



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



**FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER
AUTUMN TERM**

NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Parents

Last week was such a happy one welcoming all the children (including many new pupils) and staff back to school. The children are already getting used to their new routines, their classrooms and their new friends. Lessons are in full swing, and it's been a pleasure to see the children engaged in all this week's varied activities. It's also been super to see so many parents at the Years 1 and 2 Introductory and PTA evenings.

I am proud to report that Berkhamstead has once again achieved the Mental Health Champions Award - a whole school award recognising the high-quality provision we make to support the wellbeing of our community. A huge thank you to our brilliant Citizenship and Wellbeing (CWB) lead, Mrs Gargan, for leading this. Our submission highlighted developments since our last award, including how we prepare children for learning in Pre-Prep, encourage healthy eating, and support both emotional and physical wellbeing. Assessors visited the school, toured by our Year 2 and Year 5 pupils, explored the new playground and Creative Cabin, and met with Mrs Rees to learn more about her work as ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) and Learning and Wellbeing Mentor. Importantly, all our staff have also recently updated their safeguarding training ensuring we continue to provide the very best support for our pupils.

I am also delighted that, at the end of the Summer Term, Berkhamstead was awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction for 2025! This award recognises the hard work of our pupils and staff in making sustainability a priority, with projects focused on Energy, Litter and Transport. From the Sustrans Big Walk & Wheel and 'Bikeability' training, to tree planting, litter picks and our 'Switch-Off' campaign, the assessors were impressed by the breadth of initiatives and the enthusiasm of our school community. A huge thank you to Mrs Hannett and her Eco Team for leading this fantastic work.

DIARY DATES

THE WEEK AHEAD

Saturday 13th September
Gloucestershire Grammar
Schools Entrance Test Day
Wednesday 17th September
Mrs Bareham at IAPS Head's
Conference
2pm U11 Girls' Hockey
v Beaudesert (away)
2.30pm U10 Boys' Rugby v King's
Gloucester (away)
3pm Early Years
Open Classroom –
Early Years parents invited
Thursday 18th September
Mrs Bareham at IAPS
Head's Conference
Friday 19th September
Mrs Bareham at IAPS
Head's Conference
Individual photos





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL CONTINUED

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our first 'Taste the Menu' event of the school year this morning. We are delighted that our catering is now fully managed in-house. Under the new regime we are already seeing exciting improvements, including a stronger focus on sustainability. We are also pleased that our dedicated catering staff have remained with us, ensuring continuity and quality for our pupils and staff. As part of the transition, our kitchens were re-inspected and we are proud to share that we achieved a 5-star hygiene rating across all three sites, with inspectors giving special praise for our outstanding allergen control. Guests at the event sampled a delicious selection of snacks, including homemade flapjack, digestives, banana bread and milk buns, alongside tasters of beef lasagne and vegan cottage pie. A huge thank you to Catering Manager Rob Fisher, Head Chef Mark Young, and the whole catering team for their hard work and commitment.

All the very best of luck to those of our Year 6 children who are sitting the grammar school test tomorrow. These children attended a mock test here in school last Saturday, the purpose being to familiarise the children with the process, boost their confidence and reduce feelings of stress and anxiety about the day. Many also benefitted from several very useful practices in the summer holidays with specialist teacher, Mrs Hannett. The preparation the children receive for the test here at Berkhampstead is rigorous. From Year 3, there are weekly critical thinking lessons (teaching useful skills for all our pupils, and ones that the grammar school entrance exams test), which increase to an hour a week in Year 5. We are confident that the children have been thoroughly prepared.

The Year 5 children have now returned from their three-day residential trip to Viney Hill. The children enjoyed a packed itinerary of brilliant team building activities, including climbing, crate stacking, low rope challenges and archery. I am pleased to report that all the children have now arrived safely back to school; a big thank you to all the staff who organise and support these trips, and care so well for the children.

I wish you all a pleasant and relaxing weekend.

Michelle Bareham

Michelle Bareham
Head of School





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

NEWS FROM KINDERGARTEN

Welcome to Autumn Term. We have had a wonderful first week back and have loved seeing our classroom buzzing with energy again, filled with both familiar faces we have missed over the summer and welcoming new friends joining us for the first time.

Over the past week we have loved hearing all about the children's holiday adventures. It has been wonderful to see their confidence begin to grow as they speak and listen to one another.

