

FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

FAITH

CURIOSITY

WELLBEING

CONFIDENCE

Spring Term 1



Spotlight

Happy Half-Term!
School will return on
Monday 23rd February.

Don't forget that Nursery
admissions open on
Monday 16th February and
will close on 26th March
2026.

UPCOMING EVENTS

* February Half-Term

16th February – 20th February

* Maths Meet-up

Barkway – 24th February at
2.30pm for 30 minutes with Mrs
Porter

* Maths Meet-up

Barley – 3rd March at 2.45pm for
30 minutes with Mrs Porter

* Easter Break

30th March – 10th April

“Living life in all it's fullness” – John 10

A message from our Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of the first half of the spring term, I would like to thank you all for your continued support and to share some of the wonderful learning that has taken place across our school this week.

Children's Mental Health Week: "This Is My Place"

This week we have been focusing on Children's Mental Health Week (9–15 February) and the important theme "This Is My Place". We know that our sense of belonging in friendships, in school, and in our wider community plays a vital role in our mental health and wellbeing.

Feeling that we truly belong is a basic human need. It influences our physical and mental health, our education, relationships and future opportunities. When children feel secure and valued, they are empowered to contribute positively to the world around them.

Mrs Gould organised a thoughtful whole-school assembly exploring:

- what mental health means
- this year's theme
- how belonging, kindness and healthy habits support our wellbeing

We would also like to thank her for the wonderful activities linked to the *Five Ways to Wellbeing*, including the memorable balloon and daffodil activity. We hope you have enjoyed sharing these activities at home with your child.

Winter Sports Week

Children have loved learning about the 2026 Winter Olympics, watching events live and then taking part themselves! They experienced bobsleigh ("Feel the Rhythm!"), luge and curling. Thank you Mrs Whitaker for such creative and exciting sporting experiences!

Classroom Highlights

•**Beech Class** – I was privileged to hear pupils reading their letters to King Charles III about pollution, such an important message and a fantastic real-life writing experience. We now eagerly await a reply!

•**Hazel Class:** Superb doubling and halving to 20, with very quick recall and excellent understanding of even and odd numbers. Well done!

•**Apple Class:** Learning about Chinese New Year and enjoying a fortune cookie treat while reading their fortunes.

•**Years 3 & 4 RE:** Learning about Sikh places of worship and developing impressive knowledge of the Gurdwara. A special well done to Isaac (Beech Class) for his detailed drawing and explanation.

•**Oak Class:** Exploring transport this week. Thank you to Mrs Bailey and her dad for bringing in their beautiful vintage cars for the children to see and learn about. Nursery also enjoyed learning the number 2 by printing with cars and trucks, fantastic work!

Finally, a huge thank you to our wonderful Barley and Barkway staff team for their hard work and dedication in providing such rich opportunities for our children every day.

We hope you all enjoy a happy and restful half-term break. We look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 23rd February.

Warmest wishes,

Miss Mière

Barley and Barkway (VA) C of E First Schools Federation
Church End, Barley, SG8 8JW | 84 High Street, Barkway, SG8 8EF

Tel: 01763 848281 | 01763 848283

Email: admin@barleybarkway.herts.sch.uk

Website: www.barleybarkway.herts.sch.uk

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Stars of the Week

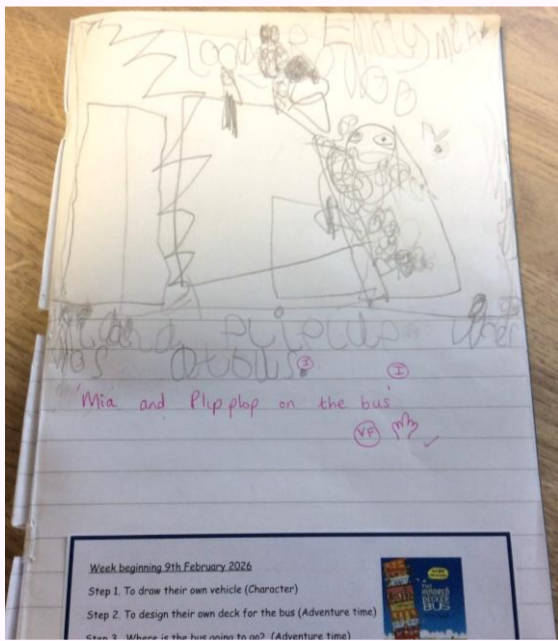
Nursery

This week Albie is our shining star. He showed super maths skills by recognising 1 and 2 quickly through subitising in our maths sessions this week. He talked about what he could see and shared his ideas confidently. Albie did an amazing job spotting 1 and 2 straight away with his quick eyes.



