



Bloxham CE Primary School

January 2026 Newsletter

As we begin a new year, our whole-school value for this term is Ambition, rooted in our Christian vision to *“encourage one another and build each other up.”* January is a natural time to reflect, set goals and think about our hopes and dreams, and this sense of purpose has been clear across the school.

We began the term with Ambition Day, where pupils explored their aspirations and reflected on the importance of perseverance, encouragement and self-belief. These themes have continued through daily school life, with pupils showing determination and positivity even in challenging conditions. Despite some truly wet and wintry weather, children have approached learning with enthusiasm — not least Year 4, who braved the elements on their trip to the Gogs to launch their Geography learning on Mountains and Rivers. Their curiosity and resilience were a wonderful example of ambition in action.

Our older pupils have also embraced opportunities beyond the classroom. Year 6 represented the school superbly during their Junior Citizens experience, developing important life skills linked to safety, responsibility and independence as they prepare for the next stage of their journey.

This shared commitment to ambition and continuous improvement extends across the whole school community. Yesterday, we were pleased to welcome a Department for Education representative into school as part of the Department's routine engagement with schools. She spent the whole day with us, visiting lessons and speaking with staff and pupils. She commented on how welcoming and inclusive the school felt, noted a number of strengths across the school, and recognised that the areas identified by Ofsted have been addressed, with leaders accurately identifying the next priorities for improvement.

A key part of supporting pupils to achieve their ambitions is the strong partnership between home and school. Regular home learning plays an important role in embedding the knowledge and skills taught in school. Full details can be found on the Home Learning section of our website and include daily reading, writing fluency practice, weekly spelling work and regular times tables practice. Your continued support with this makes a real difference to pupils' confidence and progress.

Looking ahead, February brings several opportunities to celebrate learning and wellbeing, including Number Day, Safer Internet Day, and, of course, half term, which is not far away.

Encourage one another and build each other up.

Finally, we would like to give advance notice that, in light of recent guidance regarding mobile technology in schools, from August 2026 the school will not permit any pupil mobile phones, smart watches or smart glasses on site. This decision supports pupils' safeguarding, wellbeing and focus on learning, and ensures a clear and consistent approach for all children. We recognise that some families currently use personal devices to support safety when children are walking home, which is why we are sharing this information well in advance to allow time for alternative arrangements to be considered. The school will continue to enable pupils in Year 6 to walk home independently, in line with existing arrangements and parental consent.

Families have supported children to travel safely to and from school long before mobile phones were commonplace, and many of these approaches remain the most effective. Clear routines, agreed routes, fixed meeting points or times, walking with friends or siblings, and strong communication between adults all help pupils develop confidence, responsibility and independence, while ensuring safety without reliance on personal devices during the school day.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We look forward to another term of encouraging one another and aiming high together.

Warm regards,
Sarah Marshall
Headteacher

Safeguarding Reminder

- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000
- **Childline:** 0800 1111
- **Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Helpline:** 0800 731 0055
- **Banbury Foodbank & Community Support Services** 01295 661304
- **Samaritans:** 116 123

Changes to First Aid notifications

We have changed our procedures for notifying families of first aid injuries and head bumps. All notifications will now be sent as emails via Arbor. Head bump notifications will be sent as soon as the injury is logged, and a phone call will only be made if we feel your child is deteriorating and would benefit from leaving school early. All general first aid notifications will be sent at the close of the day via email.



Attendance

Overall attendance across the whole school during January was 94.17% A massive well done to class 3HK at 96.7% for achieving the highest attendance for a class in January - each student will receive 10 KBVs! Congratulations to Foundation Stage for the highest attendance in January for a year group at 96.35%

Our January SuperHere0s are:

Foundation/Keys Stage1: Olivia, Noah ,Harrison, Haya

Key stage 2: Hannah, Cooper ,Penny ,Sebastian

Items being brought into school

We kindly remind families that fidgets should only be brought into school where there is a recognised need and this has been agreed in advance with the class teacher. Please note that other toys or teddies should not be brought into school, and children should not bring money in to buy or sell items with others. Children in KS2 are welcome to bring a healthy snack, such as fruit, for break time. Finally, we appreciate your continued support in ensuring reading folders are brought into school every day, as regular reading makes a real difference to children's progress. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Please keep off the grass!

Please can we also remind parents that pupils should not play on the grass or use the trim trail in the mornings before school. These areas are not supervised at this time and may be unsafe. We also want to ensure that children are calm and ready to learn when they come into school. Thank you for your support in helping us keep everyone safe and settled for the start of the day.

