

FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

FAITH

CURIOSITY

WELLBEING

CONFIDENCE

Spring Term 1



Spotlight

World Book Day is just around the corner – don't forget to get your child to fill in their reading bingo challenge and share with Miss Preston for them to receive a World Book Day badge!

UPCOMING EVENTS

* Maths Meet-up

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

* World Book Day

5th March – Pupils are invited to come dressed as one of their interests.

* Easter Break

30th March – 10th April

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

A message from our Headteacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! I hope you all had a wonderful half term break, enjoying special times with friends and family. Our BBF team are absolutely delighted to have all the children back in school and ready for another fantastic half term filled with learning, growth and fun.

We began the week with Collective Worship led by Reverend Mark, who delivered a truly thought-provoking and engaging session all about Lent and the significance of Ash Wednesday. The children were fascinated as he explained how the palm crosses from the previous year's Palm Sunday are carefully burnt, with the ashes then used to mark a cross on the foreheads of the congregation at the start of Lent. This powerful symbol represents humility, reflection, repentance and a time of prayer and fasting. It was certainly a moment filled with awe and wonder, and a lovely opportunity for the children to deepen their understanding of Christian traditions and values.

I am also incredibly proud to share that BBF has been recognised for achieving Effective Practice in the Hertfordshire Emotional Wellbeing in Schools Mark. This is a fantastic achievement for our Federation and a true reflection of the dedication and commitment we place on mental health and wellbeing for everyone in our school community. In particular, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Mrs Gould, whose passion, expertise and determination have driven this work forward so successfully. Her commitment to ensuring that emotional wellbeing remains a priority for our children, staff and families is truly appreciated. This award recognises not only structured provision, but the culture we nurture every day, one where children feel safe, valued and supported to flourish both academically and emotionally.

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent Maths meeting. We hope you found it helpful as an introduction to how we teach maths across BBF. We truly value these opportunities to work in partnership with you and always welcome your feedback. If there are any other workshops or information sessions you would find useful, please do let us know. A special thank you to Mrs Porter for leading such an informative and engaging session.

It has been a joy to see the fantastic learning taking place across both schools this week.

I was very lucky to spend time in Oak Class twice this week, where the children were celebrating Chinese New Year. The role play area had been transformed into a Chinese restaurant, and the children were even using real noodles as they served food to their friends! The excitement, creativity and role play on display were wonderful to see. A huge congratulations and very well done to Oak Class, who were awarded the fastest and tidiest class this week when getting changed for PE. The children impressed us all by folding their clothes into neat piles in their own spaces, ready for getting dressed again afterwards. We are particularly proud as Oak Class are our youngest children in the Federation. Well done, Oak Class, we are so proud of you all!

In Years 3 and 4, the children have been busy working creatively in Computing to produce their own slideshows. As part of this project, they have learnt a song about Online Safety in their Music lessons. They will be filmed performing the song and will then incorporate the recording into their presentations, which will be shared on our website for everyone to enjoy. What a fantastic cross-curricular project!

Year 1 have been developing their Design and Technology skills, creating sculptures using techniques such as folding, tearing, twisting and joining. I was particularly impressed with Lexi's beautiful butterfly perched on top of a flower and Eleanor's carefully folded tent, such creativity and attention to detail.

Year 2 have been enthusiastically practising their throwing and aiming skills in PE, making excellent use of the new resources that Mrs Whitaker has kindly purchased for the Federation. It is lovely to see the children benefiting from this new equipment and developing their coordination and teamwork skills.

Mrs Ruban will be leaving Barley and Barkway Federation after just over two years. During this time, she has worked at Barkway supporting children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1. She will be seeking opportunities more closely aligned with the work she was doing in Ukraine, which will also offer further scope for her future career development. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

We are very pleased to welcome Mrs Grimes to Year 1 this week. She will be supporting in Year 1 and at lunchtimes on Thursdays and Fridays. We hope she enjoyed her first two days at BBF and we are delighted to have her as part of our team.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.

