



Dashwood Banbury Academy
an Aspirations Academy

Dashwood News

Friday 19th December 2025



Aspirations Academies Trust
In association with Quaglia Institute

A note from the Principal...

As we come to the end of another busy and rewarding term, I want to take a moment to thank you all for your continued support and commitment throughout the year. Our school has enjoyed many wonderful events this term - from Nativity plays to festive singing. Our pupils have shown care in the community and brought Christmas cheer to two care homes as well as all of our pupils collaborating with creativity to create their classroom Christmas doors. There has been an abundance of creativity: one of our Power Skills!

To our parents, carers and families: thank you for your supportive partnership. It has been wonderful to see so many of you attending one of our Christmas events and we hope that it gave you a little Christmas joy! We wish you a very peaceful break and look forward to welcoming you back in the New Year on Tuesday 6th January 2026.

Mrs Gordon-Weeks



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We have set the Term dates for 2026-2027

Term 1 2026: Thursday 3rd September - Friday 23rd October

INSET DAYS: Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd September - School closed for pupils

INSET DAY: Friday 16th October

Term 2 2026: Monday 2nd November - Friday 18th December

INSET DAYS: Friday 27th and Monday 30th November - School closed for pupils

Last day - Friday 18th December - school closes at 1.30 pm

Term 3 2027: Tuesday 5th January 2027 - Friday 12th February

INSET DAY: Monday 4th January - School closed for pupils

Term 4 2027: Monday 22nd February - Thursday 25th March

Term 5 2027: Monday 12th April to Thursday 27th May

Bank Holiday: Monday 3rd May - School Closed

INSET DAY: Friday 28th May - school closed for pupils

Term 6 2027: Monday 7th June - Wednesday 21st July

Last day of term - Wednesday 21st July - school closes at 1.30 pm

Please add
them to your
diaries



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Tick Tock getting in a festive mood!

Tick Tock Mr Clock welcomed pupils to school on the last two days and was really in a jolly mood!

The pupils loved his Christmas outfit and were full of high-fives and smiles!

Tick Tock wishes all of our families a happy and restful break and looks forward to welcoming you back in the New Year on the 6th January 2026!



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Cherry Nursery

This term Cherry Class have been learning all about the weather. They have explored a range of activities to help discover different types of weather and learn more about the four seasons. They have been observing changes outside, as well as taking part in hands on experiments and creative tasks. The children have shown great curiosity and enthusiasm throughout their topic and their learning has helped them to begin to understand how weather can affect people's daily lives and noticing some seasonal changes throughout the year.



Plum Nursery

Plum class have been enjoying the build up to Christmas. They have been busy practising their Christmas songs and getting creative making their own Christmas decorations. They have decorated their class Christmas tree and this has been added into their home corner. They have set up a toy shop arotto and this has been popular with the pupils role-playing buying and selling different toys to each other.



Christmas Singing in Plum



Our Plum pupils got everyone into the festive spirit with their wonderful singing this week.

Families were invited in to listen to the children singing their favourite Christmas songs. They sang beautifully, bringing Christmas joy to the school and looking the part in their festive jumpers.



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Reception

This term in Reception, the theme has been 'Heroes'. The children have been learning about real-life heroes in our community — such as police officers, health workers and firefighters — alongside everyday heroes like postal workers and shopkeepers. They have enjoyed plenty of role-play and stories linked to this.

The pupils also used their imaginations to become superheroes themselves, creating masks, inventing special powers and acting out exciting scenarios. They even designed brilliant traps to capture Evil Pea from the *Supertato* story!



Reception visit a church

At the beginning of the month, Reception pupils visited Marlborough church. The children made Christinales, coloured stained-glass window designs, and explored items around the church linked to the Christmas story.

The minister also explained the meaning of each part of the Christinale using an entertaining puppet and talked about how Christmas celebrations began — perfectly linking to the Nativity songs the children have been practising



Reception Nativity

Peach and Pear classes performed their Nativity for parents earlier this week, retelling the story of the first Christmas. For many children, it was their first time taking part in such a big performance, and they truly shone. With song lyrics, spoken lines and stage directions to remember, they rose to the challenge brilliantly and impressed everyone with their confidence and enthusiasm. We are extremely proud of our EYFS pupils.



