

HPS Newsletter 13.02.26

Friday 13th February 2026

Harborne Primary School



Headteacher's Message

End of Half-Term Message to Parents and Carers

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of a busy and productive half term, we would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the many positive achievements across our school community. Family engagement has been a real highlight in recent weeks. Thank you to everyone who attended our Writing Workshops—your involvement plays a significant role in strengthening children’s confidence and enthusiasm for learning. We were equally pleased with the strong turnout at Parents’ Evening, despite the wet and windy weather. Your commitment to working alongside us to support your child is truly appreciated. We are grateful to all families who participated in SEND Review Meetings. Open and honest communication remains vital in helping every pupil continue to make accelerated progress. If you were unable to attend your scheduled appointment, please contact Mrs Cockayne to arrange a new date. Our pastoral and medical support teams remain on hand for any families who may require guidance or assistance. Support is available for:

- Housing referrals
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) applications
- Free School Meals entitlement
- 1:1 family counselling
- SEND support
- Medical advice from our school nursing service

These services are designed to provide early, practical help so that challenges can be addressed before they grow. Please reach out if you feel your family would benefit from any of the above. We are excited to welcome parents and carers of pupils who attend The Nest to a special Mother's Day Stay and Play session on Thursday 12th March at 2pm in the Nest Classroom. This half term has also been enriched by memorable learning experiences. Year 1 thoroughly enjoyed their visit from the Animal Expert, even having the chance to meet a snake! The children remained calm, curious, and engaged throughout. Animal encounters offer valuable academic and social benefits: they deepen scientific understanding while also promoting empathy, communication skills, and self-regulation. In recognition of Safer Internet Day, pupils explored how to stay safe online and what steps to take if something feels wrong. This important learning will continue over the remainder of the term. We are planning a Parent Coffee Morning to support families with setting up parental controls on home devices details will be shared shortly. Thank you for supporting our charity fundraising efforts this term. Activities like these help children develop empathy, social awareness, and a strong sense of community responsibility. We are grateful for your contributions towards NSPCC Number Day, during which we raised £144. We would also like to congratulate the winners of our Pancake Day competitions. Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday, marks the final day before Lent in the Christian calendar—a period of reflection that begins on 18th February this year. We also recognise the start of Ramadan, expected on the evening of 17th/18th February. Thank you to all parents who attended our Ramadan meeting. Celebrating and learning about different faiths and cultures remains central to our inclusive curriculum. Looking ahead, we warmly invite all parents and carers to a meeting with the CEO of the Elliot Foundation Academy Trust on Monday 2nd March at 6pm at the Main Site. This will be an excellent opportunity to hear more about the Trust's vision and values. Representatives from the Trust recently spent two days in school meeting pupils and staff, and the experience was incredibly positive. We are very much looking forward to officially joining the Trust on 1st September 2026. If you are unable to attend this meeting, further opportunities will be available during the spring and summer terms across both sites. During half term, there is a fantastic selection of family events taking place across the city from 16th–20th February, including:

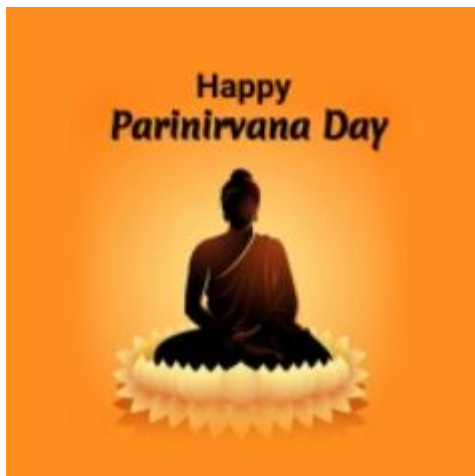
- Birmingham Botanical Gardens – Animal Handling *20th February at 11am and 2pm*
- Birmingham Museums – Art and Tour Activities *14–22 February, 10am–5pm*
- Cadbury World – Freddo’s Circus Show *14–22 February*
- The Stick Man Trail – Great Wyre
- Himley Hall and Park – Gruffalo Sculptures
- Wolverhampton Art Gallery

Thank you once again for your continued support, partnership, and trust. We remain deeply committed to the wellbeing, safety, and academic progress of every pupil. We wish you all a restful and enjoyable half term break. Warm regards,

Mrs Francis

Headteacher





Congratulations!