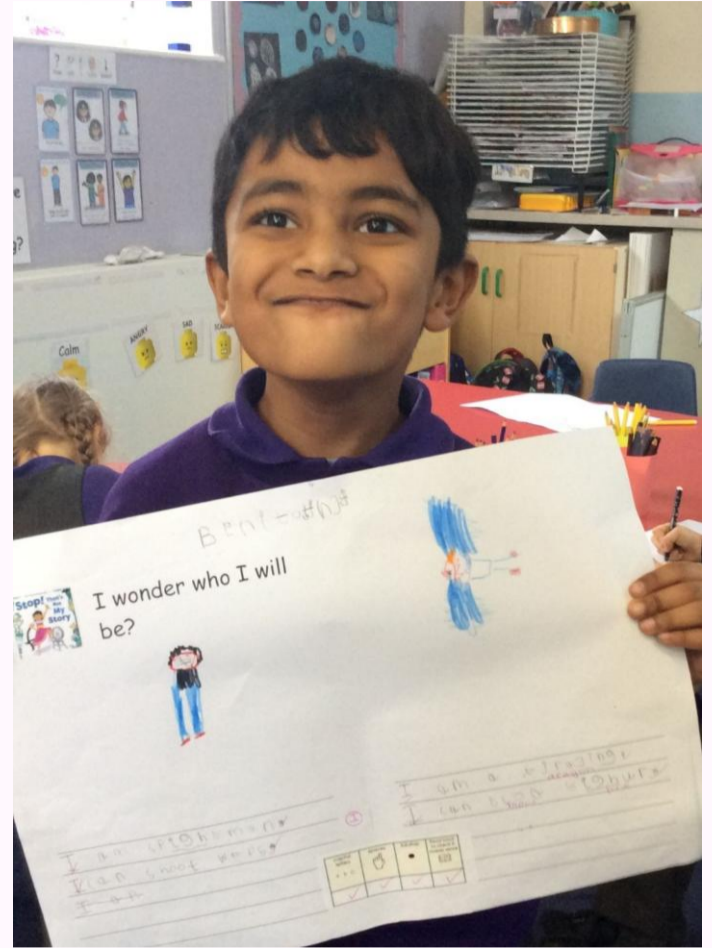
Well done for trying your best and learning new maths words!

Reception



This week's Star of the Week goes to Mia. In Drawing club this week she worked really hard to sound out words for her sentence about the vehicle she had drawn. She remembered finger spaces and even her full stop. Mia always tries hard in class and is especially kind to all her friends in the classroom.

Keep up the great work Mia!



Year 1

This week our shining star is Benito. We have been really impressed with Benito's learning across all subjects.

Benito has shown a great attitude to learning. He has been keen to challenge himself, share ideas and try his best in lessons.

He especially impressed us with his fantastic independent writing this week.

Well done Benito!

Children are chosen by their teacher to be Star of the Week and are proud to receive this recognition which we celebrate in our Sharing assembly. Stars are chosen for good behaviour, excellent work and demonstrating school values.

Stars of the Week

Year 2

This week, the star of the week in Year 2 is Maisie. Maisie has been working really hard on her reasoning and problem solving, making connections in maths. She has especially been making connections between ordering and even numbers. She has been able to count in twos and work systematically which means going in order to make sure she has covered all the possibilities. She has also been using the correct maths vocabulary. Well done Maisie!



Year 3



Angelica-Mae has been an absolute superstar this week across all areas of her learning. Mrs Porter was especially impressed during a VIP (Very Important

Pupil) conversation with Miss Mière, where Angelica-Mae spoke confidently and proudly about her learning. She also wrote a recipe book for John, our Catering Manager, filled with ideas for Friday Funday desserts. The cherry crunch sounded divine! John was delighted when Angelica-Mae presented it to him and promised to take a look at her fantastic ideas. Well done, Angelica-Mae!