Donations wanted

Early Years are looking for donations of empty containers to create musical instruments to use in our music sessions. We are hoping to have enough to have one per child and staff member.

Ideal containers could be chocolate tubs, baby formula tins, coffee canisters, vitamin containers and tubes which can be sealed.

Please see the example pictures below:



Any supplies are greatly appreciated! Thank you in advance.



A visit from the Christmas Elves



Two mischievous elves made a wonderful visit to Cherry, Plum, Peach and Pear classes yesterday! The children were delighted to meet them, and each pupil received a special present to take home.

A big thank you to our PTFA for providing these gifts and adding an extra sprinkle of festive joy to the Early Years!



Year 1

What an exciting couple of weeks Year 1 have had! We have truly embraced our creative sides by producing wonderful pieces of art inspired by Kandinsky and Goldsworthy! The children should be so proud of these achievements.

We have also loved our story Stick Man over the last few weeks. The children got to fully immerse themselves in the story during our Theatre visit and have loved reading the story.

What a wonderful end to the term, with some incredible achievements!



Year 2

What a brilliant end to the term, year 2 have had. They have continued their India topic by looking at Rangoli art and comparing this to Kandinsky's abstract art. We created our own rangoli patterns and then drew them with chalk. We have loved seeing their creativity.

We then held an exciting science investigation where we tested different materials and which one was the most water resistant, ready for Santa to use for his present sack.



Year 1 and 2 Carol Concert

Year 1 and 2 absolutely blew us away on Tuesday with their wonderful singing. They showed true character and collaboration where they showcased all the songs and actions they have learnt for the concert. A big well done also to our readers who also showed brilliant bravery by speaking solo to share prayers and tell the Christmas Story.



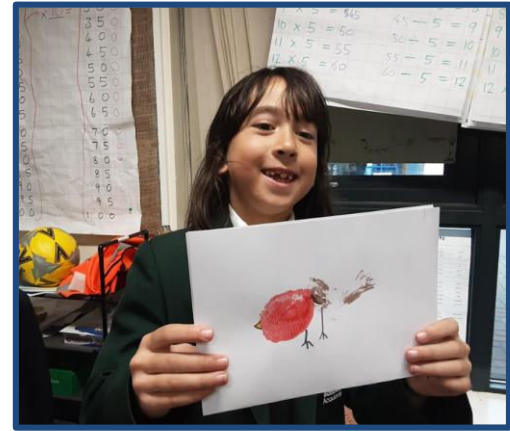
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Year 3

This term, Year 3 have focused on Multiplication and Division, specifically focusing on 3 and 4 times table. We have been really impressed with the progress the children have made on TTRS (please keep it going at home as it really helps). In Literacy, we used the book *Leon and the Place Between* to create a diary entry about a magical place. We added our art skills to create a page from this book and held an art exhibition for students and staff. In art, we looked at and compared three techniques; pointillism, pop art and aboriginal art and created our wonderful and impressive art pieces.



Year 4

What an amazing end to the term we have had! To start of our art unit, we explored the art of Barbara Hepworth and Alberto Giacometti and compared their styles whilst giving our opinions on their artwork. Using soap, we created a Barbara Hepworth inspired piece of art, using a range of carving tools and techniques to create the finished product. Our final project required us to collaborate in groups and create a scenario based on our emotions. We then created freeze frames of these scenarios and sketched the results in our art book. We then used these sketches to create figures using clay. We developed our carving skills further and included a range of molding techniques. Year 4 are very talented artists!



Singing around the Christmas Tree: Year 3 and 4

What an amazing time we had singing around the Christmas tree! The children sang beautifully and our four children read their Christmas poems confidently and clearly. Well done Year 3 and 4!

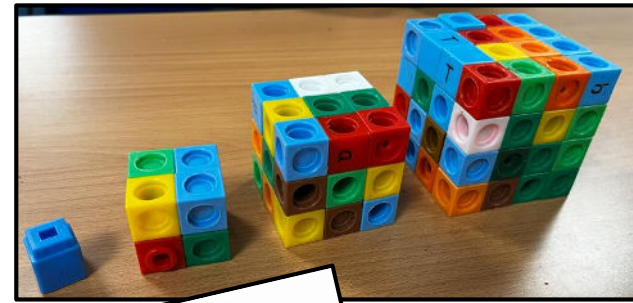


Year 5

Year 5 have really worked hard during Art term. The children have all shown real resilience and determination during our sewing unit and our beautiful flock of winter robins have left our nest. We have been so impressed with the careful stitching and choice of designs. Please send us a picture on Seesaw of the robins on display in your homes or on your Christmas trees.