We send our double congratulations to Mrs Dalzell, Mrs East and their partners upon the births of their babies. Mrs Dalzell has had a girl, Ada and Mrs East a boy, Rupert. We send you both lots of love and know that you are enjoying your first cuddles, squawks and gurgles with your babies.

Dates for your diary



Please see below a list of key dates for your family diary:

- Monday 16th February-Friday 20th February: Half-term holiday
- Monday 23rd February: First day of Spring 2 for pupils
- Monday 23rd February: Thinking Day (wear Scouts/Girl Guiding/Hobby Club uniform/clothing)
- Monday 23rd February: Year 5 Harry Potter Day (wear PE kit and optional cloak)
- Thursday 26th February: Costume Swap Shop 3:20-4:00pm, both An and MS
- Monday 2nd March: Parent/Carers Introductory Meeting with the CEO of the Elliot Foundation 6:00pm Main Site
- Thursday 5th March: World Book Day (book character fancy dress)
- Monday 9th March: Mothers' Day Assembly for Class RS 2:45pm
- Tuesday 10th March: Mothers' Day Assemblies for Class RA and RH 2:45pm

- Wednesday 11th March: SEND Coffee Morning (Annex, 9:15-10:15am)
- Wednesday 11th March: Able Writers' Day @HPS
- Thursday 12th March: Mother's Day Stay and Play session for Nest children at 2pm
- Thursday 12th March: Mothers' Day Assembly for Class RP 2:45pm
- Thursday 19th March: Phonics Screening Check Briefing for Y1 Parents/Carers (Main Site, 9:15-9:45am)
- Friday 20th March: Film Club (at both sites)
- Friday 20th March: Comic Relief/Down's Syndrome Awareness Day (wear red)

NB Change from some dates previously advertised:

- Tuesday 24th March: EYFS Maths Learning Together Workshops (Main Site, 9:05-10:00am and Annex, 2:15-3:15pm)
- Thursday 26th March: Infant Easter Bonnets
- Thursday 26th March: Junior Eggstravaganza Competition
- Friday 27th March: 'You Choose' Day
- Friday 27th March: Final day of Spring Term for pupils

Summer Term

- Monday 13th April: First day of Summer Term for pupils
- Friday 17th April: Languages Day (Parents/Carers invited to tour gallery 3:30-4:00pm)
- Friday 24th April: Friends' Social event (evening)
- Monday 4th May: May Bank Holiday (school closed)
- Thursday 7th May: TED 7 (school closed to pupils)
- Friday 8th May: Eid Fest (at Main Site, everyone welcome - 3:35-5:00pm)
- Friday 15th May: Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Sports Festival at Lordswood School for Boys (1:30pm)
- Friday 22nd May: Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 & Year 6 Sports Festival at Lordswood School for Boys (1:30pm)
- Monday 25th May-Friday 29th May: Half-term holiday

- Wednesday 3rd June-Friday 5th June: Y6 Residential
- Friday 12th June: Disco for children (3:20-5:00pm, both sites)
- w/b 15th June: EYFS Fathers' Day Event
- Friday 26th June: Summer Fair (at Annex, everyone welcome - 3:30-6:00pm)
- Tuesday 7th July: Futures Day (STEM focus)
- Thursday 16th July: 'You Choose' Day

Final day of the academic year for pupils

- Friday 17th July: Final day of the academic year for pupils
- Monday 20th July: TED 8 (school closed to pupils)

Safeguarding at Harborne Primary School



Hello Everyone!

We are the Digital Leaders, a group of Year 6 pupils who are very interested in responsible use of digital technology by children our age. Whether it be computers, iPads, phones or TVs, it is important that people stay safe and use these devices in a sensible way. We'll be sharing some tips and recommendations for staying safe and still enjoying technology, but it's up to you to do your own research and make the choices that work for you!

Enjoy,

The Digital Leaders

In the UK, every film, game, or TV show must have an age rating. These are done to make sure children like us are kept safe and help parents know what kind of content is in each bit of media, without having to watch or play it themselves.

Games are rated using the symbols shown.

