



Balksbury Federation

Across the Playground

Friday 20th March

Nearly Half-Term

It hardly seems possible, but we've nearly reached the Easter half-term break! The past weeks have flown by, and we're so proud of everything the children have achieved this term. We hope you all enjoy a well-deserved rest, some spring sunshine, and plenty of time together.

Have a wonderful Easter break, and we look forward to welcoming the children back refreshed and ready for the summer term on **Monday 13th April**.



INSET

A reminder that **Friday the 27th March** is an INSET day.

Eat the Rainbow Week

Thank you to all the parents and children who took part in our 'Eat the Rainbow' challenge this week. The prizes are:

- 1,000 tokens for each class that has ticked off all the rows
- 50 tokens for each full row if not complete
- 5,000 tokens for the class, or classes that have completed the most choice of fruit and vegetables.



Easter Hamper

Tickets for our Easter Hamper can still be purchased up until **Wednesday 25th of March**.

For your chance to win come and buy a ticket:

- Visit the Hive before and after school

or

- Send in an envelope marked 'Easter Hamper' with your child's name and 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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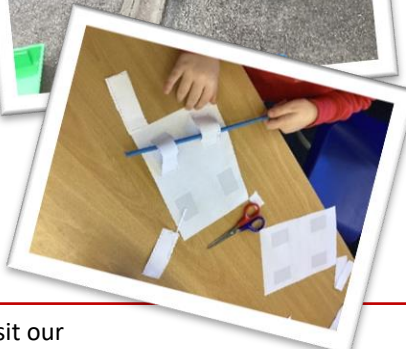
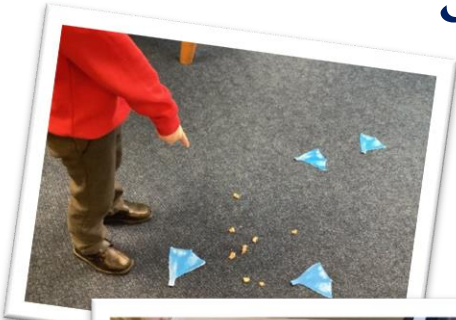
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Memories from Across the Federation



Spring 2026



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The Reading Corner



Recommended Reads

This week, I caught up with Maple Class who were visiting the library for their weekly library visit. A popular choice amongst the class this week were the Harry Potter books. I spoke to Alfie who said:

'I enjoy reading the Harry Potter Books. I have read the first two and now I'm on the third.'



Spotlight Author

This week our spotlight author is Malorie Blackman. Malorie Blackman has written 70 books for both children and young adults. One of her most famous books is the Noughts and Crosses series. This series follows Sephy and Callum and their forbidden romance. In her spare time, Malorie likes to play the piano and write poetry.



Focus Bookshelves

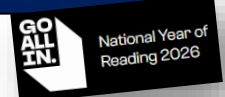
Bonjour! How much French do you know? Would you like to learn more? We have a brilliant selection of books to help people learn, most of which are dual language to make it easier to learn. Why not try *Les Trois Petits Cochons* (The Three Little Pigs), *La Marmite Magique de Porridge* (The Magic Porridge Pot) or *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*? Bonne lecture! (Happy reading!)



Don't forget to check out the official website for the National Year of Reading.

Here you can find reading activity ideas, tips and tricks to get your child hooked on books and local events linked to literacy.

<https://goallin.org.uk/>



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Sporting Highlights



Invasion Games

P.E. across the federation has gone from strength to strength in 2026, with a variety of new and exciting invasion games introduced to the children at the Junior School, ranging from dodgeball to handball. The children have been learning the Five Ds - dodge, dip, dive, duck, and... dodge! We have seen some incredible agility, reactions, and reflexes on display throughout these lessons, which the children have thoroughly enjoyed.

Within the Infants, the children have been developing their fundamental movement skills, as well as beginning to understand how invasion games work and the tactical thinking needed to achieve success in these activities. It has been wonderful to see the children taking their first steps into the concept of invasion games, and to know that this is helping prepare them for their transition to the Junior School.