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Stars of the Week

Nursery

This week's Star of the Week goes to Hallie. In Nursery, we have been reading the story 'The Ugly Duckling' and their StoryDough challenge was to create their own nest and eggs out of the playdough.



Hallie carefully rolled out three balls of playdough for her eggs and chose to use the rolling pin to make her nest extra flat. She was able to talk about what she had made and used her careful counting to count how many eggs she had made. Well done Hallie!

Reception



This week's Star of the Week goes to Elsie. Reception have been exploring Chinese New Year this week and as part of their learning they made their own Chinese pancakes.

Elsie showed fantastic concentration and practiced her careful chopping when chopping vegetables such as carrots, cucumbers and avocado.

Elsie was also really supportive to her friends and offered kind words of support when they found chopping a bit tricky. What a kind and supportive friend you are Elsie. Well done!



Year 1

The star of the week in Apple class goes to Leo this week! Leo takes great care with his school work and puts effort into all his tasks. He worked independently to make a brilliant robot called Bob this week and he chose to write extra sentences when given a choice in English.

Leo has also impressed us with his brilliant joining in with signing and Makaton signing during our singing practices.

Well done Leo!

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 Ellie-May for her fabulous learning in science this week!



Ellie-May independently recalling facts about desert habitats. Ellie-May shared that “meerkats live underground.” “snakes can camouflage” and “it is hot and it is never cold”. Well done Ellie-May!

Year 3



This week, Alice has really impressed Mrs West with her spellings. Mrs West couldn't wait to tell Mrs Porter all about it.

In Beech Class, the children have been learning about contracted words, and Alice showed excellent understanding.

She accurately spelt the words during the spelling lesson and then went on to identify contractions in her reading book while Mrs West took the children to Margaret House.

Well done, Alice, I'M super proud of you! We CAN'T wait to see contractions in your writing.



Year 4

This week, our star of the week is Eliza. In our maths this week, we have been looking at perimeter and Eliza has been able to explain how we work out the perimeter of a 2d shape. She has also been able to find missing lengths in a 2d shape when given the perimeter of the whole shape.

Excellent problem solving Eliza!

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Stars of the Week

Oracy Star

This week our Oracy Star is Albie in Nursery. Nursery have been exploring the story of 'The Ugly Duckling' this week. During our StoryDough activity Albie was able to retell the story with such enthusiasm.



He used a different voice to become the characters, and enjoyed talking to the adult about how the story made him feel.

It has been lovely to see how much enthusiasm you have for your learning Albie.

Well done!

Sports Star



This week the star has to be divided up between all of year 2/3/4 who all took part in the Cooper Run this week.

The Cooper run is a challenge to see how far you can run in 12 minutes and it helped us understand the importance of fitness on our body and mind.

Miss Grint, Mrs Bagnall and I were not only impressed with those who ran a mile in 12 minutes (and those who ran a mile and a half) but mostly we were impressed with the encouragement and praise you gave each other whilst completing this PE challenge!

Well done Barley.

Science Star

This week all of the children in years 2, 3 and 4 are science superstars.

The children took part in an awe and wonder activity to make a bug hotel. They worked collaboratively to design the room for our Barley Bug Hotel, fill it with natural resources and design the overall hotel. Mrs Porter was very proud of your collaborative approach to learning and the questions you asked when selecting your materials.



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Well Done, Edward!

Edward has achieved a certificate from the library and wondered if it could go into the newsletter.

Edward took part in the 'My First Library Adventure' where he worked really hard to read several books and collect book tokens. He was 1 of only 50 in the whole of Hertfordshire that won the competition and his prize was a certificate and a book signed by the author.



Well Done, Angelica-Mae!

We would like to say a huge well done to Angelica-Mae for her wonderful creativity and initiative this term.

Angelica-Mae created a beautiful recipe book for John, the chef at Margaret House, who kindly prepared the delicious pudding that was served on the last day of term. What a thoughtful and inspiring project!

