



Balksbury Federation

Across the Playground

Friday 13th February

Happy Half Term!

Just like that, another half term has gone by in a flash! We would like to wish all of our families a restful break and we will see you on **Monday 23rd February**.

Year 6 Residential

Our Year 6 children returned this afternoon from a fantastic week at Fairthorne Manor. They embraced every challenge with enthusiasm - from abseiling and firelighting to pioneering and a whole host of other adventures. The Year 6 Team could not be more proud of how the children approached each activity, showing resilience, teamwork and a brilliant attitude throughout the week. Well done Year 6!



World Book Day

We are looking forward to celebrating World Book Day, on **Thursday 5th March**.

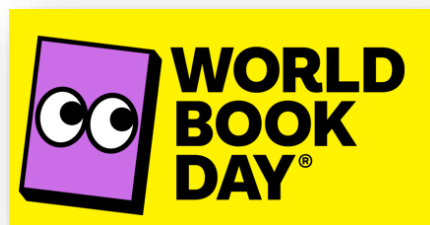
Children are invited to come to school dressed as their **favourite character from a book**, or **wear something comfy** to snuggle down with a book!



Dolce will be serving a special World Book Day themed lunch of:

- Peter Pan's Pizzas: margherita, pepperoni, vegetable
- Rapunzel's Golden Locks Pasta (VG)
- Goldilocks and the 3 Bears Wrap Bar
- Jacket Potato with a choice of fillings

Children ordering a Dolce lunch on this day will **have the chance to win a £10 Book Token!** There will be a special sticker underneath one plate at each school. Find the sticker and win the prize!



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Classroom News



Across the Playground

Year R

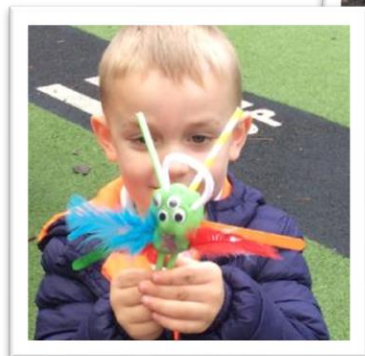
This week, the children have loved exploring '*The Smeds and the Smoos*' and '*Aliens Love Underpants*'. They have been busy designing and creating their own aliens using playdough and clay, along with lots of exciting materials such as pipe cleaners, feathers, and googly eyes. Their **imagination**s have truly come alive.

We've also enjoyed wonderful discussions about their aliens - including their names, special features, and the imaginative planets they come from. It's been a fantastic week of **creativity** and storytelling.



Year 3

Spring 1 has been a busy term for our wonderful year 3s. They have written some great non-chronological reports on their fictional animals, inspired by the book **The Barnabus Project**. They are now enjoying their new text *The Lost Bear*, which takes them to the Arctic Circle. This ties in with our **Geography topic** on North America, as some of this huge continent sits within the Arctic Circle. The children have enjoyed learning facts about the third largest continent and are fascinated by all the physical and human features within it. In Music, we have been looking at elements of **Indian music** and have enjoyed using glockenspiels and drums to create our own music. In P.E., the children have been learning the rules of handball and continue to practise their attacking and defending skills. They have also been creating some great shapes and sequences in their gymnastic sessions.



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Classroom News



Across the Playground

Year 6

The children have had a busy and exciting start to the term! In **Design & Technology**, they took part in an exploration lesson, building structures using a range of resources to investigate the properties of different materials. In P.E., the children enjoyed both dodgeball and gymnastics sessions - practising quick dodging skills in dodgeball and exploring counter tension and counter balance in gymnastics. In **Science**, the children investigated how light travels in straight lines, sparking lots of **curiosity** and thoughtful discussion.



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The Reading Corner

New Books!

There has been a buzz at both libraries recently as children across the federation have had a chance to explore a huge selection of new books.

Did you know? The federation has a dedicated book budget for each school, which is carefully spent to ensure a wide variety of texts for children to enjoy.