You can see them on the box or on the shop page. The number tells you what age someone should be before buying or playing the game and the other symbols give you the reason why. If you're unsure about a game, gamesratingauthority.org write reports about every game they rate with lots of information.

Game recommendations by Year 6

Minecraft:

Minecraft is a 7+ game that you can play on a mobile, PC or console. You can enjoy it on a choice of two main modes: Creative or Survival.

On Creative mode you can play freely and build to your heart's content.

On Survival mode you have to collect materials during the day and build something to protect you from the monsters at night.

-Harris and Fergus

Rocket League:

Rocket league is a video game like football but instead of people, there are cars that hit the ball around the arena. This game is played in teams or solo. The age rating for rocket league is PEGI 3 so it is suitable for all age groups.

-Violet

School Computing Programs

1. PurpleMash

Purple Mash is a great educational app because you can learn coding, English, Maths, Science, History and you can also play fun games and see the joke of the week! We also use it for homework

★ ★ ★ ★ 4 stars!

2. Times Tables Rock Stars

TTRS is a fun educational app because it gives you multiple multiplication questions to test your times table knowledge to help you become a rockstar! You can compete against your friends or other classes

★ ★ ★ ★ 4 stars!

3. Spelling Shed

Spelling Shed is an excellent educational app because it gives you different words to spell and you have to spell the word correctly to get currency and get a better avatar.

★ ★ ★ 3 stars!

4. Oxford Reading Buddy

Oxford Reading Buddy is an online library of books. It links to what stage reading you're on to give you suitable books and can test you with quizzes after. See more information below.

★ ★ ★ 3 stars!

Playground Safety Reminder

We kindly ask parents to ensure that children **do not ride their scooters or bikes on the school playground or entrance driveway** at the start or end of the day.

If your child rides a scooter to and from school, please remind them to **dismount and walk with it** to the scooter/bike store.

This measure helps keep everyone on the school grounds safe and prevents accidents.

Thank you.

Attendance and Punctuality Matter



We remain committed to supporting all children and families to achieve at least our target of 96% attendance, over the course of the academic year. Learning at school starts at 8:50am every day and it is very important that children arrive on time to access every learning opportunity.

If you would like any support with improving your child's attendance and/or punctuality, please speak to Mrs Brown or Ms Barron.

Medication in School



In line with our Supporting Children with Medical Conditions in School Policy, please note that we cannot administer non-prescription medications in school. Please see the wording from the policy below:

The school does not store or administer non-prescription medication in school. Non-prescription medication should be taken outside of school hours. In exceptional circumstances, the headteacher may authorise a parent/carer to attend school to administer non-prescription medication on the school site; however, this requires written authorisation and is at the headteacher's discretion.

If your child requires prescription medication, please speak to a member of office staff to fill in a consent form.

The policy can be viewed here: [Harborne Primary School - Policies](#)

Ramadan Arrangements



Thank you to all of you who were able to attend the Ramadan consultation meeting this morning - we found it to be really worthwhile to gather information and plan how we can work in partnership to support all of our children who will observe Ramadan.

If your Junior-aged child will be observing Ramadan by fasting on any school days, please complete the electronic form **before the end of Friday 20th February**.

In addition to supporting any children who fast, we will put in place the arrangements for children to pray at 12:45pm at both sites, during the holy month of Ramadan.

Ramadan Mubarak.

[Ramadan Fasting Consent Form](#)

Pancake Competition



Thank you to all of the children who entered our Junior Pancake Competition yesterday. The entries were fabulous and the judges had the very challenging job of selecting a winner from each class. This fun competition provided an opportunity for the children to develop both their practical, food handling skills and creativity.

This year's winners are:

- Year 3: Ethan, Zaha, Jai and Innes
- Year 4: Jack, Thea, Alfie and San
- Year 5: Aradya, Jules, Charlie and Hoorain
- Year 6: Rosha, Libby, Shuli and Sebastian

Congratulations to you all! Your prizes will follow in the first week back.