Tennis and Gymnastics

This term, the children in the Junior School have had the exciting opportunity to get to grips with a tennis racket and develop their forehand, backhand, and volleying skills as part of our new tennis curriculum. It has been a privilege to lead these lessons and to see the children's faces light up as they begin to rally with a partner and refine their shot technique.

Alongside this, Year R have taken their first steps into indoor gymnastics, learning how to keep themselves and others safe while using the apparatus. They have also been building their core strength and developing their ability to hold a variety of balances.

Finally, within Years 1 and 2, the progress in the children's strength and stamina has been clear to see across both the fitness and gymnastics elements of the curriculum.

Their growing confidence and physical development have been wonderful to watch throughout the term.

Football

As we draw near to the end of term, I am delighted to announce that the Bawksbury boys' football teams have successfully secured their places in the semi-finals of the Andover Town Schools Football Competition. Dates are still to be confirmed. Alongside this fantastic achievement, the Bawksbury girls' football team has also qualified for their semi-finals.

The performances from both teams have been particularly impressive. The children have demonstrated wonderful footballing skills - moving the ball with confidence, showing decisiveness in attack, and defending strongly as a unit. Our school values of collaboration, perseverance, and respect have been at the heart of every performance, and I am incredibly proud of all the players who have represented Bawksbury this year

Mr Bensaid



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ESafety

Instagram

Instagram is one of the world's most popular social media platforms, especially with young people, especially among teens.



Instagram allows users to share photos and videos, create interactive stories, broadcast live, send private messages and follow others.

Around 70% of 13–17 year olds use Instagram.

What is the minimum age?

To be eligible to sign up for Instagram, you must be at least **13 years old**.

Letting your child use the platform before they are old enough leaves them open to risk of harm.



Instagram Parent Controls

Instagram has several features to help you manage your child's account.

Click on the link below for a Parent's Guide to controls and settings.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/instagram/>



Keep your child safe

Make the account private - so posts can only be seen by followers

Disable direct messages - prevents adults from messaging young people who don't follow them

Mute - certain profiles from appearing on your feed. It is different from blocking because you can still see each other's profiles

Sensitive Content Control - to reduce content your child might find upsetting or worrying

Hide comments - with common offensive words, phrases or emojis and stops them from appearing on your posts

Comment controls - manage who can comment on your posts - switch off comments completely or select only followers can comment.

Take a break - set reminders to take a break away from the app

Talk - about who they are following or who is following them. Talk about what they have posted

Show how to block/report inappropriate content

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What are the risks?

Threads integration

Threads is Instagram's sister app which is for public text-based conversations. Posts from Threads appear in a user's Instagram feeds, which can lead to children viewing, sharing and commenting on public conversations with strangers.



AI Chatbot

Meta's AI (available on Instagram) allows users to chat with an in-app chatbot. This can lead to children asking for or reading inappropriate content or seeing the chatbot as a real friend or confidant.



Exposure to inappropriate content

Your child could see or hear harmful or upsetting content. Due to how the platform shows users' content, it is easy to come across inappropriate or adult posts.



Scheduled messaging

This new ability means that children may receive messages late at night or early in the morning. This could impact their sleep or keep them consumed before the school day begins.



Unwanted contact

Children are at risk of receiving unwanted messages from people they do not know. Even if the account is set to private, other users can still request to send you direct messages.



Location sharing

Your child could reveal this to anyone who can see their posts



Risk of livestreaming

The livestream feature allows users to broadcast to followers (or anyone if the account is public) in real time. This increases the chance of unwanted contact from strangers and pressure to act in ways that gains attention. Children may also see offensive or harmful comments that are posted during live sessions.



Exclusion and low self-worth

Being left out of a photo which has been posted, receiving less likes than others, being unfollowed or being ignored in comments and chats can leave children feeling excluded. This can lead to low self-esteem and a sense of not belonging.