In maths, the children have consolidated their understanding of squared and cubed numbers using practical resources.

We have been delighted with the outcomes in our metaphor poetry unit. Each child conveyed the buildup of a rainstorm over three stanzas using carefully chosen vocabulary and figurative language.



The storm

Cotton + like clouds piled up.
In the creamy cherry sky.
Roaming around the blue sky.
On top of the tall giant buildings
The clouds are candy glass.

Frustratedly the clouds started to rage,
In the dark black sky.
Pounding pebbles powerfully dashed on the floor
on the city road.
It's raining tocs.

Vicious clouds roared
in the pitch black sky
Hammering down rain drop pelted down
onto the busy city streets packed with people
the Ra'n news Anburica

Deen



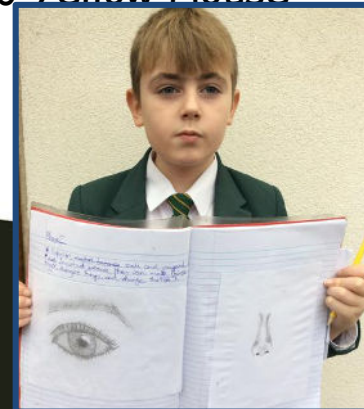
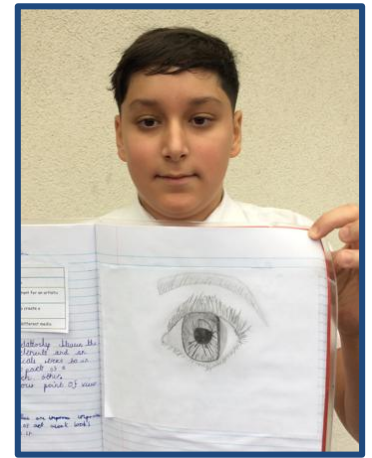
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Year 6

Year 6 have enjoyed our art focus over the last few weeks and have been working hard to develop their sketching and shading techniques. They learned how to use different grades of pencil, scale, proportion and shading to add detail to their drawings. They also looked at how to draw the features of a face in detail and used this to create a portrait of either Mary I or Elizabeth I.

During science sessions they have been investigating light and shadows by changing variables such as distance and measuring the effect this has on a shadow. In maths, they have continued to work hard on their fractions unit including looking at adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing fractions. Finally, in PE they competed in an inter-house competition to test their handball skills which they have developed this term - well done to Yellow House for their closely contested victory!



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St Leonard's Church Christmas Carol Concert: Year 5 and 6

Year 5 and 6 enjoyed their trip to St Leonard's Church to participate in our annual Christmas Carol Concert. The pupils sang beautifully and we were also treated to multiple confident readings by pupils and an amazing musical performance. Well done to all involved!



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Singing in the community - Care for Care Homes

A selection of pupils from Years 3 - 6 performed at [Anchor - The Ridings](#) annual Christmas light switch on! The mayor was in attendance to support the switch on and pupils received so many positive comments about their singing and their polite manners! Some pupils also visited Chamberlaine Court to share some carols too! Well done to all involved!



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Singing at Chamberlaine Court Residential Home

Another lovely afternoon celebration out in the community. A group of children from Years 3-6 visited Chamberlaine Court to sing some Christmas Songs together. Pupils loved spending the afternoon here and joining in with the Christmas party.



Pantomime comes to Dashwood 'Oh Yes It Did!'



StageEd Theatre visited us for a very special festive pantomime! Years 1 - 6 enjoyed lots of fun and laughter immersing themselves in all the usual excitement of panto! A HUGE thank you to our wonderful PTFA who funded this amazing experience and work so hard all year long to make these magical moments possible!



