



BEENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

VALUING OURSELVES. VALUING EVERYBODY.

Beenham Bulletin

Spring Term
April 2025

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Acting Headteacher's Message

With the clocks going forward at the weekend and the longer, sunnier and (slightly) warmer days, it feels like spring has finally sprung and even brings hope that summer may follow! This has been a long spring term and, as always, we have been really busy in school packing as much in as we can. The children have been enjoying lots of hands-on and creative learning, from building earthquake-proof structures in Torak to clearing our pond area and planting up raised beds in Tundra.



It feels like a very long time ago now, but it was the spring term that started with the headteacher recruitment process. I was really overwhelmed with the amount of encouragement I received in my application to the role, from the team in school, the children, our families and the community – the feeling of support was enormous and I cannot thank all of you enough. I am absolutely delighted to be able to continue to serve as the headteacher of a school that I think is pure magic, and I am really excited to already be making plans for developing and growing the school over the coming years.

As you know, our school maybe small but it is mighty. This is by and large down to the phenomenal team we have who give their best every day and frequently go over and above to help the children and each other. I would like to send a really heartfelt thanks to all of them for their tireless effort, kindness and humour – 3 essential ingredients for a wonderful team!

I hope you all have a happy, healthy and restful Easter break and the sun stays with us for the holiday! We will look forward to seeing everyone back in school on Wednesday 23rd April 2025.

Take care until then,
Miss Sophie McBean

Values of the Term

COOPERATION

During Spring 1, we explored the value of 'cooperation' across the school. With our weekly affirmations, we thought about what cooperation really means and what it looks like in different contexts. We enjoyed our inter-house newspaper building challenge, with Zephaniah claiming victory with the joint-tallest tower and clearest display of cooperation!

Recipient of Acting Headteacher's Award for care: Lottie M (Tala)

RESPECT

For Spring 2, we have been thinking about our value of 'respect'. We have questioned how respect can be shown to other people, to things around us, to ourselves and to our learning. We have also thought about how showing respect links with our school rule, *Be Kind*.

Recipient of Acting Headteacher's Award for respect:



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Tala

I cannot believe that it is the end of our second term this year! The time has really flown in Tala and the children have grown so much. They continue to impress me with their hard work, resilience and dedication to producing their best pieces of work.

This term we explored what life was like long ago. This included learning all about how much schools have changed since the early 1900s, how Beenham Village has changed and how much our day-to-day activities have changed. In our science lessons, we explored how the seasons change from winter to spring, then spring to summer. We became weather reporters and reported on the daily weather, hunted for signs of spring, investigated the daylight hours in each season and recorded our data.

The most fun learning we did this term was making our own puppets. The children have really enjoyed learning how to make puppets and I will often find them making more in their Busy Time!

One of the most exciting things to happen for us is our outdoor shelter was fixed! This means that our outdoor area has been more accessible, and children have been spending a lot more time outside. We welcomed a new climbing frame and lots of other equipment to enhance our outdoor experiences.

I look forward to all the exciting adventures Tala go on and watching the children grow even more!



Torak

We have had a brilliant Spring term in Torak!

We have had some fantastic experiences, including visits from the Police and Fire services, as well as engaging first aid workshops. The children have thoroughly enjoyed these activities and have gained valuable key skills.

This term, our topic has been Rocks, Relics, and Rumbles, where we have explored volcanoes and earthquakes. We have looked at the Earth's layers and how they influence volcanic activity and seismic events. The children have particularly enjoyed learning about different types of volcanic eruptions, famous volcanoes around the world, and the effects of volcanic eruptions. Also, we had a great time designing and testing our own earthquake-proof buildings, using our knowledge of earthquakes.

In science, we have explored rocks, focusing on how to classify them based on their properties and formation over thousands of years. The children particularly enjoyed learning about fossils and even learnt how to make their own! We have also explored forces and magnets, focusing on contact and non-contact forces, how objects move on different surfaces, and the properties and practical uses of magnets.

We have also looked at a variety of topics including the artist L.S. Lowry and his distinctive industrial-style paintings. The children even learned a song about Lowry and his artwork! Additionally, we explored cams and mechanisms, working collaboratively in groups to create different types. We also learned how to organise data using branching databases and discovered what school life is like in France.

It has been a fantastic term filled with exciting learning experiences, and we are so proud of everything the children have achieved. We can't wait to see what the next term brings!



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Tundra

Another jam-packed term for Tundra!

Our second term kicked-off with an introduction to our next topic - Sow, Grow, Farm. The children explored local, national and international geography, looked at climate maps and discussed how climate and soil type and quality affect the variety of crops which can be grown. We took a trip down to the local allotment to see how they grow their food and which food grows best. We researched and planted our own vegetable garden in school including beans, lettuce and potatoes. We sowed seeds which have slowly grown into little pepper plants in the classroom. We have seen lambing during live lessons and compared the food grown across different climate zones across different continents.