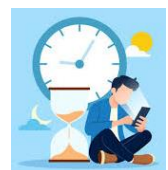
Pressure

Children may feel pressure to post certain images or videos based on what they're seeing on the app. This could lead to experiencing issues with self-esteem and wellbeing



Spending too much time scrolling

Instagram uses what's called persuasive design - techniques to keep users engaged on the platform e.g. the endless scrolling feature. As you can keep scrolling to reveal new content, you can accidentally spend hours engaging with content.



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



Easter Holiday Activities and Food (HAF)

There are free spaces for Easter holiday activities in Andover, for any child that is entitled to benefit-related free school meals. You will need to apply for a HAF code, if you don't already have one. Parents can check eligibility or apply for their code here:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/connectforcommunities/holidayactivities/register>



Youth Options will be offering free HAF spaces at their holiday club this Easter and summer for children aged 4 to 13.

Once you have a code, you can book spaces here <https://bookwhen.com/youthoptions>.

Over Easter, you can book for the Centre days, 8.30am until 3pm or they are offering some spaces for the trips for over 8s.



GLOBE FIT KIDS PRESENTS...

EASTER HOLIDAYS KIDS CLUB EXTRAVAGANZA!

7TH APRIL - 10TH APRIL
8.30 - 4 PM

HAF - FREE FOR CHILDREN RECEIVING FSM

£34 - FULL PRICE

EMAIL INFO@GLOBEFIT.CO.UK FOR MORE INFO

Augusta Park Community Centre, Hampshire

FREE HAF

Spaces booked via **Bookwhen**

www.bookwhen.com/globefitkidsclubs

Sports & Team Games, Themed Disco, Picnics, Scavenger Hunts, Nature Trails, Crafts and MORE!










Free Healthy Steps sessions online for families with children aged 5 to 12 years old

Do bedtimes feel like a battle?

Is your child a fussy eater?

Do you want to be healthier as a family?

Do you struggle to get your child to brush their teeth?

Would you like to know more budget friendly healthy recipes?

Mondays at 1:15 PM

5 weeks starting on Monday 13th April

Scan the QR code to book your free space:



Wednesdays at 7:30 PM

5 weeks starting on Wednesday 14th April

Scan the QR code to book your free space:








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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: Admiral Class.



Tokens - Juniors

The class with the most tokens in the Junior School to date is: Willow 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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Achievements from Outside of School

Well done to Robbie, Albert and Bertie from year 3 who took part in the Andover Rugby Festival as part of the Under 8's team last weekend.



Congratulations to Freddy who scored his 20th goal of the season. This milestone marks a season of growth, commitment and enjoyment of the game. Freddy should be extremely proud of what he has achieved, as are we. Well done Freddy!



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Dates to Remember

Diary Dates

March 2026

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

Monday 13 th April 2026	Children Back to School for Summer Term
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

Friday 7 th May 2026	Year R Trip to Hillier Gardens
Monday 11 th May – Friday 15 th May 2026	KS2 SATs Week
Wednesday 20 th May 2026	Year 4 – Parents v Kids Timestable Challenge 2:30pm-3:15pm
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
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 June – 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
Thursday 18 th June 2026	Year 3 Parent Transition Meeting (3:30pm – 4:30pm)
Friday 19 th June 2026	Fraser Portraits Class Photos
Monday 22 nd June – Friday 26 th June 2026	Bikeability Week – Year 6 (more information to follow)

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Tuesday 23rd June 2026	Year 4 Mini First Aid
Wednesday 24th June 2026	Andover Dance Festival 4:00pm – 9:00pm
Thursday 25th June 2026	Butterflies Transition - Session 2
<i>July 2026</i>	
Wednesday 1st July 2026	Year 5 Taster Day at John Hanson 9:00am – 12:00pm
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 School Reports Come Home
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
Thursday 16th July 2026	Year 6 Graduation at the Lights 9:00am – 12:00pm (more information to follow)
Friday 17th July 2026	Disco Fun Day
Monday 20th July 2026	Year 6 Graduation 9:15am
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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