'Learning Together' Writing Workshops

We are thrilled that so many parents/carers were able to attend our 'Learning Together' Writing Workshops from EYFS-Y6. We hope that you are inspired and informed, to write with your children over the half-term holiday. We have received lots of positive feedback from you and in response to the Even Better If.....comments, we plan to share year group Writing Checklists routinely with you on the year group pages of our website.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the workshop! The presentation was fantastic - clear and articulate, and I loved working with my child in school. Thank you for all your hard work putting it together!" Y1 Parent

"I attended all 3 workshops for my 3 children (years 1, 3 and 5) and it was fantastic to see how the same book can be taught to the different year groups, showing clear progression. Thank you for all your hard work"

"I thought this was inspired and really eye-opening on a topic that's hard for parents to understand how best to support them at home. The demonstrations of the skills required to build a sentence were quite clever and the kids were engaged the whole way." Y5 Parent

All PowerPoints for these workshops can now be accessed on the year group pages of our website.

[Website - Year Group Pages for access to 'Learning Together' Writing Workshops](#)

Thinking Day

Dear Parents and Carers,

Monday 23rd February is the day after the Scouting and Guiding Movement's World Thinking Day.

To celebrate all the wonderful interests our children have, the School Council would like to invite everyone who would like to take part, to wear their Rainbow, Beaver, Brownie, Cub, Guide or Scout uniform to school on that day.

If they aren't involved in Scouting and Guiding, they could wear another uniform related to a club or interest, or just wear their own clothes that reflect an activity they enjoy doing out of school.

Yours sincerely,

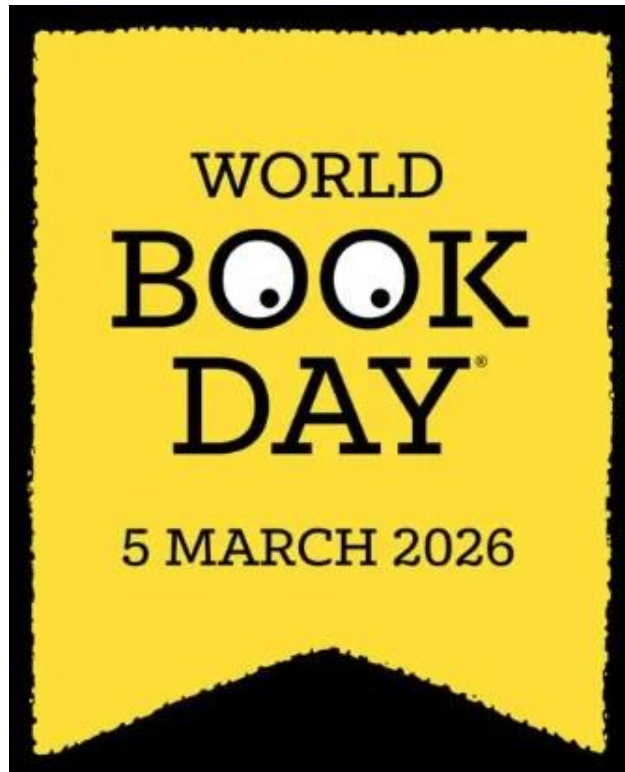
School Council



music!
Songs!



World Book Day - Thursday 5th March



Dear Parents and Carers, We are looking forward to celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 5th March with the children this year! To keep things fun, simple, and stress-free, pupils are welcome to come to school dressed as a book character *or* in their pyjamas.

There is absolutely no need to buy anything new. Easy costume ideas include:

- Pyjamas with a favourite bedtime story
- A character wearing everyday clothes (e.g. Lottie Brookes, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Matilda*)
- A homemade accessory such as a crown, hat, or badge

To help make dressing up accessible for everyone, we are running a Costume Swap Shop at both the Main Site and the Annex. 🏠 [Costume Swap Shop Details:](#)

- Date: Thursday 26th February 3.20-4pm
- How it works:
 - If you would like to donate any pre-loved costumes you no longer need, please bring them to school before the 26th February

- Come along on the day and choose a costume to take home
- Further details to follow

This is a great way to recycle, save money, and make sure all children can join in the fun. Thank you for your support—we can't wait to see everyone's creativity! Warm regards,

Mrs Oakley and Miss Davis

SEND Coffee Mornings

Please join us for our next SEND Coffee Morning:

- Wednesday 11th March: SEND Coffee Morning (Annex, 9:15-10:15am)



Learning Together Workshops – EYFS Maths Focus



The Spring 2 Term's Learning Together workshops will focus on EYFS Maths. The purpose of these sessions is to share how EYFS children learn best with concrete apparatus and models. We will share a variety of strategies that you can use to support and strengthen your child's understanding of Maths at home.

