



Balksbury Federation

Across the Playground

Friday 6th March

New Scooter Pods

Mr Frowd has been working hard over the past few weeks to install brand new scooter storage, which is now ready to be used.

The scooter storage is located to the right hand side of the Infant School admin office, but can be used by families from both the Infant and Junior Schools.



With the weather brightening up, why not take the opportunity to walk, cycle or scoot to school?

Eat the Rainbow Week

Next week in assemblies, children will be focusing on the theme 'Eat the Rainbow'. Children will be learning all about the benefits of eating a colourful, varied diet and will be set a challenge to see if they can 'Eat the Rainbow' across the course of the week.

To help them on their mission, there will be a variety of colourful fresh fruit on offer at lunch time if your child orders a Dolce lunch.



Easter Hamper

Our Easter Hamper is back, and this year more chocolatey than ever!

For your chance to win, visit the Hive before and after school from **Wednesday the 11th March**.

Alternatively, you can send in an envelope marked 'Easter Hamper' and your child's name with your money, and we will pop your tickets in your child's book bag.

Tickets are £1 each and the winner will be announced in assembly on the last day of term before the Easter holidays.

Good luck!



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Classroom News



Across the Playground

Year 1

Recently in Year 1, we have been learning about the American artist James Rizzi. We looked at different examples of his work and talked about the Pop Art style that he uses. Then, we **experimented** with paint by mixing primary colours to make secondary colours and tested out changing the shade and tint. We planned out our **artwork** and thought carefully about our use of space and what colours we wanted to include. Finally, we **painted** our final piece and evaluated them by discussing what we liked and what we would do differently next time.



Year 2

In Year 2 for **English**, we launched our new text *Big Bear, Little Brother* in a very mysterious way. The children were thrilled to discover footprints and pawprints scattered around the Year 2 area - sparking **curiosity**, questions, and brilliant early predictions about who (or what) might have visited! This led us beautifully into our focus on diary writing.

In **Art**, we began our new learning journey inspired by Pablo Picasso. To build confidence and **creativity**, the children explored a range of mark-making techniques, experimenting with line, tone, and texture. They used graphite, charcoal, chalk, and pastels to compare the different effects each tool can create. It was wonderful to see them observing closely, working boldly, and beginning to think like real artists.



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Classroom News



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Year 4

Since coming back to school after half term, Year 4 have been super busy! In **Geography**, we have used the virtual reality headsets to explore the **Amazon Rainforest**. We also used atlases and iPads to research where in the world we would find the rainforest and find out why rainforests are located where they are. We had fun in art exploring the medium we will be studying this half term – clay! We revisited our skills that have learned previously during sculpture units. We practised manipulating clay using our hands, which was tricky because it dries out quickly! We also used tools to shape and form clay into our desired shapes. We are very excited to continue to explore the use of wire in **sculpture** later this week! Finally, in P.E, we have started our tennis unit – it has been so lovely to be out practicing our skills in the sunshine!



Year 5

Year 5 has enjoyed an inspiring and action-packed Spring term. In February, we welcomed two **Police Education Officers** for an engaging workshop on cyber bullying. We explored the importance of staying safe on line, including how a digital footprint can remain long after it is deleted. This learning proved especially valuable as we began a new computing unit on video editing. In **Health and Wellbeing**, we loved planting seeds and taking responsibility for nurturing our growing plants. English lessons have been filled with imagination as we have delved into the world of **Greek myths**. We are now excited to craft our own alternative endings. In History, we have brought Ancient Greece to life by exploring our very own Greek Museum. Through this we developed our understanding of primary and secondary sources and what these can reveal about the past. It has been a fantastic term of curiosity, creativity and new learning. Year 5 are eager to build on this momentum as we move into the next half term.



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The Reading Corner

World Book Day Special

World Book Day was certainly a special one this year, with incredible outfits, special stories and an afternoon jam packed with fun activities.

So...what did we get up to?

A story from a published author...

Did you know that Miss Thompson is a published children's author - twice over?

Her second book, *Oswald Flies Home*, was released just before Christmas.

The children loved hearing her read the story today, and later took part in a fun competition to recreate one of the illustrations.

The winning artists each received their own copy of the book.



Tales from Openbox Theatre Company

We were hugely lucky to be joined by Kenn from Openbox Theatre Company, who gave up his time to come and share stories with every year group in the Federation.

The children had a wonderful time, thank you Kenn!



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Story Sharing with Friends

Children had the chance to read with children from other year groups or head outside to enjoy a book with friends. It was wonderful to see them sharing stories so enthusiastically, and showing such thoughtful respect when reading alongside children they perhaps hadn't met before.



Library Displays

There were exciting displays in our Federated Libraries today, all built around the message that *reading can take you places!* Children explored the geography behind some of the stories on our shelves, discovering where different books are set and how far a story can transport its reader.

Brilliant Costumes

Of course, one of the most exciting parts of World Book Day, is coming to school dressed as your favourite character or in something comfy! There were some absolutely incredible costumes on display today from children and staff alike!



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ESafety

Top 10 Tips for Keeping Children Safe from Cyber Crime

1

Encourage strong passwords

Weak passwords make it faster and easier for criminals to gain access to your online accounts, device, bank accounts, personal information and identity.

It is recommended that you and your child use:

- **A strong password** – often 3 random words is best e.g. lionbottlegarage
- **A separate password** for your email account
- **Two-factor authentication** where possible e.g. one-time password or facial/fingerprint recognition



4

Stay updated



People often put off installing updates because they feel it's not necessary, is time consuming or could cause problems with programmes they rely on. But updates help protect users from recently discovered vulnerabilities to malware.