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Uniform

Please see attached letter sent out this week regarding expectations for uniform:

<https://dashwood.academies.aspirationsacademies.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2025/10/Uniform-letter-full-2025.2026-to-parents.pdf>

At Dashwood we have high expectations for uniform as we know that when pupils *look smart*, they *think smart* and that it helps them feel a sense of belonging to our Dashwood community. So many of our pupils looks smart in their full school uniform each and every day. Thank you to those parents and carers who support us in this important aspect of our daily school life!



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Blazers

If you have any old blazers at home that are no longer needed, we would love to find them a new home in school!

Please bring to the school office - any blazers will be very much appreciated!



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We now have some new ties available to purchase from the school office for £5.50.



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Parents/Carers.....



Can you help us with any of the following?



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We are looking to update our school football team kits ...

Can you, or do you know of anyone/a business, that would sponsor a new kit for our girls and boys football teams?

Also, do you know of any T-shirt printing business?

Any support or information would be greatly appreciated. Please email Miss Gooch at:
office@dashwood-aspirations.org



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Bringing history to life at Dashwood!

Do you have historical items tucked away at home?
We're looking for **artifacts, documents, photographs, and memorabilia** that tell the story of our past.

We're interested in:

- Any objects connected to local people who served or contributed during the wars
- Military uniforms, medals, and badges
- Letters, diaries, and photographs of soldiers or civilians
- Posters, ration books, and wartime household items
- Commemorative coins, stamps, or medals
- Photographs, letters, or personal stories related to royal events
- Souvenirs from royal visits, jubilees, or celebrations
- Objects connected to your family's encounters or experiences with the monarchy
- Toys from your childhood or your family's past



Do you have **photographs, documents, or objects** connected to our town's past? We're looking for items that tell the story of our community!



We're interested in:

- Old photographs of streets, buildings, and events
- Letters, diaries, and personal documents
- Household items, tools, or clothing from earlier times
- Memorabilia from local schools and businesses

We warmly welcome any donations of historical items, for us to keep in school, to help support and enrich the teaching of our history curriculum.

Please bring any donations to the school office - we greatly appreciate your support!

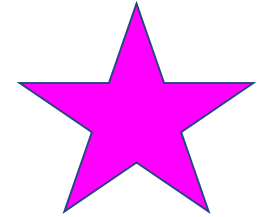
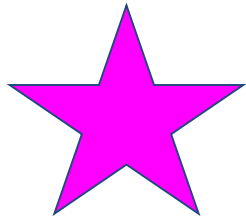
If we're unable to keep the items, we would still love for you to bring them in and share their stories with the children.



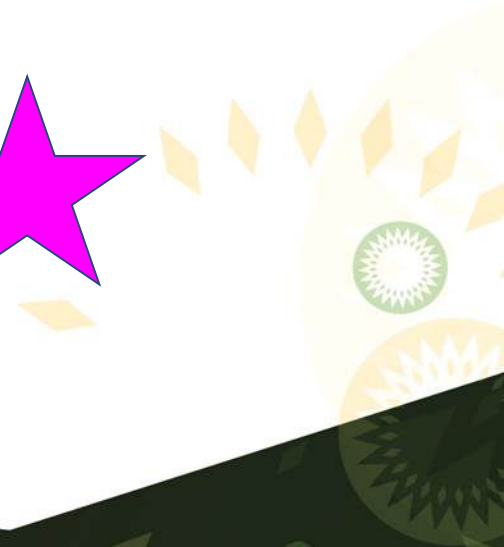
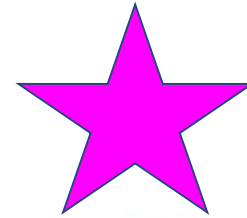
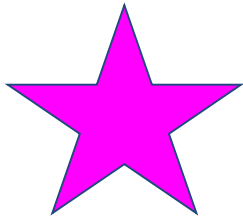
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Whole School Reminders



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Whole School Reminders

Healthy snacks at breaktime

Reminder that all breaktime snacks **must** be fresh fruit or vegetables. These can be whole or cut up pieces of fruit, a pot of grapes, raspberries, strawberries, blueberries etc, raisins, vegetable sticks - carrots, cucumber etc. No fruit substitutes such as fruit stars or wipers are allowed. Please ensure your child has these separate from their lunchbox each morning so they can eat them at break time.