The feedback from Barley pupils says it all — “The pudding was amazing!”

Thank you to John for creating such a memorable treat, and congratulations to Angelica-Mae for her fantastic effort and contribution.

We are so proud of you!



Forest School Transformation

We are absolutely delighted to share some very exciting news with you all. Over the half term break, we began the transformation of our brand-new Forest School area at Barley School – and what a transformation it has already been!

This is a project we have been dreaming about for some time, and it is wonderful to see it starting to take shape. Our Forest School area will provide a rich, hands-on outdoor learning environment where our children can explore, build resilience, develop confidence and deepen their connection with the natural world. We know it will become a very special space for all pupils across the Barley and Barkway Federation.

This simply would not have been possible without the generosity and kindness of those who donated resources to help us create our forest area. A huge and heartfelt thank you to:

Carole Baddeley
Charlotte Larkin
Simon Robinson
Michelle Felts
Emily Birks

Your support has made a real and lasting difference.

We would also like to extend a very special thank you to our incredible Forest School team who gave up their time during half term to help bring the space to life:

Elsie Whitaker
Harry Whitaker
George Whitaker
James Whitaker
Louis Martin
Henry Martin
Amy Martin
Kelly Whitaker
Jackie & Vic Jones

Thank you all so much for your time, energy and hard work. Your dedication and teamwork have created an amazing space that our children will benefit from for years to come.

We are extremely proud of what has already been achieved and very excited about the opportunities this new area will bring. We look forward to sharing photographs with you and to seeing our children learning, exploring and thriving in this wonderful new environment.



Emotional Mental Wellbeing Schools Mark



We are very proud to announce that we have achieved our Emotional Mental Wellbeing Schools Mark!

The report described us as:

“A school with strong leadership who demonstrated many areas of Advanced practice, a fantastic array of knowledge and a well-constructed PHSE curriculum; this is a wonderful environment for children to be supported in.”

This recognition also belongs to our entire staff team, who consistently place children’s wellbeing at the heart of everything they do. Thank you for your ongoing care, vigilance and compassion, and for always working together to ensure that our federation is a supportive environment for pupils, parents, staff and governors alike. Wellbeing is everyone’s responsibility, and this achievement reflects our shared commitment.



CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

WE PROUDLY PRESENT THIS CERTIFICATE TO

Barley and Barkway (VA) Church of England First Schools Federation

This certificate was awarded for achieving **Effective Practice** in the Hertfordshire Emotional Mental Wellbeing in Schools Mark

February 2026

DATE

EMWiE Team

SIGNED





Happy Birthday

A big **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to Cali who is celebrating her Birthday this week!

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



This weeks activities

Oak Class

This week, our EYFS children have been learning about Chinese New Year and exploring the traditions and celebrations linked to this special festival. We discovered that Chinese New Year is also known as the Lunar New Year and is celebrated by millions of people around the world, particularly in countries such as China.

The children enjoyed listening to the story of the Great Race and learning how the years are named after different animals in the Chinese zodiac. We talked about which animal represents this year and what characteristics it is said to have. The children were fascinated to find out how families prepare for the celebration by cleaning their homes, decorating with red and gold, and spending time together.

In provision, the children have been very busy! They created beautiful red lanterns, practised writing Chinese numerals, and drew their own dragons out on the playground with chalk. We listened to traditional music and even tried some Chinese food, using chopsticks to help develop our fine motor skills.



This weeks activities

Apple Class

This week Apple class have dived straight into their new History unit, Toys Then and Now with enthusiasm. Henry said "I think I'm going to enjoy this topic" when Mrs Gould introduced it to the class. The children loved listening to the book *Lost in the Toy Museum* by David Lucas before designing and creating their own robot. They were surprised and entertained by the cheeky behaviour of Punch and Judy and then created their own puppets using split pins for the moving parts. The puppets were for their very own mini puppet theatres!