It is recommended that you and your child:

- **Set updates to run automatically**
- **Ensure updates are installed as soon as possible** after you have been notified that they are available

2

Back up your data



Some cyber-attacks can lead to your data, personal information or files (photos and videos) being stolen or deleted.

It is recommended that you and your child:

- **Back up your data to a cloud or other device**
- **Set the devices to back up automatically**
- **Back up data before installing an update**

5

Don't over-share



Does your child share too much on social media? Do they post things about their private life, upload images of your home, or discuss their friendships and relationships online?

Criminals will gather this information and may try to use it for identity theft or other offences such as fraud.

It is recommended that you:

- **Set your child's privacy settings** so they can only share information with family and close friends
- **Use parental controls** where appropriate

3

Be aware of public Wi-Fi



Free public Wi-Fi is often not secure and sends unencrypted data via the network. A criminal on the same network could access and steal your personal data (bank details etc.) without you knowing.

It is recommended that you and your child use:

- **Your mobile data**
- **A VPN (Virtual Private Network)**

6

Only accept requests from people you know



Not everyone is who they say they are online. It is very easy to use fake photos or videos.

It is recommended that you and your child:

- **Only accept friend requests from people you know**
- **Never meet up with someone you only know online**

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7

Be aware of Phishing



'Phishing' is when criminals use scam emails, text messages or phone calls to trick you into visiting a website, which may download a virus onto your computer, or steal your passwords, bank details or other personal information.

Often, the criminals will pretend to be someone (or an organisation) that you trust.

It used to be easier to spot scams. They might contain bad spelling or grammar, come from an unusual email address, or feel 'off'. But scams are getting smarter and some even fool the experts.

Criminals are increasingly using QR codes to trick users into visiting scam websites.

Criminals use information about you that's available online (including on social media sites) to make their phishing messages more convincing.

It is recommended that you:

- **Reduce the likelihood of being phished** by knowing what personal information you (and others) post about you
- **Review your privacy settings**
- **Break the contact** if a message or call makes you suspicious
- **Contact the organisation directly** if you have any doubts about a call or email. **Don't** use the numbers or address in the message – use the details from their official website

Remember, your bank will never ask you to supply personal information via email or call and ask you to confirm your bank account details.

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/>

8

Report and block



Knowing how to block and report inappropriate or harmful online content is vital for keeping you and your child safe.

It helps to protect wellbeing, prevent harm to others, create safe spaces online, stop illegal activity and prevents it spreading further

It is recommended that you and your child:

- **Talk about the content they are seeing**
- **Look together at how to report and block content on the sites/apps they use**

9

Know the Consequences



Many children (and adults) do not always realise the possible consequences of their poor online behaviour.

According to the Computer Misuse Act 1990, anyone engaging in illegal activity online can be charged, prosecuted or convicted. This includes children aged 10 or over.

This would mean not only:

- The possibility of a criminal record
- Lifelong travel restrictions
- Damage to future education
- Damage to future careers

It is recommended that you know what your child is doing online and support them to be safe online.

10

Take care when chatting



Do you know who your child is talking to online? Is it someone they know or a stranger? Is the conversation appropriate?

Criminals may look to manipulate others online and coerce them into doing things like sending inappropriate images.

It is recommended that you:

- **Talk to your child about who they are talking to**
- **Monitor the conversations/messages**

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CSL Messages

Reporting Your Child's Absence

A reminder that you can now record absences via the Parent Portal and Arbor App. **You will only be able to record same-day absences**, so for any extended or future absences, please contact your child's school admin office and complete a Request for Absence Form.



You will still be able to phone and leave a message on the absence line.

Requesting a Leave of Absence

The Local Authority States: 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 or via our website.

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



Hampshire County Council fund sponsorship of togetherness.co.uk to make invaluable NHS learning and content *free* for local parents.

Togetherness is an online learning environment developed by psychologists and health practitioners providing accessible learning about emotional health and wellbeing, proven to positively impact mental health, behaviour and relationships.

Parent E-Learning and quick videos include

- Understanding your child's feelings
- How can I support my child with anxiety
- Teenage brains
- Healthy sleep habits
- Raising kind kids
- Bedtime routines

Please visit the website to see a full timetable and links to courses.

Are you a parent/carer with pre-school or school-age children?
Are you looking for a bit of support from a friendly face?




Family Support Workers from PEAS will be running a parent drop-in at ACE on Bridge Street, Andover Town Centre, on the following dates:

**6 & 27 February, 20 March, 17 April,
01 May, 05 June, 10 July**

For anything family related, if we can't help you directly, we can signpost you to someone who can.

No need to book
Just stop by and grab a cuppa.



Selected Friday's
When: 09.30 - 11.30
Where: 13-17 Bridge St, Andover



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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: Tawny Class.



Tokens - Juniors

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



PTA Message



CAN YOU HELP YOUR PTA?

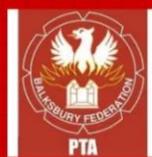
As a small team, we are always on the lookout for new volunteers to join us in raising funds for our schools. This could be by helping us at treat sales, helping with the ACE food donations or helping to source raffle prizes.

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

March 2026

Thursday 12 th March 2026	Admiral Class Dolce BOGOF lunch
Wednesday 18 th March 2026	Year 1 – Army Flying Museum Trip
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 – Friday 10 th April 2026	Easter Holidays

April 2026

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

May 2026

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

June 2026

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

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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
<i>July 2026</i>	
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	Children's reports sent home to families
Monday 13th July 2026	Year 6 Production 6:00pm
Tuesday 14th July 2026	Year 6 Production 6:00pm
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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