Healthy lunchboxes

At Dashwood, we encourage all pupils to have a healthy lunch. Please ensure that this is a nut-free lunch (including NO chocolate spread) and is a balanced mix of foods with **one** treat only. There are some ideas on the next page.

Drinks

To support dental hygiene, please ensure that your child has **water only** in bottles in class. They can bring fruit juice/squash to have with their lunch. If they bring squash into class they will be asked to save it for their lunch and can access water from class instead.



The NHS recommends that a healthier lunchbox should include:

Starchy carbohydrates that keep your child feeling fuller for longer (wholemeal bread, pasta, potatoes, rice). **Top Tip:** If your child does not like wholemeal bread, try making a sandwich from one slice of white and one slice of wholegrain to get them used to it. Please ensure sandwich filling are also low sugar - no chocolate spread please.

Make healthy swaps to cut down on crisps, chocolate and fruit bars that are high in refined sugar. Find out more about healthier snack swaps at <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-snacks/>

Only **ONE** small treat should be included in lunchboxes if absolutely necessary. No 'grab bag' crisps or extra-large sized chocolate should be included. A portion of fruit or a low-sugar yoghurt are much healthier choices. Calories should be under 100 calories.

Include at least one portion of vegetables or salad: cherry tomatoes, cucumber, celery sticks and sliced peppers all count towards your child's '5 a day'. You could add a small pot of cream cheese for your child to dip their vegetables in.



At Dashwood Banbury Academy, we believe that school meals are a great choice for your child, but if you choose to make a packed lunch for them instead, here are some tips for providing a healthier lunchbox. Please help your child to live a healthy life.



Include fresh fruit that is in season: chopped apple, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, blueberries and melon, all make great snacks too. **Top Tip:** add a squeeze of lemon juice to chopped fruit to stop it from going brown.

Include a source of protein such as beans and pulses; eggs; meat; cheese; and fish.

REMEMBER: We are a NUT-FREE school.

Please **NO** peanut butter, chocolate spread or nuts as snacks as some of our children and staff members have severe allergies.

Find healthy lunchbox choices and ideas from the NHS at Change4Life and <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/the-eatwell-guide/>



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Whole School Reminders

Uniform - earrings and jewellery

We remind all pupils that a single stud earring in each ear only can be worn as per our uniform policy. **No hoop earring are permitted in any year group.** If your child has their ear(s) pierced, please ensure that these are removed on PE/swimming days or that your child can remove the earring(s) themselves or that they are taped over.

As per our uniform policy, no jewellery should be worn to school. If your child wears this to school, they will be asked to remove it.





Up and coming events and dates for your diary



<https://dashwood.academies.aspirationsacademies.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2025/12/Term-3-Dates-2026.pdf>



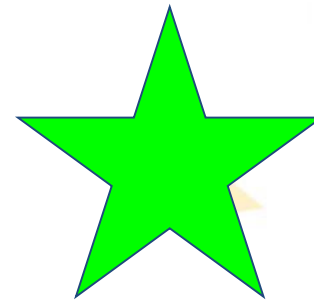
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Parent and Carer Support Section



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Free healthy lifestyle programmes for families.

<https://oxf.maximusuk.co.uk/beeze-families/>



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Community Fundraising

Lunchbox Project and Prabhu, together with Tuao and Lee, and Banbury Car & Bike Meet's Rowan, have joined forces once more to support our community.

Look at the link if you would like to support this community fundraising project.

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/tugo?utm_medium=CF&utm_source=CL



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Safeguarding - What to do if you have a concern about a child

If you have a concern about any child over the holidays you can, make a referral as a member of the public. For more information on how to do this follow:

[Report child abuse | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

[Report abuse to the NSPCC](#)

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, call 999.



Parent Support Workshops from Camhs

<https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/oxon/sir/webinars/>



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PARENT WEBINAR

Parents are the most important part of young people's lives and hold the key to helping them. Let us help you, to help them.

