



# BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



## NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

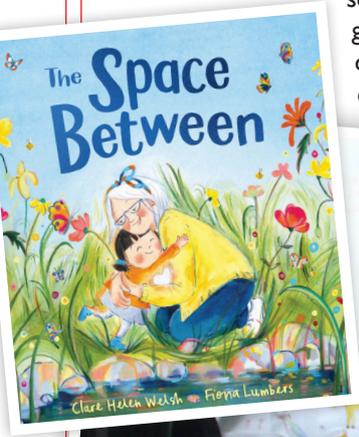
Dear Parents

We have been taking part in Safer Internet Week this week, which Mr Jones, our Head of Computing and Digital Learning, launched with a special assembly. He introduced this year's theme of artificial intelligence, encouraging pupils to think carefully about how AI is used and the importance of being sensible and discerning online. (You can read more from Mr Jones later in this newsletter).

Year 2 enjoyed a fantastic afternoon on Wednesday, participating in a vibrant Indian dance workshop as part of their 'Inspiring India!' topic. The session culminated in a super performance for parents, showcasing the children's new dance moves.

On Thursday, Mr McCreanor and the Year 5 pupils visited the Commandery in Worcester to deepen their understanding of the English Civil War. The children enjoyed hands-on experiences, handling weapons such as muskets and pikes, dressing up in armour and Stuart-era clothing, and learning about the realities and challenges of life during wartime. The visit also included a tour of the Commandery's beautiful historic buildings, bringing this fascinating period of history vividly to life.

Also on Thursday, Year 1 took part in a special online author event to mark Children's Mental Health Week. The session was led by Clare Helen Welsh – a well-known picture book author, passionate advocate for children's mental health and former primary school teacher. Clare read her book, 'The Space Between', before guiding the children through related activities and an engaging draw-along session. It was a wonderful opportunity for the children to reflect on feelings, connection and wellbeing.



FRIDAY 13TH JANUARY  
SPRING TERM

## DIARY DATES

### THE WEEK AHEAD

**Monday 23rd February**  
9.15am 6L trip to SkillZONE  
12pm 6K trip to SkillZONE

**Tuesday 24 February**  
9.15am 4P trip to SkillZONE

**Wednesday 25 February**  
9.15am 4J trip to SkillZONE  
5.30pm 5J Parents' Evening - Online

**Thursday 26 February**  
4.15pm Move More cross-country at Cheltenham College Prep (away)  
5.30pm 5H Parents' Evening - Online

**Friday 27 February**  
8.30am Visiting Head assembly - Mrs Sandford Squires, St Edward's School, Prep parents invited  
2.15pm U8 & U9 Football v Ashley Manor (away)  
2.15pm U8 & U9 Netball v Ashley Manor (away)





# BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



## NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL CONTINUED

Last week, under the expert guidance of Mr Cole, our Years 5 and 6 children took part in the qualifier for the Gloucestershire Schools Wildlife Quiz. They answered questions on UK birds, wildflowers, trees, mammals and reptiles, showcasing their impressive knowledge of the natural world. Congratulations to Betty D (Captain), Rupert S, Toby M and Nancy A who will represent Berkhampstead as our team, with Magnus D as reserve. Well done to everyone who took part.

As Chinese New Year falls during half term, we marked the occasion today with a celebration. Rob and his team prepared a delicious feast of Chinese chicken curry with egg noodles and sweetcorn, alongside a vegetarian Chinese tofu curry. The meal was completed with prawn crackers and spring rolls. With Shrove Tuesday also taking place during half term, the celebrations continued with buttermilk pancakes served with lemon and sugar for pudding – a much-enjoyed treat. Thank you to our catering staff.

This half term will conclude with our much-anticipated annual House Pancake Races, with pupils from Years 3 to 6 taking to the track. Spectators can look forward to a lively contest, which will showcase impressive pancake-flipping skills as competitors race on to the cheers of their houses. Last year, St Patrick's claimed the trophy – but which house will lift the much-coveted frying pan this year?

I am very sorry to miss the final two days of half term while I am away at a conference, and I look forward to hearing all about the races on my return. Very many thanks go to the PTA for providing refreshments after the event – not to mention Valentine's cakes at brektime.

Wishing everyone a wonderful half term.

