



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Parents

What a fantastic sight it was this morning to see the Year 6 children arriving at school transformed into evacuees - one of my favourite Berky days of the year - as they set off on their eagerly awaited trip to Swindon's STEAM Museum. Dressed in their 1940s attire, our young historians set off on an immersive journey into wartime Britain. They will have experienced life as World War II evacuees, with a highlight including being lined up and 'evacuated' on the museum's railway platform - a moment that is sure to stay with them. The day will have been filled with engaging activities, offering a unique glimpse into life in the 1940s; my thanks to Mr McCreanor for organising this brilliant trip.

The Early Years Christmas nativity, 'The Big, Big Story!', took place this morning at All Saints' Church and was simply delightful, enchanting everyone with its joyful performances. This afternoon, our Pre-Prep children take to the same stage to perform 'Hey Ewe!' - another festive highlight that I am thoroughly looking forward to.

On Thursday, Year 5 enjoyed a fantastic time at Dean Close, taking part in hands-on DT, art and drama workshops before settling in to watch the school's impressive production of 'Shrek the Musical'. We were especially excited to see Freddie L starring as Shrek - a former Berky pupil who left us in 2024. Miss Evans and I were delighted to accompany the children.

On Tuesday after school, our Year 5 and 6 VoxBox choir spread festive cheer at Waitrose, carol singing and raising £129.83 for Headspace, the charity chosen by our School Council this year. Then on Thursday, Years 3 and 4 performed at Bay Tree Court Residential Care Home - another much-loved annual tradition. Bay Tree Court holds a special place in our school's history, as it was home to our founder, Mrs Edna Andrews, during her final years. She lived there until her passing in 2009 at the remarkable age of 105. It has also been wonderful to welcome parents to our recent music ensemble open rehearsals. My thanks to Mrs Mitchell, our Head of Music, for organising these joyful festive events.



**FRIDAY 5TH DECEMBER
AUTUMN TERM**

DIARY DATES

THE WEEK AHEAD

Monday 8th December

4.00pm IML Parents' Evening

Tuesday 9th December

09.30am Year 2 trip to the Holst Museum

Wednesday 10 December

9.00am Early Years and Pre-Prep Pantomime trip to Roses Theatre

Thursday 11 December

12.50pm Early Years Christmas Entertainer

2.15pm Pre-Prep Christmas Entertainer

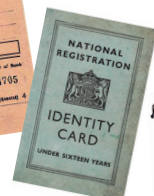
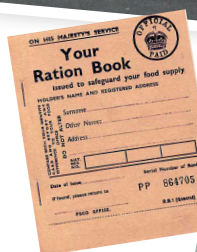
2.30pm Prep Carol Service at All Saints' Church - Prep parents invited

Friday 12 December

School Christmas Lunch

3:30pm/3:45pm Autumn Term ends

No after-school provision





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

NEWS FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL CONTINUED

The PTA Festive Friday event took place at the end of last week, and what a wonderful afternoon it was! Families enjoyed a fantastic array of festive treats, including hot chocolate, shortbread and mince pies. Our Prep School carol singers, VoxBox, and the Day Nursery singers performed beautifully, accompanied by Mrs Mitchell and Mrs Sallis. I had a super time joining in and singing with VoxBox. The Pre-Prep lawn looked magical, with a magnificent Christmas tree decorated by our Pre-Prep and Early Years children. The raffle - filled with prizes generously donated by parents - was superb, with vouchers galore to be won. It was a very busy afternoon, and an enormous amount of work went into making it such a success. Huge thanks to our brilliant PTA team for all their hard work – leading up to and during the event - and in particular to Lottie Noar, Charlotte Chapman and Laura Cowley. Thanks too to all the staff who helped during the afternoon, and to our estates team for their invaluable support.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming families to our upcoming Berky Experience Open Morning for Pre-Prep and Early Years on Friday 9th January. Children are invited to bring along their favourite teddy as they explore our classrooms and experience a taste of life at Berkhampstead. Earlier in the week, we released a short film to accompany the event publicity, offering prospective families a glimpse of the warmth and happiness that make our school so special. If you haven't yet seen the film, do take a look on our Instagram page [@berkhampstead_school](https://www.instagram.com/berkhampstead_school). And if you know of anyone looking for an exceptional school, please do point them in our direction - we would love to meet them.

