



Bloxham CE Primary School

October 2025 Newsletter

Dear Families,

The Autumn term has been filled with creativity, reflection and togetherness. Our school value this term has been Inclusion, explored through the idea that everyone is part of a jigsaw — each piece unique, yet essential to the whole. Through worship and learning, pupils have reflected on how our differences make us stronger. We've linked this to Bible stories, folklore and the Torah — considering how Nehemiah organised the rebuilding of Jerusalem, how Jesus encouraged and included everyone, no matter their age, and how the Jewish festival of Sukkot reminds us of community and thankfulness.

We've also looked at the Sikh practice of Langar, learning how sharing food together as equals shows that everyone belongs, and reflected on the inclusivity of Diwali, celebrating light, hope and togetherness. Across these faiths and stories, we have talked about the importance of judging each other by our values and actions, not by appearances, and how our school values help us to build a kinder, fairer world.

Children created Kindness and Playground Pledges, celebrating the ways we can build each other up through care and respect. And if you were one of the many families who joined us for Open Classrooms, then you also played a part in exploring this value — recognising that we all have a part to play. Fittingly, the event coincided with our first Values Day of the year, reinforcing how inclusion shapes our learning and school life.

We marked Black History Week under the theme "Standing Firm in Power and Pride," learning about individuals whose courage and determination changed history — from Sir Lenny Henry and Baroness Floella Benjamin to Rosa Parks. National Poetry Day was linked to Remembrance, with pupils' poems and artwork soon to be displayed around the village as part of our community trail. We also took part in Hello Yellow Day, reflecting on mental health and how small acts of inclusion can make a big difference to wellbeing.

Encourage one another and build each other up.



A love of reading has continued to grow across the school this term, reflecting our belief that stories have the power to bring people together. Through sharing books, pupils have found connections, discovered new perspectives and celebrated characters who show courage, kindness and acceptance. Our Book Fair inspired children to share recommendations and build excitement around stories, while Ms Staples has been refreshing our library with a diverse range of new titles purchased through last year's fundraising. By ensuring every pupil can find a story that speaks to them, we continue to nurture curiosity, empathy and a sense of belonging for all.

Our first major educational visit of the year has taken place today, on this last day of the half-term, with Year 6 stepping back in time to experience life during World War II at Holdenby House. Pupils have immersed themselves in hands-on activities, deepening their historical understanding and bringing their classroom learning vividly to life. The visit also helped children see how, during the war, inclusion and teamwork were vital — people from all walks of life came together, supported one another and worked towards a common goal - echoing our own school vision.

It has been a wonderful start to the year — a term that truly reflects our vision to **"Encourage one another and build each other up."**

Finally, following a recent incident, the school will be taking the sad but necessary step of keeping the front door locked during the school day. An intercom system will be fitted to provide an additional safeguard and help us manage authorised access more effectively. We understand that this change may cause disappointment and we sincerely apologise to our families who consistently follow our safeguarding procedures and support us in ensuring that all staff and pupils feel safe to learn and work. Your understanding and cooperation are greatly appreciated as we continue to prioritise the wellbeing and security of our school community.

Warm regards for a safe and restful half term.
Sarah Marshall

Mrs Paxton

It is with great sadness that we share the news of the passing of Rachel Claydon Hill, formerly known as Rachel Paxton. She was a much loved and respected former member of staff at Bloxham Primary School. Rachel dedicated over 17 years to our school community and played an instrumental role in promoting eco and sustainability throughout the school. Her passion for the environment inspired countless pupils, encouraging them to care deeply about the world around them. Rachel will also be fondly remembered for setting up and leading Bloxham's first 'Forest School' and making it very much part of the Bloxham culture.

Rachel helped so many pupils grow, just like the sunflowers she loved so much. Sunflowers stand tall following the sun throughout the day. No matter what the weather brings, they keep their faces lifted, seeking warmth and light. In many ways, Rachel was our sunflower. She brought warmth, kindness and light into the lives of others. She helped us smile and made our days brighter just by her presence.

Just like the sunflower, may we always try to turn towards the light, even on cloudy days and remember Rachel and the sunshine she brought to our school community.

Communication Update

After the half-term break we will be introducing **Parent Hub** — our new platform for sharing school news and information with families.

Parent Hub is a free app designed to help you stay connected and up to date with everything happening at school. Through the app, we'll share messages, reminders, and updates directly with parents and carers. You'll also be able to join "**channels**" for your child's class or year group, so you only receive information that's relevant to you.

Please look out for more details on how to **download the app and get started**. We're looking forward to making communication easier, clearer, and more convenient for everyone.

We'd also like to let families know that **email will now be our main method of communication** for general updates and information. Please check your inbox regularly to stay informed. **Text messages** will only be used for urgent or time-sensitive matters — for example, unexpected schedule changes or emergencies.