*Michelle Bareham*

Michelle Bareham  
Head of School





# BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



## NEWS FROM PREP

The past few weeks in Prep has been a damp but by no means dreary affair - the weather has not gotten us down and the fun and learning have shone through! While we, of course, love talking about our core subjects, be it English, maths or science, at Berky we also embrace a holistic, wider education, filled with flair and excitement. The children love nothing more than to showcase their creativity to whomever will listen! Recently, this has included film making in Year 6 computing lessons, creating birds out of clay in Year 3 art sessions and even expressing their understanding of Cheltenham during World War II through the power of digital collage in history! Some of Year 6 completed creative movement within their yoga sessions during their weekly carousel, while, at the same time, some Year 5 children started designing their own board games, a process that will include some 3D printing of game pieces. Year 4 also flexed their creative muscles with some superb work on descriptive poetry, looking at a variety of forms such as Haiku and limericks.

We, of course, also place high value on staying active, with children across the Prep developing their ABCs (agility, balance and coordination) in Miss Keegan's fabulous PE lessons, with a current focus on dance, while also training and playing matches in games lessons - a real team effort from the Prep teaching staff. In his assembly on Thursday, Mr Jennings spoke about the importance of being active: how it improves our mood, helps us to sleep and keeps our bodies fit. He showed some of the different ways we can move, from the ridiculous (cheese rolling - don't try this at home), to the sublime (ice skating whilst dressed as a minion at the Winter Olympics). His advice - don't let the weather put you off - is to wrestle your child into some waterproofs and get outdoors during half term when you can!

We've had a brilliant half term in the Prep School, and we can't wait to see the children again after their well-deserved half term break - may the rain hold off and the sun shine through. Enjoy! KJ





# BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

## NEWS FROM PRE-PREP

Year 1 pupils have continued their topic on Polar Explorers beginning English lessons with a treasure hunt to uncover facts about Scott of the Antarctic and the famous race to the South Pole. Hot seating Captain Scott helped the children imagine what life was like during the expedition.

In art, the children travelled from one polar region to another, using chalk to create striking scenes of the Northern Lights.

In science, Year 1 have planted cress seeds in different places around the classroom; some of them have already started to grow!

Year 2 pupils took part in an energetic Indian dance workshop on Wednesday afternoon, learning traditional moves which they proudly performed for parents at the end of the day.

In English, the children developed their research skills by using the Kiddle search engine to find facts about tigers, which they then used to create their own fact files.

Meanwhile in maths, Year 2 are practising their 2, 5 and 10 times tables and have begun exploring division. Please help us to practise our times tables at home.

In science, Year 2 are comparing rainfall in Cheltenham with that of Mumbai, India. They should have plenty of results to compare with our recent wet weather! AS





# BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



## NEWS FROM AROUND THE SCHOOL



### SAFER INTERNET DAY 2026

Tuesday of this week signalled Safer Internet Day 2026 - a day when, worldwide, schools celebrate the wonder of the World Wide Web while considering how best to stay safe in an increasingly digital world. This year's focus was on Artificial Intelligence, which is becoming increasingly prevalent in everyday life. Across the school, children had assemblies and lessons on staying safe online, increasing their understanding of the role of AI in the world today. Children from Reception upwards considered the use of AI support, such as spellcheck on computers, translation software and utilising GPS systems to go the most efficient route when driving. A big focus was on Smart Speakers and streaming services; something many children have direct experience of. Children thought about 'suggested' TV programmes and how these are based on personal preferences and habits, and considered the pros and cons of such services. Prep children also looked at generative AI and, as a school, we discussed how to be safe, sensible and discerning users of technology, focusing on fundamentals such as checking with our grown up before using any online tools, not believing everything we consume online and, of course, rule 1 of online safety - talking with a trusted adult if we see anything that worries, scares or upsets us. Really interesting subject matter that we will continue to revisit throughout the year. For lots more information on Safer Internet Day 2026, you can visit <https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2026/top-tips-for-parents-and-carers>

Mr Keir Jones, Head of Computing and Digital Learning

### PARKING REMINDER

We have had several complaints from our neighbours regarding parking. Please can all parents park legally and with consideration for other road users and pedestrians.

Please note the entrance to Teme Road, the private road opposite the entrance to Pittville Circus Road, is not a car park and cars should not be left parked there. Thank you for your co-operation.





# BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

## SPORTS REPORTS

### NETBALL

#### U8 v Cheltenham College Prep School

The U8 girls made the short trip across town to play Cheltenham College Prep School. All the girls played three matches and every game was a close contest. The girls are making rapid progress and their accuracy when passing is improving with every game and practice. They are continuing to work on their movement and this was evident throughout. We were all really impressed with the positive yet determined attitude consistently demonstrated by all of them. Well done, girls. IP





# BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



## SPORTS REPORTS

### FOOTBALL

#### U9A v The Richard Pate School

Friday 6th February brought about the U9A's second match of the season against a very capable opposition - the U9s of RPS. Conditions were tricky, with some heavy ground impacted by recent rainfall, but the boys started well, taking the ball to their opposition and creating a few chances while defending resolutely; there were some superb blocks from Tom R, Zac and Gabriel in goal. RPS picked up a couple of goals midway through the half, but the score was pulled back to 2-1 by half time, with Heath converting a spectacular 20-yard free kick he had won himself, to the delight of the crowd. The restart came, with some initially balanced play, before our opposition moved up a gear or two and started putting together some beautiful one-touch football, converting a number of chances despite some heroic defensive efforts from the Berky lads. RPS ended up clear victors, but we went home with some positive efforts to celebrate and things to work on during our next training session. We march on! Well done, gents, and big thanks to our parent supporters in the rather unpleasant weather. KJ

#### U9B v The Richard Pate School

The U9 boys split into two squads for an exciting round robin against RPS, and what an afternoon it turned out to be! Across four fiercely competitive matches, the boys showed fantastic determination, energy and teamwork from start to finish.

They worked tirelessly all afternoon, carving out plenty of goal-scoring opportunities with some sharp attacking play, while also defending with real grit and determination. Every game was closely fought. By the final whistle, we had secured one win, one draw, and narrowly missed out in two hard-fought matches — a great effort all round.

A big well done to Eli (3) and Theo for getting their names on the scoresheet, and huge credit to the entire team for the way they supported one another and played so effectively together. P McC

#### U10A Football v Wycliffe College

The U10A boys produced another memorable performance this week, coming out 6-4 winners against a strong Wycliffe side in what was one of the most entertaining matches of the season. The scoreline only tells half the story — this was a game full of momentum swings, brilliant attacking football, and a final ten minute spell that will stay with the players for a long time.

The pitch conditions added an unexpected

challenge. The grass was long and heavy, and it took us the first ten minutes to adjust our passing, weight of through balls, and general tempo. Once the boys adapted, the game opened up, but a few defensive lapses — mainly both defenders being drawn to the ball at the same time — allowed Wycliffe to take advantage. With ten minutes left, we found ourselves 4-3 down despite having played some excellent attacking football throughout.

What happened next was simply outstanding.

The final ten minutes looked like something straight out of the Barcelona youth academy. The boys produced flowing, connected passing moves, switching play, clipping balls over defenders, and sliding passes into space exactly as we've been practising in training. The confidence, creativity, and intelligence in the build up play were a joy to watch. Regardless of the score, that spell of football made me incredibly proud of every single player on the pitch.

Three goals in those final minutes turned the match on its head and secured a fully deserved 6-4 victory — but more importantly, they showed the boys' resilience, teamwork, and belief in the way we want to play.

Player of the Match was, once again, extremely difficult to decide.

- Jack O'K and George R had brilliant games again
- Max added another hat trick to his growing collection, with Archie assisting quite a few goals throughout the game.

But this week's POM goes to **Ralph**, who controlled the midfield superbly. He did so much unseen work — breaking up play, recycling possession, and linking defence to attack — and his influence was a huge part of our late surge.

A brilliant performance from all involved and another step in our unbeaten run against U10 teams. Well done, boys — you earned this one. ZL



#### U11A and U11/10B v Wycliffe College

Wednesday's fixtures were played in testing conditions — heavy rain had left the pitches soft underfoot, with longer grass making quick passing a real challenge. But both teams embraced it, rolling up their sleeves for two excellent games with Wycliffe.

The A team endured a tricky start against a physical Wycliffe side, conceding twice inside the opening six minutes. Showing real character and composure, the boys gradually wrestled back control, moving the ball with purpose and attacking with confidence. What followed was a remarkable response: nine superbly taken goals in a thrilling turnaround. Seth led the charge with four, Arthur struck twice, Max added two of his own, and Jacob rounded off the scoring in a fantastic 9-3 victory. Well done to all of the team.

The Bs were involved in a match which had everything. The first half was finely balanced, with both sides battling hard in difficult conditions. Then the game burst into life after the break in an extraordinary 16-goal thriller. Wycliffe enjoyed a strong spell and looked in the ascendency for much of the second half, but the Berky boys refused to back down. Showing tremendous heart and togetherness, they fought until the final whistle. Despite a narrow 9-7 defeat, it was a superb contest played in great spirit. Eric claimed a brilliant hat-trick, with George R-S, Guy, Sebby and Oli S also finding the net.

Two entertaining matches, full of teamwork and effort. Well done to all the boys for representing Berky with such determination. P McC