Next week marks the final week of term, and it promises to be another tremendously busy one. Highlights will include the Prep Carol Service on Thursday, Early Years and Pre-Prep panto trips and our whole school Christmas lunch which takes place on the final day of term – don't forget to send your children in wearing their Christmas jumpers! I'm very much looking forward to the week.

Michelle Bareham

Michelle Bareham
Head of School





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



NEWS FROM KINDERGARTEN

What a wonderful week we've had in Kindergarten! As we continue our countdown to Christmas, the children have been full of excitement. Our room has been buzzing with festive fun, including carol singing and Christmas card creating. Jingle the elf arrived on Monday, along with our Christmas tree, and helped the children make it their own with beautifully bright decorations and twinkly lights.

We have also been busy learning the songs for our Nativity performance. The children's confidence and enthusiasm has grown with each rehearsal as Mrs Sallis expertly helped them prepare for this morning's celebration at All Saints' Church.

Our focus has also been on 2D shapes and learning how to recognise them from their properties: - How many sides does it have? Does it have corners? The children became shape detectives as they hunted around the room for hidden shapes, and spotted familiar shapes in everyday objects, too. Maybe you could have a go whilst you're out and about together! The children have also worked hard to recognise their names written down and have been beautifully copying them into their Christmas cards. LS



BERKHAMPSTEAD
SCHOOL
EARLY YEARS
VALUES TREE

THIS WEEK'S AWARDS

Leaves: Amelie S, Alfie B
Berkie Bear: Cece O





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

NEWS FROM RECEPTION

The excitement is nearly bubbling over in Reception this week as we fully embrace the most wonderful time of the year! We have been learning about Advent in our Understanding of the World lessons and finding out about why the days leading up to Christmas Day are so special and important to Christians. We have also been learning about Advent in other countries and love the idea of sweeties hidden our shoes, like they do in Germany!

This week we got creative using real Christmas tree branches to make our own decorations. The children explored the texture and smell of the branches and used them to create beautiful festive pieces to take home. We have also been finalising our snowman Christmas cards and calendars and look forward to sharing these with you when they go home early next week.

The children have been working so hard learning their lines for our Nativity performance and certainly sang their hearts this morning, filling the church with Christmas cheer! -Well done to everyone for being so absolutely brilliant! A huge thank you to everyone who came to support us - we are incredibly proud of the children.

We look forward to our final week of the Autumn term with the pantomime next Wednesday and Gizmo, the entertainer, visiting us next Thursday! Z M-S



BERKHAMPSTEAD
SCHOOL
EARLY YEARS
VALUES TREE

THIS WEEK'S AWARDS

Leaves: Otto D, Posey L,
Ralph H

Berky Bear: Eliza J,
Rannoch G



SECOND-HAND UNIFORM SHOP

A quick reminder that the Second-hand Uniform Shop will be open next Monday from 8:15-8:40am and will not be open on Thursday. Please note card payments ONLY are accepted.



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



NEWS AROUND THE SCHOOL

NATIONAL SCHOOLS QUIZ CHAMPIONSHIP SUCCESS

Our brilliant quiz A Team competed in the semi-finals of the National Schools Quiz Championship on Thursday. Facing tough competition from 60 schools nationwide, they secured an impressive 14th place. We now await confirmation on whether they have qualified for the Summer Term finals - fingers crossed!

Well done to all involved for their effort, teamwork and superb general knowledge.



CHRISTMAS STAMPS REMINDER

Don't forget to buy your Berky Christmas stamps for our internal postal service – just £1 per sheet, with all proceeds supporting Family Haven. Available from the school office.



CHANGEMAKERS CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The Changemakers wanted to extend a huge word of thanks to the whole school community who got behind the recent appeal for The Family Haven in Gloucester (www.thefamilyhaven.com) and donated so generously.

We really love how the children and their families got involved and took the time to shop for the items needed. The donated items were delivered by two of our brilliant Changemakers team this week, and we would love to share a message we received from the team at The Family Haven:

"Thank you so much for dropping off the huge donation of food and gifts for our families. It was such a lovely surprise to have so many useful items. It has saved us a fortune on our shopping bill and we also have some luxury items that wouldn't normally be in our budget. Thank you once again for supporting us. It really does make a difference to a small charity and the families that we support."