In our science topics this term, we have focused on plants and animals and the ways in which they grow and develop. We started with plants - dissecting different flowers to identify the male and female parts to better understand how plants reproduce. We looked at habitats and the animals and plants which live in them and looked at where animals live in the world and why. Recently we have been learning about human growth and reproduction. We have looked at gestation periods and foetal development, as well as developing our understanding of puberty, adolescence and old age.

We have had some excellent learning opportunities provided from outside of school including two excellent bushcraft workshops, a virtual reality space workshop, visits from the police and artistic support from Mrs Grace. Tundra have made bread, decorated cakes and set up a weekly fundraising event to support their chosen charity, WWF. They have created some astounding land art sculptures, built replica 'Golden Temples' from recycling materials, recorded their own news reports and produced reams of fantastic, creative writing. Tundra showed off during Bikeability and all earned badges for their efforts.

I am feeling very lucky to get to work with such fantastic (not so little) people and of course their amazing families. Although it is mind-boggling to already be 2/3 through this academic year, I am very excited for the final term and all of the super opportunities I hope will engage your children even further.

Have a wonderful Easter break!



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Chair of Governor's Message

Hi Beenham School Community,

As we come to the end of the Spring Term, I would like to take a moment to thank Stephen Wallace for his dedication and contributions as a Parent Governor at our school. His support has been invaluable, and we are truly grateful for his time and commitment.

We now have a vacancy for a Parent Governor, and I encourage any parent who is passionate about the school's future to consider this rewarding role. As a Parent Governor, you will have the opportunity to work closely with the leadership team, contribute to key decisions, and help shape the strategic direction of the school. It's a fantastic way to support the school community while gaining valuable experience. If you are interested or would like to find out more, please feel free to contact me.

Finally, I would like to wish all our families, children, the teaching team, and the PTFA a wonderful Easter break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back next term, refreshed and ready for another fantastic term ahead!

All the best,

James Tobin
Chair of Governors



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Parent Survey Feedback



Thank you very much to all of you who completed the parent survey we sent out in January. We had 26 responses to the survey which represents over half our school! We always really value your feedback and have been making plans and taking actions based on it.

If you have any thoughts, ideas or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to speak to us!

What is working well?

- Child-centred approach in school
- Support from the school
- Confidence in issues being dealt with in a sensitive and timely manner
- Consideration of children's welfare and wellbeing
- Personalised care for individual children



What needs to be better?

- Sharing of what children will learn
- Consistency in communication
- More regular outdoor learning sessions



What is going to happen?

- Class website pages updated by the start of each term mapping out the learning for each class
- Post on each class' Dojo story at the beginning of each term to share the topic and linked learning the children will be exploring
- Expectation shared that all Class Dojo messages will be responded to (written or face-to-face) within 2 working days
- After all teachers were trained to deliver curriculum-linked outdoor learning in November, each class will participate in at least 2 outdoor lessons per term
- Two Bushcraft days for all children have been booked as an additional offer for the summer term (thank you to our wonderful PTFA for paying for these!)



Just an amazing school with staff that go over and above for EVERY CHILD... Beenham is both unique and exceptional and has an extremely amazing way of teaching children. Beenham should be used as an example of an amazing environment helping children reach their potential.... whatever their potential may be.



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Working Together to Improve School Attendance

EVERY SCHOOL DAY MATTERS

Penalty Notice Fines for absence from school are changing

From 19th August 2024 Penalty Notice fines increase to £160 for each parent, for each child.

You can be fined if your child has a total of 5 days of unauthorised absences in 10 school weeks, for things like:

- being late after the register has closed
- truancy
- taking a holiday without permission from the school
- or if a headteacher isn't satisfied for the reason for missing school

Over a rolling 3-year period the sanctions are:

- 1st offence – £160 reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days
- 2nd offence – £160
- 3rd offence – Court hearing and up to £2,500 fine, or up to 3 months in prison and a criminal record

For more information please contact: EWSS@westberks.gov.uk

As many of you will know, new statutory guidance outlining the role of families, schools and local authorities with school attendance came into effect in August 2024.

Working Together to Improve School Attendance has introduced strict regulations for schools with regards to register coding and the ability to authorise absences.

In the event that 10 or more school sessions (half-days) are recorded as authorised absence in a 10 week period, fixed penalty notices will be issued by West Berkshire Council.