During library visits, in Smart School Council sessions and by talking to their class teacher, children have the opportunity to request book titles and series that they would like to see in the library.

Miss Bolton spoke to some of the children in the Junior School Library who were especially excited about the arrival of new books from the series 'Ultimate Football Heroes'!

In the Infant Library, Miss Bolton spoke to Harvey, who said:

'I can't wait to read these books about animals! I think they look really good and there are lots of these books about different animals in the library!'

Take a peek at just a few of the many new titles available to loan.



Focus Book Shelves

In assemblies this week, children have been learning all about 'celebrating with food'. We have learnt all about celebrations such as Shrove Tuesday and Ramadan and the important role food plays in celebrating during special events. If you want to find out more, why not check out our Focus Book Shelves?



Author Spotlight

Our author spotlight this week shines on...

A.F. Steadman

A.F. Steadman is the author of the Skandar book series. She is a British author and wrote her first novel aged only 13!



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Government Website: Kids Online Safety

The Government have recently launched a new website as part of their campaign to keep children safe online.

The website is designed to support and encourage families to have regular conversations about what their children are seeing online and where to access support.

<https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/>

 GOV.UK Campaign

Kids Online Safety

[Get started](#) [How to start talking about online safety](#) [What should you trust online?](#) [Parental controls](#)

[Where to get support](#) [Where to report something](#)

Help your child stay safe online

Find practical information from trusted places to help you feel more confident on the steps you can take to protect your child online.

With so many apps, games, and websites out there, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. But the good news is you're not alone.

Click on the links below to access the relevant section.



Online safety: how to get started

Learn about the different actions you can take to help keep your child safe online.

<https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/keeping-your-child-safe-online-how-to-get-started/>



How to start talking to your child about being safe online

Talking to your child about being safe online can help protect them from harm, build trust, and know what to do if they need help.

<https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/how-to-talk-to-your-child-about-being-safe-online/>

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Find the right questions to talk with your child about toxic online content

Learn how to ask the right questions to help your child think critically about what they see online and get practical tips for starting open, supportive conversations.

<https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/online-content/>



Parental controls

Learn about why it's important to make a device safe for your child to use.

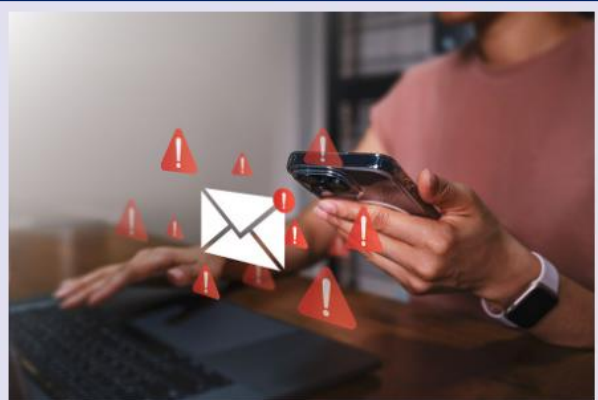
<https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/parental-controls/>



Find out where to get support

Get support on the different topics of online safety or use a helpline to speak to an expert.

<https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/find-out-where-to-get-support/>



Know where to report something

If something happens online that upsets your child or puts them in danger, know where you can report it.

<https://kidsonlinesafety.campaign.gov.uk/know-where-to-report-something-online/>

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://balksburyfederation.co.uk/esafety/>

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CSL Messages



Federated Parent Coffee, Cake and Chat

Where 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. It is also a great opportunity to come and sample some of Mrs Grinham's baking! She makes amazing cakes!



What other parents say:

"I really enjoy just popping in for a cuppa and a catch up, there is no pressure"

"What a lovely chance to meet other parents, it was nice to just take some time to sit and chat!"

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

**Tuesday 3rd March 2026
at 8.45am-10.15am**



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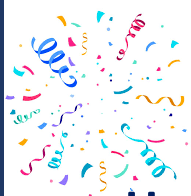
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House Points and Tokens



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: Robin Class.