Please come and join your child's class on the date and time below:

- Tuesday 24th March
- Main Site Classes RH, RP & RS - 9:05-10:00am

- Annex Class RA - 2:15-3:15pm

Healthy Snacks



- A reminder that EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 children all receive a portion of free fruit in school, every morning.
- Children in Years 3-6 can bring a healthy snack in for playtime, or can purchase a healthy snack from the kitchen.
- Please note that we are a healthy-eating and nut-free school.

Oxford Reading Buddy



What is Oxford Reading Buddy?

- Oxford Reading Buddy is an online service that helps children with their reading
- It contains hundreds of Oxford books and book-quizzes, all matched to each child's reading level
- Children can use it at home and at school
- It works on smartphones as well as computers and tablets



OXFORD

How will Oxford Reading Buddy help your child?

Oxford Reading Buddy will...

- Give your child access to lots of books so that they can practise reading
- Give them a 'buddy' to help them understand what they are reading
- Check how your child is doing and make sure they have books at the right level
- Report back to teachers so that they can see where your child might need more help
- Give your child badges for reading well and motivate them to practise more



OXFORD

How to use Oxford Reading Buddy:

Logging in

- 1** Receive sign-in card

- 2** Go to:
www.oxfordreadingbuddy.com

- 3** Enter the login details from your sign-in card




TIP
There's just one simple login for you and your child

TIP
Bookmark on all devices for easy access



OXFORD

How to use *Oxford Reading Buddy*:

Choose a buddy

Your child will choose their own buddy when they first log in



They can change it again by clicking on the wheel in the top right

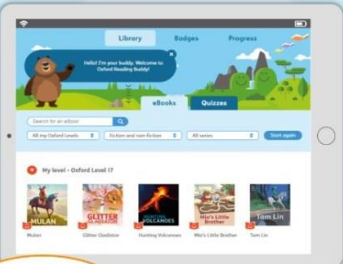



OXFORD

How to use *Oxford Reading Buddy*:


Finding a book

Your child can choose from all books at their reading level and below



Just click on a book to get started!

TIP
Find out more about Oxford Levels on the Support Site

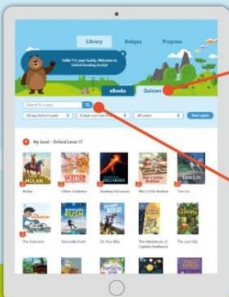


OXFORD

How to use *Oxford Reading Buddy*:


Finding a quiz

Your child can take quizzes on many Oxford print books, as well as eBooks.



Click on the Quizzes tab to find quizzes

You can search for quizzes by typing the title into the box



OXFORD

How to use Oxford Reading Buddy:

eBooks

Infant level books have audio, which your child can use if they wish

TIP
Encourage your child to read the text without audio as they become more confident

“See?” said
“We can fis
sun comes

Text tracking at the earliest levels helps your child to follow the text

OXFORD

How to use Oxford Reading Buddy:

Quizzes

Every eBook ends with a quiz. Automatic marking shows your child's teacher how they are getting on. Their quiz scores determine when they are ready to change level.

Remember, there are quizzes on print books as well as eBooks.

TIP
All quizzes are good practice, but only quizzes 'on level' will count towards progress

TIP
If your child has to leave a quiz half finished, their answers will be stored

OXFORD

How to use Oxford Reading Buddy:

Coaching eBooks

The Coaching eBooks contain your child's chosen buddy. The buddy will model, prompt and coach your child to become better at comprehension.

Coaching eBooks can be identified by the red smiley face symbol in the corner.

TIP
The reading buddy is a good model of how to support your child as they read

OXFORD

How to use Oxford Reading Buddy:

Badges

Your child will get badges for things like reading a lot, doing well in quizzes, listening to all of their buddy's prompts, etc. They can see their badges by going to the Badges screen.