PE KIT from January

A reminder that pupils should now arrive dressed for PE, on PE days - please check with class teachers if you are uncertain on which days your child's class has PE. This enables the children to enjoy the maximum learning time improving their skills. Please note that the school PE kit must be worn for these sessions and footwear should be designed for sport and not fashion. The only branding permitted on PE Kit and school uniform is the school logo. Any additional layers should be worn under uniform as base layers and should be in the school colours of red or black.

Communication update - Parent Hub

A big thank you to everyone for signing up to the Parent Hub app so promptly — we are at 93% coverage! Your timely sign-up is very much appreciated! We will be using this as our main platform for communication moving forward. If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

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Year Group News

Foundation

What a wonderful start to 2026 we have had! We have kicked off our learning with a visit from Dianna from Bloxham Museum. We loved exploring a variety of artefacts from 'Long Ago' and learning about the uses for different objects.

We have enjoyed sharing a range of texts written a long time ago (especially ones Miss Drury enjoyed when she was little!) such as *The Tiger That Came to Tea*, *Dogger*, *Alfie and Annie Rose* and *Mr Ben*. We have learnt lots of new vocabulary and learnt about childhood from the viewpoint of our family members. The children have enjoyed sharing information about their families and where their grandparents grew up.

In Maths we have loved exploring measurement. We have applied what we have learnt in our play by measuring walls, weighing in the role play area and comparing length and weight outside.

This week we have really enjoyed listening to and learning a range of Nursery Rhymes. We especially liked immersing ourselves in our learning around *Humpty Dumpty*. We designed and made protective clothing to help him from cracking and have learnt about life as a royal living in a castle.



Key Stage 1

Over the first four weeks of the spring term, KS1 children have settled back into school confidently and with great enthusiasm for learning.

In English, the children have greatly enjoyed exploring *Katie Morag and the New Pier*, using talk, role play, and shared and independent postcard writing to describe journeys, places, and people. We have also begun our first narrative writing unit in Year 1, based on *The Way Back Home* by Oliver Jeffers (second narrative of the year for our Year 2s. Acting out the story and changing parts of it to make it their own has really captured the children's imagination and engagement.

In Maths, children have been strengthening their understanding of numbers using practical equipment. They have been representing numbers in different ways, talking about tens and ones, and keeping addition and subtraction skills "bubbling away" through short, focused activities.

Our Science learning has focused on *Uses of Materials*, with children exploring everyday objects and discussing how different materials and properties make them suitable (or unsuitable) for certain jobs.

In Design and Technology, children have been introduced to the *Beach Hut* project, exploring what makes structures strong and useful in preparation for designing and making later in the term.

We've been really proud of the children's enthusiasm, curiosity, and willingness to share their thinking, and we're looking forward to building on this learning over the coming weeks.

Year 3

Year 3 have made a fantastic start to the term and have been busy across the curriculum. In English, the children have been exploring the key features of report writing. They put their learning into practice by becoming *news reporters for the day*, applying their skills to write clear and engaging reports. Building on this, the children will soon use everything they have learned to create a newspaper report based on a fictional event that has taken place in school.

In Geography, the children have begun their exciting new topic, *Rocks, Relics and Rumbles*. So far, they have been learning all about volcanoes, including the different types, their features and real-life case studies. Over the coming weeks, the children will explore earthquakes and tsunamis in greater detail, before considering the impact that natural disasters can have on local communities and the wider world.

Class 3HK have also continued their inclusive work with Frank Wise, taking part in animal-themed dance sessions. During these sessions, the children have enjoyed learning movements and actions inspired by a range of animals, developing both their creativity and confidence.

It has been a pleasure to see the enthusiasm and engagement Year 3 are bringing to their learning this term - well done!

Year 4

Year 4 have made a fantastic start to the new year, full of curiosity and creativity! On the very first day of term, the children enjoyed a walk along the Gogs to observe the river, gathering inspiration for their writing and sharpening their descriptive skills. This linked beautifully with their English learning, where they have been exploring different types of poetry, with a particular focus on river poems. Pupils have been identifying key features and developing powerful vocabulary to bring natural landscapes vividly to life in their own writing.