We have already begun to settle in beautifully to our routines. The children have been practising taking turns and helping each other during play which has been lovely to see.

In our creative station this week we have been busy creating self-portraits. We will be creating a wonderful gallery of these in the entrance hall so keep an eye out!

In our French lesson this week we began learning how to count to 5. The children really enjoyed joining in with songs and activities to help them remember the numbers.

We are so excited for the term ahead and have lots of wonderful things planned. GB




BERKHAMPSTEAD
SCHOOL
EARLY YEARS
VALUES TREE

THIS WEEK'S AWARDS

Leaves: Teddy H, Harrison M





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

NEWS FROM RECEPTION

Wow! What a wonderful first few days of school, meeting new friends, exploring new activities, and finding our feet in Reception. We have been so impressed with the children's attitude to learning and they have truly jumped straight into the routines of Berky life including phonics, maths, Forest School, Circle Time, assemblies, art, PE, French and music! We have also shared many, many stories and discussions about our families and homes.

A real highlight of the week has been the introduction of phonics, which is the gateway to the children learning to read and write. Every morning the children will take part in their phonics lesson after registration. They will learn to recognise sounds, correctly form the letter and segment and blend words. The children adore the 'robot arms' section of the lesson which will help them to spell words later.

Our outdoor learning session on Monday was delightful! The children looked for bugs, spotted signs of autumn, did some digging and cooked up a storm in the mud kitchen.

On Wednesday, Mrs Gargan and Mrs Turfrey loved working on self-portraits with the children, and the results are absolutely stunning! We used photographs and mirrors to carefully look at our features. These will be pride of place in the corridor for all to see!

Next week we invite you to our Open Classroom on Wednesday from 3pm.

This will be an opportunity for you to see our learning environment and chat to the teachers - we very much look forward to seeing you there. Z M-S




BERKHAMPSTEAD
SCHOOL
EARLY YEARS
VALUES TREE

THIS WEEK'S AWARDS

Leaves: Wilf M, Rannoch G, Willa T,
Shayan S





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



SCHOOL NOTICES

DAVE THE HORSE!

Join local author Lois Kingscott on Sunday 28th September to celebrate Dave the horse's 18th birthday! The family event is in aid of Cotswold Riding for the Disabled where Dave does his wonderful job, and there will be lots of fun including games, bouncy castles, face painting, ice cream, children's entertainment, cake, a chance to meet the star of the Dave and Darcy books, and much more! Advance tickets only, so get yours now before they sell out! You can purchase tickets online on Lois's website: www.loiskingscottauthor.com/event-details-registration/daves-birthday-party



STAY CONNECTED!

Keep up to date with all our latest news, achievements and events by following us on social media:



Instagram: [@berkhampstead_school](https://www.instagram.com/berkhampstead_school)



X (formerly Twitter): [@BerkyCheltenham](https://twitter.com/BerkyCheltenham)

CHARITY CHALLENGE SUCCESS

Congratulations to our Year 1 and Year 4 brother-and-sister team who completed a "walk a mile a day, every day" challenge throughout August. Their determination raised an impressive £300 for charity, supporting children and families affected by cancer. Well done!

DAY NURSERY CAR PARK

A gentle reminder that the spaces in the Day Nursery car park are reserved for Day Nursery families only. We kindly ask all other parents not to use this area so that it remains available for those dropping off and collecting Day Nursery children. Thank you for your cooperation.

SAFEGUARDING ONLINE SAFETY - FILTERING AND MONITORING

In addition to strong network filters, the SchoolsMobile app (Y4 onward) and direct adult supervision and in-person monitoring, we are introducing a new device management software called 'Securus' through our school network management, Focus. This is a browser-based alert system that will instantly pick up any incidents that may be of concern.

Due to the strong filtering in place, we are not expecting many alerts at all. However, should a child intentionally try to search for, or accidentally come across any potential safeguarding harm (categorised by Securus), we will receive an alert and be able to take prompt action with the child involved. This would of course be communicated with you, as parents.

These changes add an extra layer of security to safeguarding our children but are also necessary to be compliant with legal safeguarding documentation (KCSIE 2025) and DfE guidance: Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges. If you have any questions or would like more information, please speak to Mrs Stephenson (DSL) or Mr Denmead (Bursar).

As always, we recommend that you have child safe filters applied at home. These can be arranged by contacting your internet provider.

Mrs Stephenson, Designated Safeguarding Lead