.Visitor QR Code

If you visited our recent Year 5 assembly and would like to share your thoughts on this experience, please use our QR Code. Thank you



School photographs

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Remember that school photographs will be taking place on Thursday 6th November.

Royal British Legion – Poppy Appeal

We will be selling various items to raise funds for the Poppy appeal from Tuesday 4th November. Metal poppy pins and wristbands are £1, all other items such as pencil sharpeners, erasers and rulers are 50p. Please note that we are unable to provide change, so please can your child not bring notes into school.



Attendance

Overall attendance across the whole school during October was 92.44%. A massive well done to class **6GH** for achieving the highest attendance for a class in October - each student will receive 10 KBVs! Congratulations to Year 5 for the highest attendance in October for a year group at 93.42%

Our October SuperHere0s are:

Foundation/Keys Stage 1: Bernardo, Ellis, William, Olivia

Key stage 2: Imogen, Saskia, Adrian, Toby

Book Fair Competition Winners

Congratulations to the following children who received a token to exchange for a book from the incredibly well supported Scholastic Book Fair held last week. Books on their suggested themes or book series will be purchased with the rewards earned.

Riley B KS1AA, Antonella W KS1CA, Hugo S 5CJ, Kit Mc KS1 CB, Flora B 4KS

School Website

We encourage you to regularly visit our school website, particularly the **School Calendar**, for important dates throughout the school year, as well as the **Class** and **Curriculum** pages.

Please also explore the **Community News** section, which highlights events and activities happening in the local area and over the half-term holidays.

Additionally, our school website features a secure, password-protected **Parent Portal** within the *Parents and Carers* section. This dedicated space provides access to key curriculum information and phonics videos.

Healthy Snacks & Water

Please remember that we are a **nut-free school** – no nuts or nut products should be brought in. Drinks should be **water only** (no squash, juice, or fizzy drinks). Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe and healthy.

Parking in residential areas

Please could we again remind Families to be respectful when parking around residential areas and to please not block pathways or driveways. If you have concerns relating to the availability of parking or in relation to specific vehicles, please contact the relevant authority. Thank you

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Parish Council: bloxhamparishcouncil@gmail.com

Oxfordshire Highways: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/contactus/contact-highways-team#no-back>

Thames Valley Police: <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us-beta/contact-us/driving-vehicles-traffic/>

Reporting illness for your child

Please report your child's absence every day either by leaving a message on the Absence line or using the email address: attendance@bloxham-pri.oxon.sch.uk. We would be grateful if you could include your child's symptoms in any message that you leave.

Halloween and Children's Safety - Child Accident Prevention Trust

It's October which we know means two things; half-term and Halloween. Halloween has long given concern to school leaders and parents as well as the general public. Largely this has been due to anti-social behaviour, social disorder linked to trick or treating, house party overflows, late opening hours in the nightlife sector and so on.

Whilst educational professionals up and down the country may spend the lead up focusing on preventing anti-social behaviour, there are other dangers lurking for children and young people. These secondary dangers including unsafe costume design, and the low nocturnal visibility of participants have been addressed in a recent article from the Child Accident Prevention Trust.

Find out more here: [Halloween and Children's Safety \(CAPT\)](#)



Online Safety

This term in Computing, our pupils have been learning all about online safety - how to use the internet responsibly and make good choices when using digital devices.

As part of this, we would like to gently remind families that the digital consent age for most apps and social media platforms is 13. It is always a good idea for children to have parental guidance when exploring new apps or websites, and to make sure the apps they use are age-appropriate.

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We understand that managing online activity can be tricky, and every family handles it in their own way. By keeping communication open and taking an interest in what children are using, we can all help to keep them safe online. If you would like any more information/guidance, there are some useful tips and links to informative websites within the Parent Guide/Online Safety sections of the school website.

Thank you for your continued support.

Foundation Stage

Foundation have loved exploring seasonal changes, traditional tales and learning more about Harvest time this term. We have sang songs, learnt new story language, painted pumpkins and explored our senses in a range of activities both in and outdoors.

We loved making hedgehog breadrolls as we developed our listening skills and followed instructions. We worked together to mix, knead, prove and cook the bread. Once it had cooled we enjoyed eating it together and created our own set of instructions by applying our phonic knowledge.

We have continued to plough on with our Phonics learning and have been learning new sounds each week, orally blending words and beginning to sound out simple words to write.

In Maths we have loved learning about shape this month. We have explored 2D and 3D shapes, naming them and describing their properties. We thoroughly enjoyed having a shape hunt around our classroom where we found lots of examples.



Key Stage 1

KS1 were delighted to welcome the *Hayjack Drama Club* for an engaging and creative drama workshop. The children took part in a range of fun activities, including games with a colourful parachute, using their bodies to create imaginative props, and joining in with the lively *Pizza Man* song. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed exploring drama through movement, teamwork, and imagination. A big thank you to the Hayjack Drama Club for providing such an inspiring and enjoyable experience!