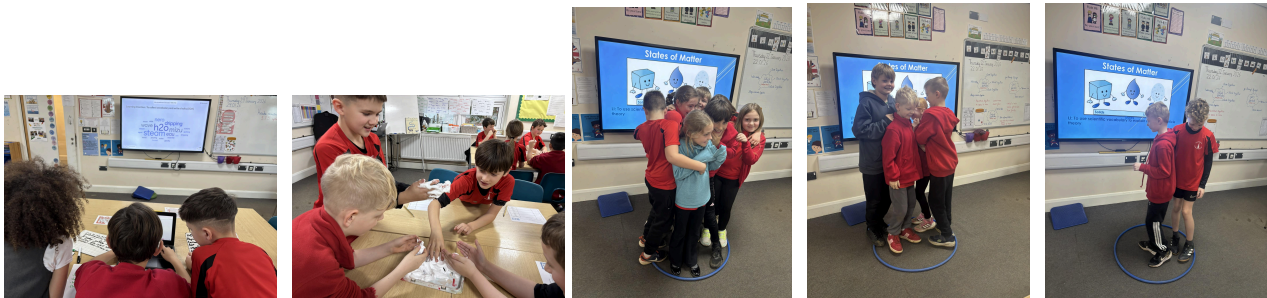
In maths, pupils have been strengthening their understanding of place value and exploring a range of strategies for multiplying and dividing larger numbers. This has included using flexible partitioning to solve problems efficiently and with growing confidence.

In science, we have been carrying out hands-on investigations into *States of Matter*. The children explored materials such as toothpaste and shaving foam, using their sense of touch to decide which state of matter they belong to. A fun visual activity saw pupils become particles inside a

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hula hoop, helping them understand how particles move differently in solids, liquids and gases. To support this learning further, the children observed a practical demonstration where ice cubes were melted, boiled in a kettle and the steam captured on a cold saucepan lid to show condensation — all for Ms Staples to make a cup of tea!

In PE, 4ZA have been learning the samba, developing rhythm and coordination, with the unit finishing with an exciting performance to KS1. Meanwhile, 4KS have been swimming, building confidence and technique in the water. It has been wonderful to see Year 4 supporting one another and living out our school values — we are incredibly proud of them!



Year 5

This Spring term, Year 5 have been busy across the curriculum. In English, we have been studying *Charlotte's Web*, completing lots of shared reading and comprehension activities while uplevelling our vocabulary and sentence structures. Our writing outcome was a newspaper report about Fern saving Wilbur's life. After exploring the features of newspapers and analysing real examples, the children developed a strong understanding of journalistic writing and thoroughly enjoyed writing for a real audience – especially knowing their work would be read in the staffroom!

In Maths, the children began the term by developing their skills in long multiplication and division, using strategies such as the column method and bus stop method, alongside their increasingly secure times table knowledge. We then moved on to fractions, focusing on finding a whole and fractions of a whole, building on and consolidating previous learning.

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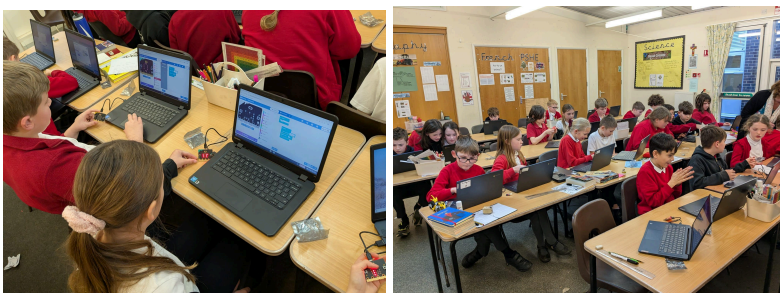
In Science, our topic has been *Beast Creator*, where pupils have been comparing the life cycles of mammals, insects and birds, including learning about processes such as metamorphosis. In Geography, we have been learning about farming, with a focus on UK farming, different types of farming and the impact of modern farming methods. We are hoping to visit Warriner Farm to help bring this learning to life.

In Art, the children have been developing their shading skills and have studied the work of Picasso, creating animal line drawings inspired by his style. They have developed their technique making continuous line drawings (which is more difficult than you think!) and shading different ways to create a desired effect.



In PE, our outdoor sessions have focused on hockey, and the children have made great progress in their tackling skills and ball control while showing excellent enthusiasm and teamwork.

In Computing the children have thoroughly enjoyed using Microbits. The Programming unit allows children to explore the software on chrome books writing algorithms to then be output on a display unit. They have enjoyed making name badges and using different symbols to be displayed through the LED display.