CAMHS
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS SESSIONS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

SUBJECTS INCLUDE

- TEEN ANXIETY
- SELF HARM
- LOW MOOD
- HOW TO TALK TO YOUR DISTRESSED CHILD

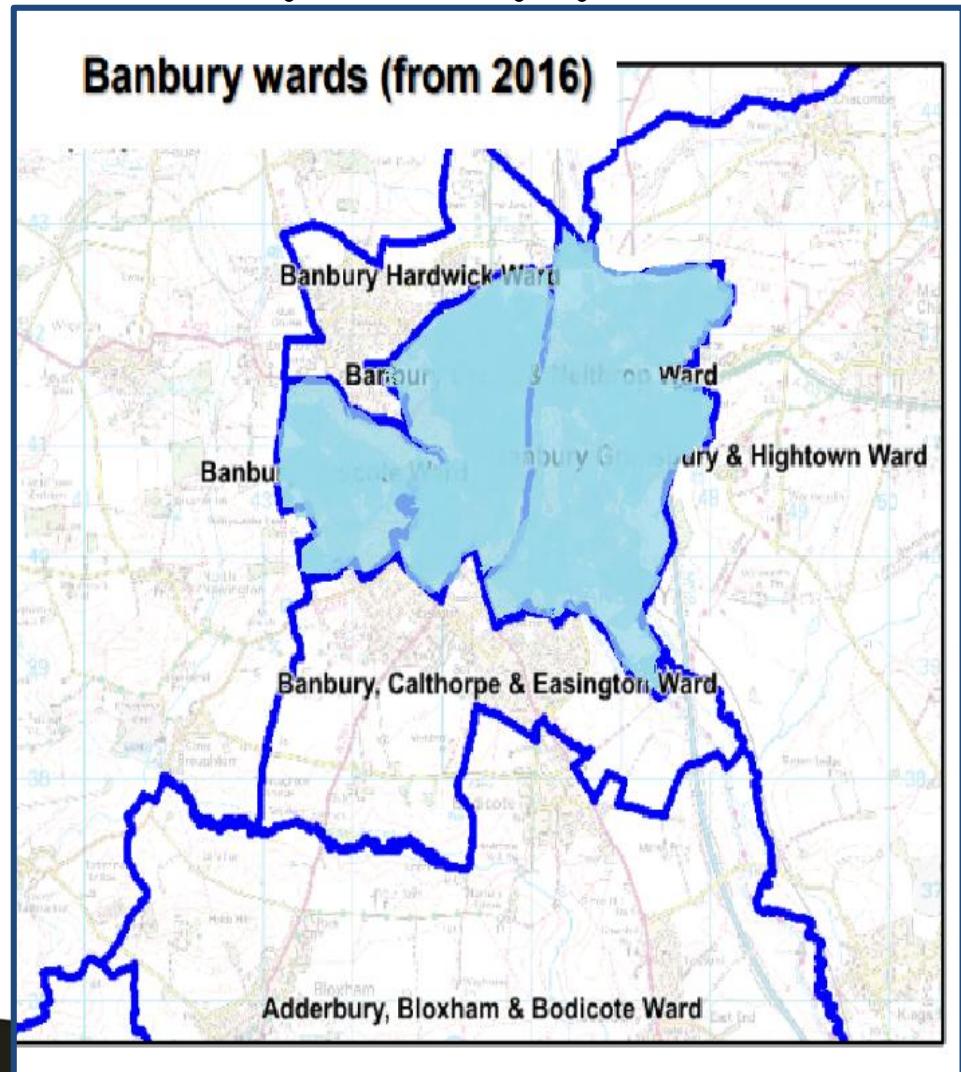
[WWW.OXFORDHEALTH.NHS.UK/CAMHS/OXON/SIR/WEBINARS](https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/oxon/sir/webinars/)



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Standing in the Gap-support for parents

Standing in the Gap are delivering **FREE** Managing Anger and Managing Anxiety workshops to **any families** living in the Ruscote, Neithrop, Grimsbury and Hightown wards of Banbury. See the picture below. The wards we are supporting with **FREE** workshops are in light blue.



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Parent conduct onsite

I would like to take this opportunity to direct your attention to the unacceptable conduct policy.

<https://dashwood.academies.aspirationsacademies.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2023/01/Dashwood-Unacceptable-Behaviour-Protocol-023-01-17-1.pdf>

Dashwood is, and always will be, a safe place, free from intimidation or fear for all its pupils and parents that attend. I will not tolerate any form of aggressive behaviour on site towards staff or between parents. If this does occur, I will not hesitate to withdraw permission for people to be onsite. If issues arise outside of school, the police have advised that you contact them for support.