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE):

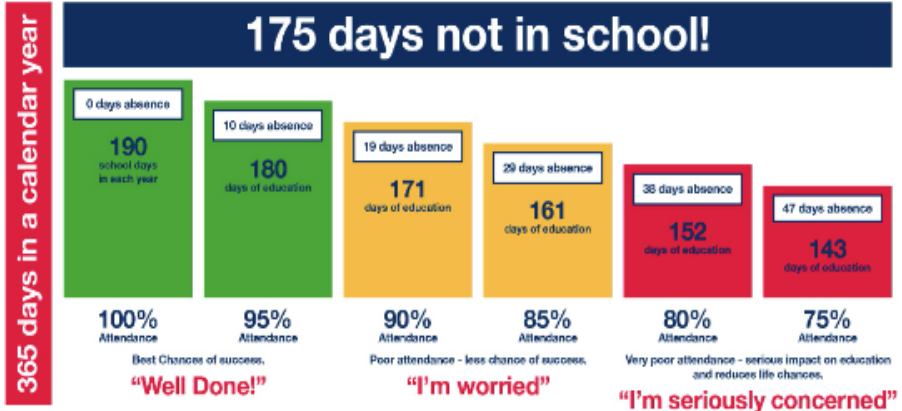
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf

Beenham Primary School Attendance Policy:

<https://primarysite-produced.s3.amazonaws.com/beenham-primary-school/UploadedDocument/ca432887->

Good attendance means...

Being in school at least 95% of the time or 180 to 190 days



Our Senior Attendance Champion is Mrs Sharp.



Please contact Mrs Sharp, Miss McBean or Mrs Appleby via the school office if you have any questions or to report absences



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Wellbeing and Safeguarding over Easter



With the weather looking good going into the break (hopefully I haven't just jinxed it!) there will be plenty of opportunity for outdoor exploring and free-range fun over the next 2 weeks. Getting out in the sunshine somehow always makes things feel more manageable and hopefully gives an opportunity for some (free!) quality time.

30 Family Wellbeing Activities to Celebrate Spring

- 1 Plant some flower seeds.
- 2 Spring clean your home.
- 3 Go for a bike ride.
- 4 Have a picnic breakfast.
- 5 Make a spring door wreath.
- 6 Visit a farm and feed the lambs.
- 7 Listen to bird song at dusk.
- 8 Grow vegetables.
- 9 Gather leaves and do leaf rubbings.
- 10 Go for a walk by a lake or river.
- 11 Make a fruit smoothie.
- 12 Bake a lemon cake.
- 13 Watch a spring nature programme.
- 14 Write a spring acrostic poem.
- 15 Make an uplifting card for a loved one.
- 16 Shop locally.
- 17 Clear out and give away old toys and clothes.
- 18 Toast marshmallows over a fire pit.
- 19 Host a family board games evening.
- 20 Play frisbee in the park.
- 21 Make homemade ice cream.
- 22 Paint a spring scene.
- 23 Feed the ducks.
- 24 Start a new hobby.
- 25 Play hide and seek outdoors.
- 26 Wash the car as a family.
- 27 Photograph different trees.
- 28 Go hunting for bluebells.
- 29 Lie on the ground and watch the clouds.
- 30 Create a mud kitchen and make potions.



As a school community, we are here to support families during the holidays as well as term time. Please do reach out if help is needed.

If you have any concerns about your child(ren) over the holiday, or any other children, Mrs Sharp and I are still available and contactable as Designated Safeguarding Leads. You can message us on Dojo or email via the school office – these will all be checked regularly.

You can also report any concerns straight to the West Berkshire Contact Advice and Assessment Service: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/childconcern>



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Diary Dates for the Spring

<i>Tuesday 22nd April</i>	INSET day
<i>Wednesday 23rd April</i>	Start of Summer 1 term
<i>Monday 28th April</i>	Tala Class trip – Ella’s Kitchen
<i>Tuesday 29th April</i>	Tala Class swimming lessons start
<i>Monday 5th May</i>	Bank holiday
<i>Friday 9th May</i>	VE Day Street Party
<i>Monday 12th – Thursday 15th May</i>	Year 6 SATs week
<i>Friday 23rd May</i>	End of Summer 1 term
<i>Monday 26th – Friday 30th May</i>	Half-term holiday
<i>Monday 2nd June</i>	Start of Summer 2 term
<i>Saturday 7th June</i>	Summer fayre
<i>Monday 9th – Friday 13th June</i>	Year 4 multiplication check & Year 1 phonics screening
<i>Thursday 19th June</i>	Torak & Tundra Classes trip – Englefield Estate
<i>Friday 20th June</i>	Pride of Beenham Awards
<i>Wednesday 2nd July</i>	Whole-school transition morning
<i>Wednesday 9th July</i>	Whole-school transition morning
<i>Friday 11th July</i>	Sports day & colour run
<i>Thursday 17th July</i>	Summer production
<i>Friday 18th July</i>	Whole-school trip to Oxford
<i>Tuesday 22nd July</i>	End of Summer 2 term (1pm finish)