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Year 6

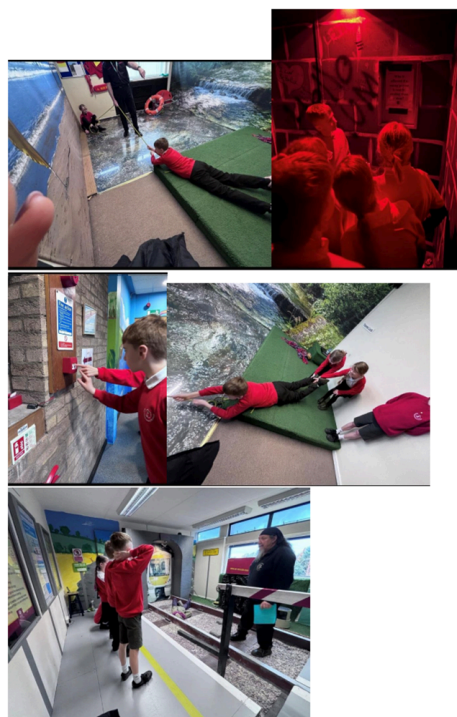
Year 6 have been working brilliantly across the curriculum, showing great focus, creativity and independence.

As part of their science topic *Electrical Circuits and Components*, Year 6 planned and carried out a practical investigation to explore how different circuit components affect the way a circuit works. They generated their own questions, built simple circuits and tested components systematically by changing one variable at a time. Pupils carefully observed outcomes, recorded their findings and used evidence from their investigation to answer their original questions.

In art, Year 6 explored sculpture and printmaking inspired by Inuit culture. The children used stencils to create their own prints before studying traditional Inuit carvings and creating their own sculptures through soap carving. This work developed creativity, patience and careful tool control, while also deepening pupils' understanding of how culture and environment influence art.

As part of their DT topic *Engineer*, Year 6 enjoyed a hands-on day focusing on bridges and engineering. The children learned about famous engineers and different types of bridges, exploring how structures can be made strong — particularly the importance of triangles and how they help distribute weight. Following a design brief, pupils designed, built, tested and evaluated their own bridges, with the strongest structure holding an impressive 220+ coins.

Year 6 also recently enjoyed our Junior Citizens trip, which provided pupils with the opportunity to learn about a range of important real-life situations. The children took part in interactive scenarios, learning about road, fire and water safety, staying safe online, and what to do in emergency situations - including the opportunity to make a 999 call. Pupils were highly engaged throughout the day and asked thoughtful questions, showing maturity and responsibility.



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Changes to Pupil Mobile Devices – Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the school introducing this change?

This decision supports pupils' safeguarding, wellbeing and focus on learning, and reflects national guidance on reducing the impact of mobile technology on young people during the school day. It also ensures a clear and consistent approach for all pupils.

Which devices are included?

From August 2026, pupils will not be permitted to bring:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Smart glasses

onto the school site.

What will happen if a pupil brings a device onto site?

If a pupil brings a mobile phone, smart watch or smart glasses onto the school site, the device will be confiscated and stored securely for the remainder of the school day. Parents or carers will be asked to collect the device from the school office at the end of the day.

Repeated breaches may result in further action in line with the school's behaviour policy. The school cannot accept responsibility for the loss or damage of devices brought onto site against school expectations.

Supporting Safe Journeys To and From School

How will children get home safely without personal devices?

Pupils are supervised by staff at the start and end of the school day, and families play an important role in agreeing safe, age-appropriate routines for collection.

We would like to remind families that all pupils from Foundation Stage to Year 5 must be collected by a responsible adult, including pupils who travel to and from school by school bus. Pupils will only be released into the care of an authorised adult.

To support safe journeys home, families are encouraged to:

- Agree clear collection arrangements and routines
- Ensure children know who is collecting them each day
- Inform the school office in advance of any changes to arrangements
- Consider shared or coordinated collection with other families where appropriate

If a pupil needs to contact home during the school day, this will continue to be supported through the school office.

Does this apply to older pupils as well?

Yes. The expectation regarding mobile devices applies to **all pupils**, to ensure fairness, consistency and clarity.

My child is looking forward to having a mobile phone and walking home independently – does this stop that?

No. The school is not placing any restrictions on families choosing to purchase a mobile phone for their child. This change relates only to whether devices are permitted on the school site.

The school will also continue to enable pupils in Year 6 to walk home independently, in line with existing arrangements and parental consent.

Families have supported children to travel safely to and from school long before mobile phones were commonplace, and many of those approaches remain the most reliable. These include:

- Clear, agreed routes and routines
- Fixed meeting points or arrival times
- Walking with a friend or sibling
- Adult-to-adult communication at the start and end of the day
- Knowing what to do if plans change

These approaches help pupils build independence, confidence and responsibility, while ensuring safety without reliance on personal devices during the school day.

Are there any exceptions?

Any necessary exceptions (for example, linked to specific medical or safeguarding needs) would be considered on an **individual basis**, in discussion with the school.

Why is the change not happening immediately?

By introducing this change from August 2026, we aim to give families ample time to prepare, review routines and make suitable arrangements well in advance.