Year 4

This week, our star of the week is Aria. I have been really pleased with Aria's learning behaviours this week.

She has been working incredibly hard and remembering to put up her hand to answer questions. She has also been able to use 'the power of three' which is a persuasive technique in her writing independently.

Well done Aria!

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Stars of the Week

Oracy Star



This week our Oracy star of the week is Mabel. When we were building towers outside she was able to explain what was happening to the number of crates each time. She was able to tell me that the crates were going up by one each time and the towers looked like stairs going up! She knew it was 1 more than each time and it looked like the number block tower we had seen in class. Excellent explaining Mabel!

Sports Star



This week George is the star of the week.

He really impressed me with his progression in both netball and gymnastics this half term. He can explain rules with confidence, execute skills with accuracy and effort and does all with such passion and confidence.

Keep up the great work George.

Art Star

This week Ellie-May in Hazel class is the art star of the week.

Hazel class were given a challenge to create a self portrait in the style of Frieda Khalo. Ellie-May worked carefully thinking about the proportions of the face to produce this wonderful work. Well done Ellie-May!



Science Star

This week Mia and Elsie are our Science stars of the week. They made careful predictions, watched what happened in the water, and explained their ideas using scientific words like float, sink, heavy, and light. Well done for thinking like scientists! They even noticed when the cork had holes in it and thought it would sink because of this. They soon realised it was too light to sink to the bottom! Well done!



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VIPs of the Week

VIP (Very Important Pupil) is our weekly celebration of learning, where a child is chosen from each class to share their successes. Our VIPs proudly show their work, talk about what they've been learning, and enjoy reading to us, with Miss Mière, Mrs Porter and Mr Watson.
We are so proud of our VIPs for this week!

VIPs this week for their amazing writing and reading:



EYFS: Jude



Year 1: Vincent



Year 2: Ellie May



Year 3: Angelica-Mae



Year 4: Aria

Happy Birthday

A big **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**
to Mrs. White who is
celebrating her Birthdays this
week!

We hope you have/had a
fantastic time filled with fun
and the things you enjoy the
most!



This weeks activities

Winter Olympic Fun

This week across both school sites the children took part in some Winter Olympic fun in their PE lessons!

The children got to try out a rendition of luge, bobsleigh, and curling.



This weeks activities

Oak Class

This week, the children explored transport and learned about old and new ways of travelling. The children looked at pictures and talked about how people travelled in the past, such as using horse and cart, steam trains, and old cars.

The children then compared these to modern transport, including cars, buses, trains, and aeroplanes. They noticed differences in how transport looks and talked about how new transport can be faster, safer, and more comfortable.

The children shared their ideas confidently, used new vocabulary, and showed curiosity about how transport has changed over time. Great learning and thinking!

We particularly enjoyed a special visit of some vintage cars when Mrs Bailey and her father drove some cars into school for us to see. Thank you to Mr Roberts for allowing us the privilege of seeing such beautiful cars.