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Free online parenting support

Online Parenting Courses - Family Lives

Family Lives has produced a series of online parenting courses that are free to access. I have sampled the teens one and found it very accessible.

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-parenting-courses>

Family Lives offers a confidential and free* helpline service for families in England and Wales (previously known as Parentline). They can be contacted on **0808 800 2222** for emotional support, information, advice and guidance on any aspect of parenting and family life. Their website is also a rich source of useful support and advice.



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Does your child have an article for the DBA News pupil-led newspaper?

We love hearing from our pupils about talents, hobbies, interests or clubs they are involved in outside of school!

If they want to share a piece of artwork, poem, story or any other creative arts, we would be delighted to share it in the DBA News!

Maybe they would like to share an article about their pet or an event you have celebrated as a family - perhaps a religious or cultural event? Or tell us what you have been up to in the Easter break!

Please send stories to: office@dashwood-aspirations.org or hand to Miss Gooch or the school office.



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P.E kit reminder

Physical Education

The school P.E. Kit is compulsory. For indoor P.E., all children require a pair of **black pumps**, a pair of sensible **black shorts** and a **white tee-shirt plain** or inscribed with the academy logo. The P.E. Kit is to be kept at school in a bag (drawstring if possible) during the week. For outdoor P.E. a pair of training shoes, **black tracksuit/jogging bottoms** and a black sweatshirt is essential.

Reminder: Children are not allowed to wear coloured jumpers/t shirts or clothing with large logos on.



FREE

BANBURY YOUNG SINGERS

For all children in years
3-6 who love singing!

Thursdays
during term time
3:45 - 4:45 pm
St Mary's Primary
School, Banbury
Entrance and car park
on Bluecoats Close

- Join weekly practice sessions
- Sing a wide range of songs
- Take part in concerts
- Develop singing and musical skills
- Make new friends

Banbury Young Singers

Sign up online by scanning the QR code OR fill in this form and bring it your first session

This form MUST be filled in by a parent or carer



Name	
School	
Year group	

Do you give permission for your child to walk home on their own?

IF CHILD IS IN YEAR 5 OR OLDER

YES

NO

Please list any other adults who can collect your child
Name and relationship to child

Parent / carer name	
Parent / carer email PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY	
Emergency contact phone number(s)	

Medical or SEND information about your child



Podding Pie
COOKERY SCHOOL

A WEEK

COOKERY CLASSES



10-17-24-31
January 2026

11am - 1pm



Grimsbury
Community
Centre



Podding Pie
COOKERY SCHOOL



Cherwell

FREE

Parent & Child classes

- ✓ Cook simple, healthy, one-pot family meals
- ✓ Learn new skills with confidence
- ✓ Weekly recipes, quizzes, and take-home food
- ✓ Special focus on budget-friendly cooking
- ✓ All ingredients included!
- ✓ Healthy dessert sessions included 🍎 🍌

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

To Book: **email: grimsburycommunity5@gmail.com**

Subject line: Podding Pie

Or come in to collect a booking form, open to 10 parent and child (1 adults and 1 child)



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2025 - 2026 Term Dates

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Bank Holiday: Monday 4th May - School Closed

INSET Day: Friday 22nd May - School closed for pupils

Term 6 2026: Monday 1st June - Friday 17th July

INSET Day: Friday 26th June - School closed for pupils

INSET Day: Monday 20th July - School closed for pupils

Last day of term - Friday 17th July - school will close 1.30 pm on this day.

There will be no After School Club



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Update: Early finish

Please note that, in the next academic year 2025 - 2026, to align with the Aspirations Trust Schools in Banbury, we will be finishing at 1.30 pm on Friday 17th July 2026



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INSET DAY: Monday 4th January - School closed for pupils

Term 4 2027: Monday 22nd February - Thursday 25th March

Term 5 2027: Monday 12th April to Thursday 27th May

Bank Holiday: Monday 3rd May - School Closed

INSET DAY: Friday 28th May - school closed for pupils

Term 6 2027: Monday 7th June - Wednesday 21st July

Last day of term - Wednesday 21st July - school closes at 1.30 pm



Dashwood Banbury Academy

an Aspirations Academy



Aspirations Academies Trust
In association with Quaglia Institute