursday 4 th June 2026	Butterflies Parent Information Evening (for new Year R families)
Friday 5 th June 2026	Sports Day and Family Picnic
Wednesday 10 th June 2026	Openbox Production: Dinosaurs – Year R
Thursday 18 th June 2026	Butterflies Transition - Session 1
Thursday 18 th June 2026	Year 3 Parent Transition Meeting (3:30pm - 4:30pm)
Friday 19 th June 2026	Fraser Portraits Class Photos
Thursday 25 th June 2026	Butterflies Transition - Session 2

July	2026
Wednesday 1 st July 2026	Year 2 Production (2:00pm)
Thursday 2 nd July 2026	Year 2 Production (2:00pm)
Monday 6 th July – Friday 10 th July 2026	STEM Week (12:00pm – 4:00pm)
Tuesday 7 th July 2026	Butterflies Transition - Session 3
Friday 10 th July 2026	STEM Festival
Monday 13 th July 2026	Balksbury's Got Talent
Tuesday 14 th July 2026	Year 2 Fun Day (more information to follow)
Wednesday 15 th July 2026	Year 6 Fun Day (more information to follow)
Wednesday 15 th July 2026	Year 2 Graduation
Thursday 16 th July 2026	Disco Fun Day
Friday 17 th July 2026	Year 6 Graduation
Monday 20 th July 2026	Children's Last Day of Summer Term
Tuesday 21 st July 2026	INSET Day
Wednesday 22 nd July 2026	INSET Day

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