This weeks activities

Apple Class

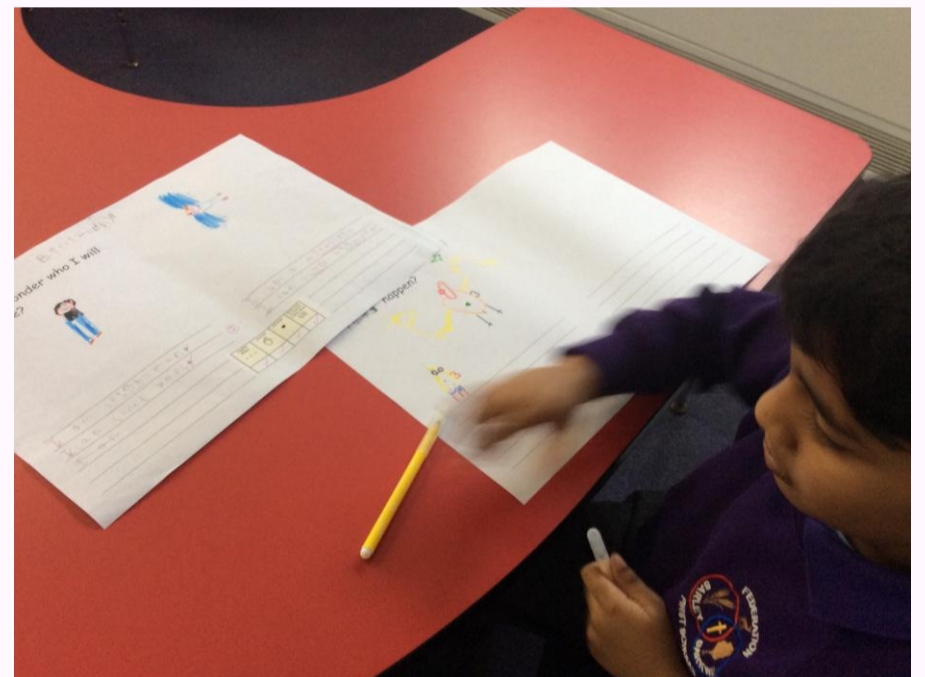
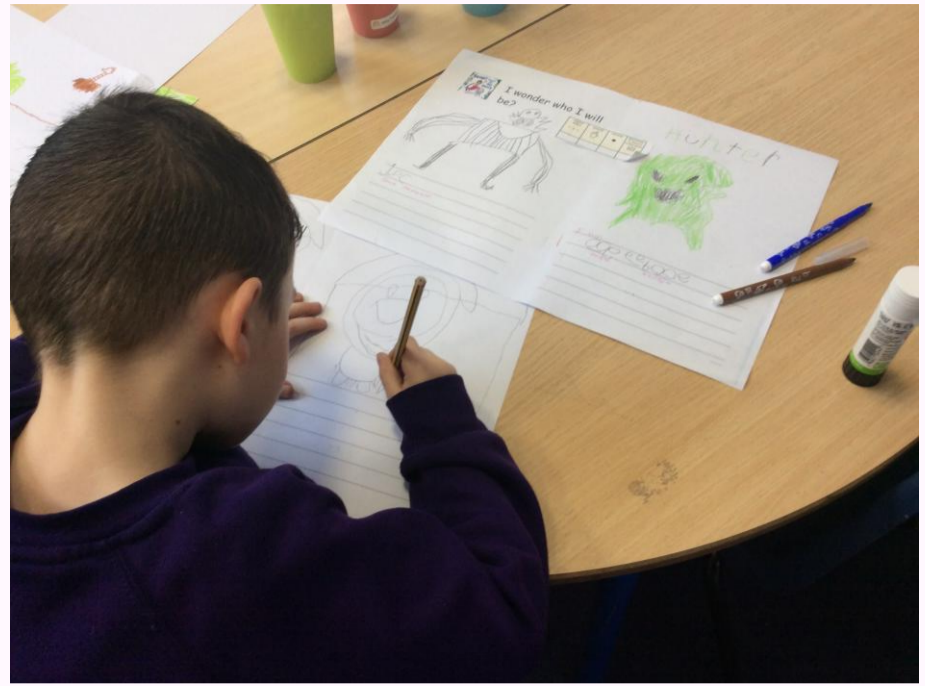
In English, Apple class have been reading the book 'Stop! That's not my story'.

In the book the character thinks about what she would choose if she could create her own story.

Apple class first had a go at choosing what character they would like to be. Then they choose the setting and what they would like to happen.

I was really impressed with the children's imagination and they loved coming up with their own ideas.

The children wrote some fantastic sentences, thinking about including capital letters, finger spaces and full stops.



This weeks activities

Hazel Class

In English this week we have been reading non chronological reports, we have been learning about whales and learnt that they can grow up to 30m long.

We took the trundle wheel out to measure and we were shocked to see how big that is! Even when all of year 2&3 held hands and spread out we couldn't cover that distance!!!



This weeks activities

Beech Class

This week year 3 wrote letters to King Charles III.

In Beech Class we are passionate about sustainability and making changes to help our planet survive.

We learnt that King Charles has been championing sustainability for 50 years - he even met Greta Thunberg!

We thanked him for his work and are hoping he will respond to us.