Year 3

For Black History Month, Year 3 have enjoyed researching and learning about the influence Serena Williams and Simone Biles have had on the sporting world. The children also found out that Simone Biles' main influence growing up was Serena! They showed excellent teamwork skills when producing their fact files in groups.

In art, we have produced clay bell beaker pots using a simple but effective pinch pot technique. It was fun adding the pretty patterns as the outside designs.

In History, we have been looking at the Beaker tribes and we became early Bronze Age traders! Each group had a chief, a scribe and some traders who travelled to other settlements (teams) and traded the resources they had with resources from the other Beaker families. There wasn't any robbing, luckily, but clever tactics were used to get the desired resources.



In DT/ Science we made a delicious ratatouille, looking at balanced healthy meals. In groups the children prepared and cut the vegetables and then after slow cooking took some home to try. The feedback was: delicious!



Year 4

For Black History Month, the children enjoyed learning about the British poet Benjamin Zephaniah and what he believed in. They felt strongly about how he believed in inclusivity and justice for all and how this resonated greatly with our School Values. The children thoroughly enjoyed both the humour and the strong messages in his rhythmic and rap style poetry. They created colourful artwork which included a written biographical text.

Wilma Rudolph, a triple Olympic gold medalist who overcame paralysis and was told she would never walk by doctors, inspired the children to write very detailed biographies. The children presented them in their own creative style along with illustrations. This followed detailed research and notetaking; a skill the children are now using to gather information in other subjects to support retrieval of information.

Teeth, both human and animal, have been the focus of learning in Science. The children had great fun exploring their own teeth using a mirror and noting the difference in how the four types of teeth felt. They used this information to predict what each tooth's function was. This knowledge also helped the children identify the diets of a variety of animals.

The children loved studying the artifacts discovered in the Sutton Hoo ship burial site. The children worked in groups to predict and infer what they might learn about the Anglo-Saxons beliefs, customs and everyday life from the artifacts found. The children were extremely intuitive, quickly recognising a mixture of both Pagan and Christianity in the designs on objects along with Roman Mythology. They were fascinated by the effort that went into dragging a huge dragon boat onto the land and burying a *Brewalda* (King of Kings) with all his precious possessions so that he would be suitably prepared for the afterlife. The children then made connections with the artifacts discovered at a local burial site in Banbury, noting that the jewellery also depicted both Christian crosses and mythological creatures and that the Anglo Saxon men and women buried there were also buried with their treasured possessions. They were wowed by the discovery that nearly 23,000 artifacts and 52 skeletons were uncovered so close to Bloxham.

Year 5

In Maths, Year 5 have been focusing on addition and subtraction using column methods. The children have been developing their accuracy and confidence when working with larger numbers, checking their answers using inverse operations. They've also applied their skills to a range of word problems, carefully identifying key information and choosing efficient strategies to solve them. It's been wonderful to see their problem-solving skills and perseverance shine through!

Linking to Black History Month, our genre was writing an autobiography for Dame Floella Benjamin. We learnt many things about the inspirational woman, and then ensuring we knew the features of a biography, wrote our own biography for her.

Year 5 have continued to enjoy learning about the Shang Dynasty, exploring their religious beliefs and the fascinating ways they used bronze in everyday life and ceremonies. We are all very excited for our trip to Compton Verney in November where we will see some real bronze artefacts, as well as make our own vessel.

In RE, the children have enjoyed learning more about Islam, which has led to some wonderful class discussions. They now understand the Islamic views of Jesus and the importance of Hadiths to Muslims.

In Science, the children have been thoroughly engaged in learning about forces, focusing on gravity and friction. They have carried out a range of exciting experiments to test these forces in action, demonstrating excellent curiosity and teamwork. The classes have shown a clear understanding of what makes a test fair and have worked carefully to draw accurate conclusions from their investigations. It's been fantastic to see their scientific thinking and enthusiasm shine through each lesson!

In PE, the children have continued their Movement and Mindfulness sessions, learning about the importance of breathing and balance. They have even designed their own flow of poses, showing great creativity and focus. In Touch Rugby, the children have developed their coordination and teamwork, becoming more confident in passing and skilfully dodging one another during games.

In PSHE, we have found that the use of the charter and the 'calm me' sequence has helped us with our learning. We all loved the 'into the woods' game which taught us how important it is to include everyone.

Year 6

Recently our Year 6 pupils took part in the Injury Minimisation Programme for Schools (IMPS). The training is designed to help children develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to keep themselves and others safe, both at school and in the wider community. Through a combination of discussion, practical activities, and role-play, pupils explored how to make sensible decisions in everyday situations and how to respond appropriately in emergencies.

As part of the programme, pupils learned basic first aid techniques, how to assess risk, and the importance of staying calm and seeking help when someone is injured. The IMPS session also encouraged pupils to think about safety in a range of contexts — from road and water safety to using electricity and digital devices responsibly. It was a valuable and engaging experience that supports their growing independence as they prepare for secondary school.



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