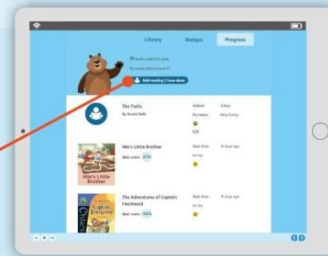
TIP

Badges can be earned multiple times so encourage your child to try for more!

How to use Oxford Reading Buddy:

Progress

Your child can see everything they've read, their quiz scores and their level-changes by going to the Progress screen.



Click on the 'Add reading I have done' button to add wider reading




How to use Oxford Reading Buddy:

Adding wider reading

- In Oxford Reading Buddy, all reading is valued, not just books in the system.
- On the Progress screen you or your child can record any other reading that they have done
- This means that you, your child and their teacher can see all your child's reading to talk about and celebrate







How you can help your child

- Encourage your child to read regularly, both on and off *Oxford Reading Buddy*
- Talk to your child about what they are reading
- Resist the temptation to help your child on the quizzes because their answers will help your child's teacher understand their needs
- Encourage your child to listen to the 'Buddy prompts', as these will help them improve their comprehension
- Be patient and encouraging, as children progress at different rates

TIP
Click the Help button to visit the Support Site, where there is a special section for parents and carers




OXFORD



How will I know how my child is getting on?

- You can look at your child's Progress screen to find out how many books they have read and their quiz scores
- The Progress screen also records level changes
- You can look at the Badge screen to see what badges your child has earned in their current level

TIP
Sometimes children move down levels as well as up. Don't worry if this happens; it may take a little while for the system to assess your child's level correctly.

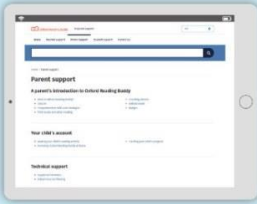



OXFORD

Don't forget the Support Site!

- The Support Site has a special section for parents and carers.
- It contains more information on all aspects of the service, including Oxford Levels, Comprehension skills and technical support


<https://support.oxfordreadingbuddy.com/>

OXFORD

Pastoral support

Please contact Ms Barron if you would like to discuss pastoral support for your child or family. We are very happy to try to support with a range of different situations. Please see the pictures for more information. Ms Barron can be contacted directly during office hours on 07354 896960.






PASTORAL SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES
at Harborne Primary School

At HPS, we believe that children are successful when they feel safe, happy and supported.

Our Pastoral Lead, Miss C. Barron, plays a vital role in supporting the emotional, social and mental wellbeing of all of our pupils. Miss Barron's role is to ensure that every child feels heard, valued and cared for.

- Emotional Support: Helping children manage feelings like anxiety, sadness or anger.
- Attendance and Behaviour: Working closely with families to improve attendance and develop positive behaviours.
- Early Help and Safeguarding: Identifying when extra support is needed and linking families with the right services.
- Family Liaison: Acting as a friendly point of contact for parents who may need advice, reassurance or someone to talk to.
- Promoting Inclusion: Ensuring every child feels they belong, especially those facing challenges at home or in school.

We have a dedicated phonenumber for parents/carers to contact Miss C. Barron if they require urgent/emergency pastoral support. Tel: 07354896960

Malachi - support for families



To support families at Harborne Primary School, we have work with an organisation called Malachi. They offer professional, therapeutic family support - they are highly regarded within this field and have established relationships with some of our local secondary schools already, including KEVI Lordswood Girls' School.

The link below will take you to their website, so you can get a flavour of what they offer. The 1hr sessions with a professional therapeutic practitioner can take place at either school site, or even at home, and a cycle usually lasts around 12 weeks.

[Home - Malachi](#)

They work primarily with parents but children are at the heart of everything they do, practitioners will include them at key points of the programme.

If you think your family could benefit from working with Malachi, please get in touch with Mrs Walters via our Enquiry email.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or comments, please use the contact details below to get in touch with us.

Harborne Primary School

enquiry@harborne.bham.sch.uk

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Harborne

Birmingham

B17 9LU

Tel: 0121 464 2705

Harborne Primary School Annex

Court Oak Road

Harborne

Birmingham

B17 9AB

Tel: 0121 464 2705 (Opt 1)

Visit us on the web at <https://www.harborneprimary.co.uk/>