This weeks activities

Sycamore Class

Year 4 have had a lovely time at the community gardens on Thursday. Among the many things we did, we mended the dead hedge, adding branches and tucking old sticks back in.

Anyone is welcome to go to the Barley community gardens at any time.



Garden House Hospice Care

Charlie Chicks

We are supporting Garden House Hospice Care's Easter campaign selling their Charlie Chicks again (which are all supplied by volunteer knitters and have a Cadbury's Creme Egg inside).

Garden House Hospice Care is a local charity providing free, compassionate end of life care and support to patients and their families in the communities of North Hertfordshire.

Charlie Chicks are available in both school offices for £1.50



NSPCC

Online Safety

Here at Barley and Barkway we know the importance of keeping our pupils safe online. Over the years children have become more and more active online at a younger age – whether it be playing games, or simply watching a YouTube video on an iPad/tablet. But how can you keep them safe?

The NSPCC have an amazing array of information on how to keep your children safe online – more specifically children under the age of 5.

Click the link to head to their website for any tips on online safety: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parents-guide-online-safety-children-under-five/?utm_source=print&utm_medium=print&utm_campaign=&utm_content=vodafone_under_fives_online_safety++Feb26&source=

What do experts say about screen time for under-fives?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has [recommendations for younger children by age group](#):

Children under one year old

Screen time is not recommended for infants, apart from being in video calls with family members who may live further away.

Children aged between one and two years old

For one-year-olds, sedentary screen time (using screens while sitting down eg to watch TV or videos or play computer games) is not recommended.

For two-year-olds, sedentary screen time should be no more than one hour per day – and less is better.

Children aged between three and four years old

Children of this age should be spending no more than one hour a day on sedentary screen time and less time is preferable. When they are sitting down and using devices, it's best for children to be engaged in reading and storytelling with a caregiver.

The [WHO's recommendations](#) highlight that screen time should be limited and purposeful. It's not about banning technology completely, but about making sure it supports children's development rather than replacing play, conversation, and movement.



Common risks for under-fives

Young children don't yet have the skills to navigate online spaces safely. Some of the most common risks to them include:



- autoplay traps – video platforms often play the next clip automatically, which can lead to children seeing content that isn't suitable for them
- inappropriate content – even child-friendly apps can show adverts or videos that aren't suitable for this age group
- accidental purchases – in-app purchases and pop-ups can tempt children to click, leading to unexpected costs
- inappropriate use – young children may explore their bodies using cameras or devices without understanding privacy or boundaries
- sharenting and image misuse – parents might share images online while others might take and misuse children's photos. That can create long-term privacy and safety issues
- overuse – long periods of passive screen time can affect children's sleep, play, and development.

Understanding these risks helps parents take simple steps to protect children while still enjoying the benefits of technology.

Role modelling healthy habits

Children learn by watching adults. If you take breaks, avoid oversharing, and follow family rules, they're more likely to do the same. Try:

- putting your phone away during meals
- talking about why you limit your own screen time
- showing that you enjoy offline activities like reading or playing outside.

Role modelling isn't about being perfect – it's about showing balance and making healthy choices visible.

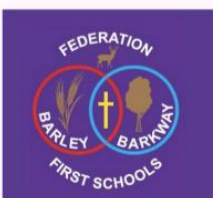
Tesco Tokens

In Tesco Extra, Royston, we have been given the opportunity to receive up to £1,500 funding for our mud kitchen!

How does it work?

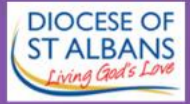
After you finish your shopping you will find the blue tokens available at the checkout.

Simply place the tokens in our box which can be found near the exit doors on your way out!





**BARLEY & BARKWAY FEDERATION
FIRST SCHOOLS**



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*“The school’s warm and caring family atmosphere is greatly valued by pupils, staff and parents”
- BBF Ofsted 2023*



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For more info:

01763 848281

admin@barleybarkway.herts.sch.uk

Visit us:

www.barleybarkway.herts.sch.uk



Barley and Barkway (VA) C of E First Schools Federation
Church End, Barley, SG8 8JW | 84 High Street, Barkway, SG8 8EF

Tel: 01763 848281 | 01763 848283
Email: admin@barleybarkway.herts.sch.uk
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