Grassroots action such as this is what the Changemakers was started for, and this appeal enabled us to have an immediate impact on a vital local charity. We couldn't have done this without such support from you all, as well as support from within the staff body at the school, so thank you all again.

The Changemakers.





BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL



**SMARTPHONE
FREE CHILDHOOD**

CHELTENHAM SCHOOLS ...

Berkhampstead is proud to be a member of the Smartphone-Free Childhood initiative, a collaborative effort among Cheltenham schools to support healthier digital habits for young people. The initiative aims to shift the 'rite of passage' age for owning a smartphone up to 14, helping children enjoy a safer, more balanced childhood free from the pressures and distractions that smartphones can bring. We are pleased to be working together with local schools and our families to promote this positive movement.

SMARTPHONE FREE AT KS1, 2 & 3 CHELTENHAM

Let's keep the conversation going...

We've launched **Smartphone Free at KS1, 2 & 3**. So, what's next? To support our clear phone-free policies, we intend to share regular information and updates to keep this important conversation going. If you don't already follow [@jonathanhaidt](#), he shares useful, research-backed, information via his Instagram account. Jonathan's best-selling book, *The Anxious Generation*, is highly recommended too (also available on audiobook).

The 4 new norms

- no **smartphones** before high school
- no **social media** before 16
- phone-free **schools**
- more **independence**, free play, and responsibility in the real world

[@jonathanhaidt](#)
[#freetheanxiousgeneration](#)



75%

of 17-18-year-old teens report insufficient sleep

230%

increased likelihood of a teen feeling tired the next day — leaving them unfocused at school and at higher risk for physical and mental health struggles — due to having a device in the bedroom

JAMA Pediatrics



jonathanhaidt ✓

The team from [@screenagersmovies](#) recently launched the [@ScreenFreeSleep](#) campaign to fight back against the youth sleep crisis.

The research is clear: devices at bedtime steal kids' sleep. 51% of teens get less than 7 hours of sleep most nights, and 36% wake at least once during the night to check notifications.

Just having a device in the bedroom makes kids 2.3x more likely to feel tired during the next day, leaving them unfocused at school and at higher risk for physical and mental health struggles.

It's time to make Screen-Free Sleep the norm. Support the campaign at link [🔗](#) [screenfreesleep.org](#)

SMARTPHONE FREE AT KS1, 2 & 3

We are working with local schools and parents to encourage the delayed use of smartphones. Together, we have created Smartphone Free at KS1, 2 and 3 to help us achieve our goal.



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

SPORTS REPORTS

HOCKEY

U8 v Rendcomb & Hopelands

Last Friday, a selection of girls from Year 3 visited Rendcomb school for a triangular tournament against our hosts, as well as fellow visitors from Hopelands. The first match, against Rendcomb U8s, was a closely fought affair; while Berkly enjoyed the lion's share of possession on a large pitch, hearing the thwack of ball against goal backboard was harder to achieve. As the match progressed, our girls pushed and pushed, and started to spread out and utilise the space; eventually scoring the only goal of the game to record a 1-0 victory. The second match was against Hopelands, and being full warmed up and in the zone, the girls started confidently and quickly got into their stride. Almost constant pressure within the Hopelands' half led to lots of success in the D, with Berkly ending the match 5-0 victors. It has been absolutely fantastic to see the teamwork, positivity and developing tactical nous from the Under 8s this season; we have a brilliant group of girls who all try their best and are showing some fabulous developing stick skills, as well as an understanding of using space. I am very proud of them, and they should be of themselves too. Great stuff Year 3! KJ

U9B v Dean Close

The U9 hockey team had a great match against Dean Close (despite the cold weather!) There was some excellent defensive pressure from Rosie D, Meriem T and Eleanor W and some wonderful attacking play across the pitch which resulted in a great goal from Lizzie C. The girls also showed great team spirit and created their own positive chant before heading back onto the pitch - well done on a great hockey season! SO



U10 v The Richard Pate School

The U10 girls put on a brilliant performance today, securing a well-deserved victory! From the first whistle, the team showed fantastic energy, making strong tackles and linking up beautifully in midfield. Their passing was steady and consistent, and they worked the ball confidently into the attacking circle.

A well-taken goal boosted the team's spirits, and they continued to dominate possession. The defence stayed organised, clearing danger quickly and supporting the play moving forward. Betty as keeper made a couple of solid stops to keep the momentum in our favour.