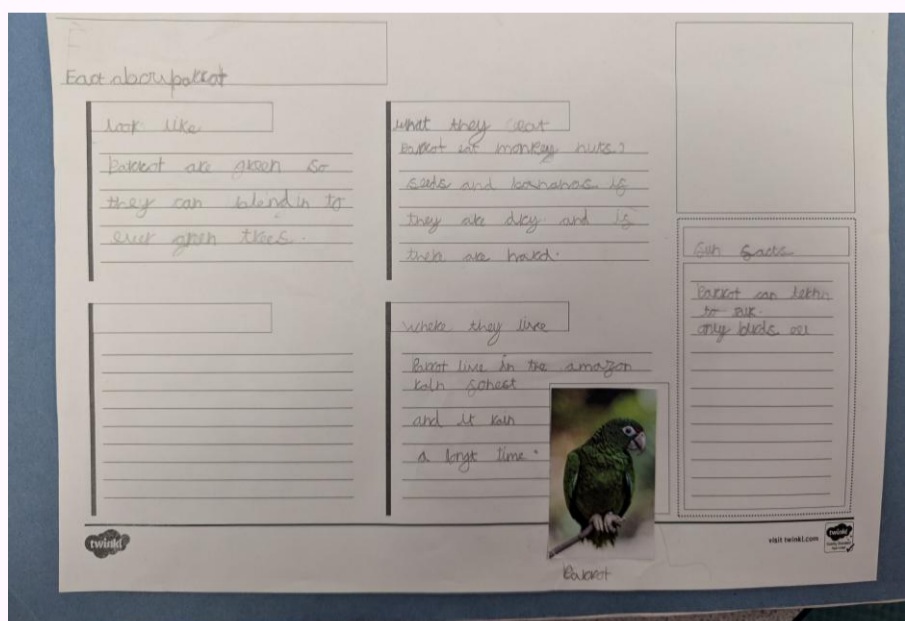
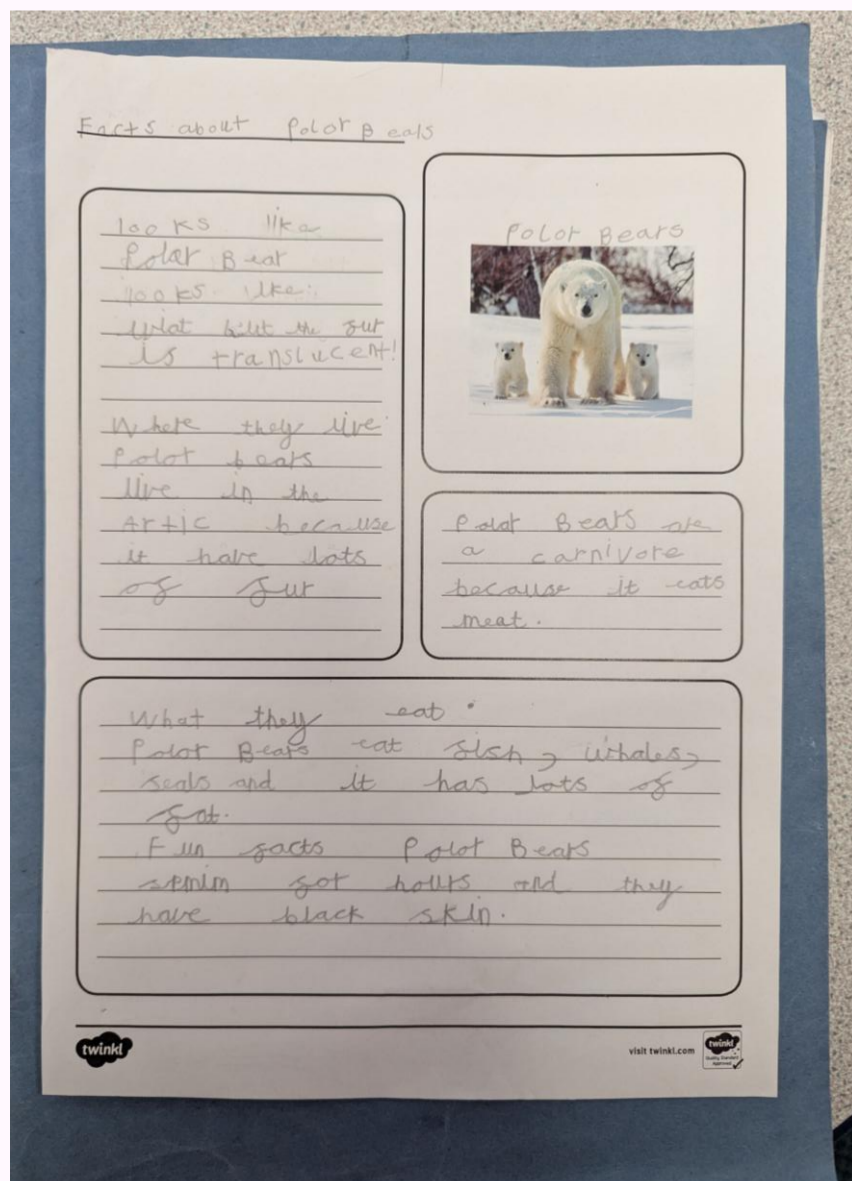
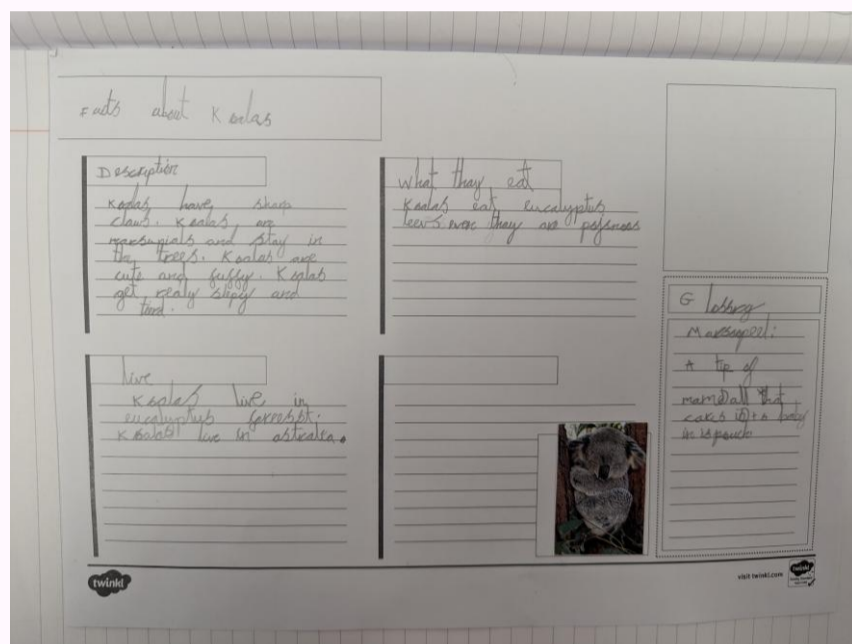
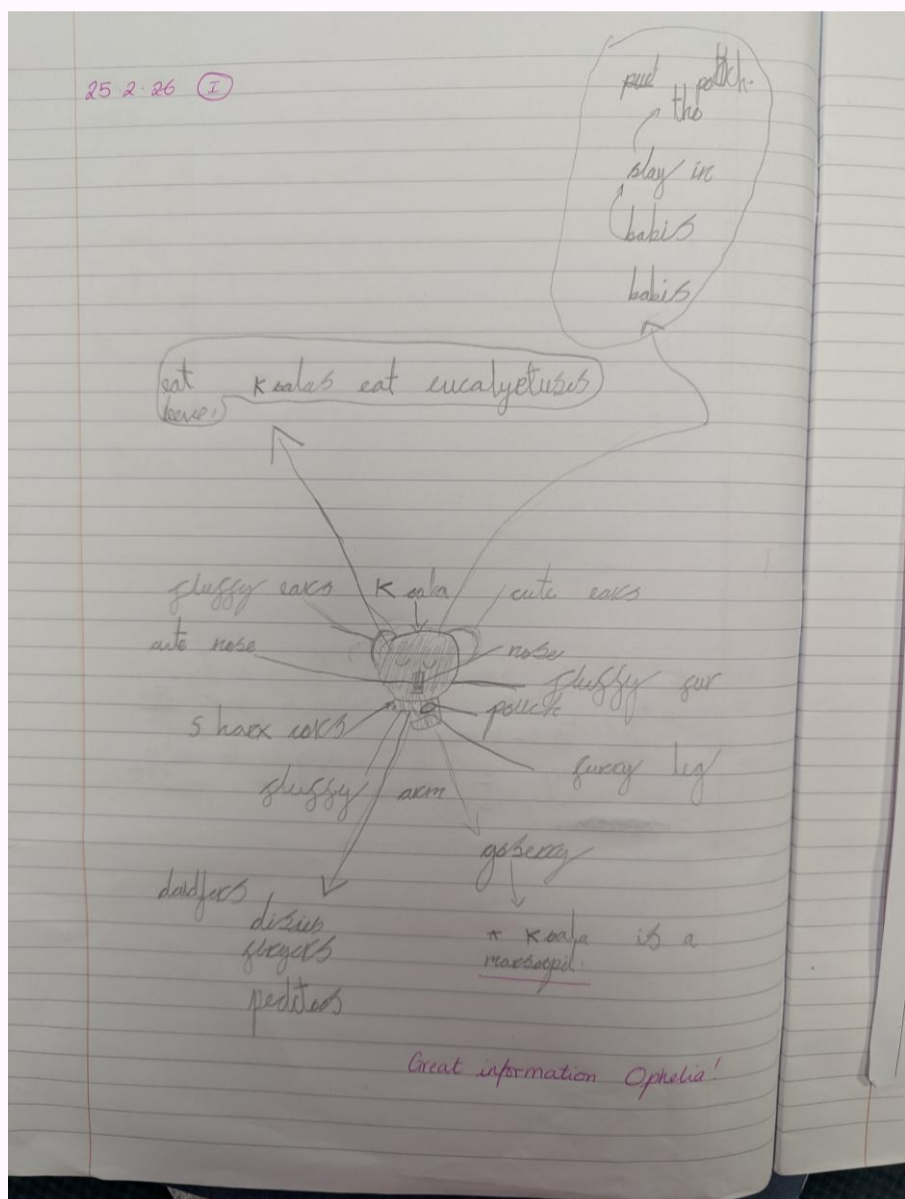
The children were quickly able to identify how toys have changed over time. Vincent and Benito knew that toys used to be made of wood and metal and Louis correctly recalled that plastic was the material that was invented which meant plastic toys could also be made. Great work Apple class!



This weeks activities

Hazel Class

This week in year 2 we have worked extremely hard on our non-chronological reports. The children have all researched their own animals and written a fact file to give to Mrs Porter to help her know more about animals as she is the science lead !!



This weeks activities

Beech & Sycamore Class

Year 3 and 4 have been learning about Sikhism and to support their learning they experienced a langar on Thursday.

A langar is the kitchen in a Sikh Gurdwara. Everyone is welcome to come and eat there. The food served is always vegetarian so it is accessible to all. When entering a langar, shoes are taken off, hands washed and heads are covered.

We all enjoyed the Indian food!



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



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!





BBF

NURSERY ADMISSIONS

OPEN FOR 2026

Nursery applications are open from Monday 16th February 2026 and will close on Friday 26th March 2026.

- ✓ Church of England School
- ✓ Wrap-around care available
- ✓ Forest School Opportunities
- ✓ Nursery to Year 4



ENROL NOW!

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