Tokens - Juniors

The class with the most tokens in the junior school to date is: Ash Class.



PTA Message



CAN YOU HELP YOUR PTA?

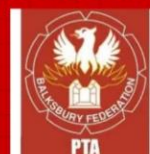
As a small team, we are always on the lookout for new volunteers to join us in raising funds for our schools. This could be by helping us at treat sales, helping with the ACE food donations or helping to source raffle prizes.

We also have our uniform swap shop which always needs a bit of support!
Meeting attendance is optional and we really appreciate any time you can donate!

ACE food donations / Treat sales / Uniform swaps and sales all take place on Fridays at the hive. 3pm - 3:30pm.

**If you are interested in lending a hand,
please pop an email to
balksburypta@balksbury.org**

THANK YOU!



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Diary Dates

February 2026

Monday 16th – Friday 20th February 2026	Half Term
Monday 23rd February 2026	Start of Block 2 Clubs

March 2026

Thursday 5th March 2026	World Book Day
Thursday 12th March 2026	Admiral Class Dolce BOGOF lunch
Wednesday 18th March 2026	Year 1 – Army Flying Museum Trip
Monday 16th March 2026	Parents' Evening (3:30pm – 6:30pm)
Wednesday 18th March 2026	Parents' Evening (3:30pm – 6:30pm)
Tuesday 24th March 2026	Year 1 Production (2:00pm)
Wednesday 25th March 2026	Year 1 Production (2:00pm)
Friday 27th March 2026	INSET Day
Monday 30th March – Friday 10th April 2026	Easter Holidays

April 2026

Wednesday 15th – Friday 17th April 2026	Year 4 Residential Trip to Upton Court
Tuesday 21st April 2026	Year 2 Titanic Trip

May 2026

Monday 11th – Friday 15th May 2026	KS2 SATs Week
Monday 25th – Friday 29th May 2026	May Half Term

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June 2026

Thursday 4th June 2026	Openbox Production: Moon Landing – Year 1
Thursday 4th June 2026	Year 3 Butser Farm Trip
Thursday 4th June 2026	Butterflies Parent Information Evening (for new Year R families)
Friday 5th June 2026	Sports Day and Family Picnic
Monday 8th – Friday 12th June 2026	Year 1 Phonics Screening Check Week
Wednesday 10th June 2026	Openbox Production: Dinosaurs – Year R
Thursday 18th June 2026	Butterflies Transition - Session 1
Thursday 18th June 2026	Year 3 Parent Transition Meeting (3:30pm – 4:30pm)
Friday 19th June 2026	Fraser Portraits Class Photos
Thursday 25th June 2026	Butterflies Transition - Session 2

July 2026

Wednesday 1st July 2026	Year 2 Production (2:00pm)
Thursday 2nd July 2026	Year 2 Production (2:00pm)
Friday 3rd July 2026	Year 2 Country Dancing Festival
Monday 6th – Friday 10th July 2026	STEM Week (12:00pm – 4:00pm)
Tuesday 7th July 2026	Change Up Morning and Butterflies Transition - Session 3
Friday 10th July 2026	STEM Festival 2:00pm – 4:30pm
Monday 13th July 2026	Balksbury's Got Talent
Monday 13th July 2026	Year 6 Production 6:00pm
Tuesday 14th July 2026	Year 6 Production 6:00pm

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Tuesday 14th July 2026	Year 2 Fun Day (more information to follow)
Wednesday 15th July 2026	Year 6 Fun Day (more information to follow)
Wednesday 15th July 2026	Year 2 Graduation
Friday 17th July 2026	Disco Fun Day (date amended)
Monday 20th July 2026	Year 6 Graduation 9:15am (date amended)
Monday 20th July 2026	Children's Last Day of Summer Term
Tuesday 21st July 2026	INSET Day
Wednesday 22nd July 2026	INSET Day

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