Dashwood Banbury Academy
an Aspirations Academy

Dashwood News
Wednesday 24th June 2026

Aspirations Academies Trust
in association with Quaglia Institute

A note from the Principal…

Wow, what a scorcher of a week it has been! The blazing sunshine has certainly tested our stamina, but we want to say a massive thank you to all of our parents and carers. Your brilliant preparation—sending the children in with hats, water bottles, and plenty of sun cream—has kept everyone safe, cool, and happy in the heat.

Despite the high temperatures, it has been an absolutely spectacular start to Term 6! We've kicked off our eagerly anticipated Sports Days, and it has been wonderful to watch the pupils practicing their skills, cheering each other on, and smashing their own personal bests. Don't worry if your child hasn't had theirs yet—we still have plenty more sporting fun to look forward to later this term!

Creativity has also been shining bright at Dashwood this week. Our Year 6 pupils put on a fantastic display of their artwork. Their incredible pieces will soon be joining our whole-school displays (the ones you might have spotted just before half-term). The corridors are looking vibrant, colourful, and serve as a wonderful celebration of just how many talented artists we have in our school community.

As we hit the homestretch of the academic year, our focus is gently shifting toward transitions and preparing the children for the next exciting phase of their learning journeys. Change can bring up a mix of big emotions, so every year group is currently undertaking a special transition unit in PSHE. These lessons focus on understanding change and developing positive coping strategies. We know some children find these shifts a little daunting, so we are keeping a very close eye on everyone and reinforcing the message that their trusted school adults are always here to listen, support, and chat whenever they need it.

Have a Wonderful Week and Weekend! 🌟

We are so proud of how hard the children have worked through the heat this week! Keep drinking plenty of water, enjoy the beautiful sunshine, and have an absolutely fantastic rest of the week. When Friday finally rolls around, we hope you all have a wonderful, relaxing, and joy-filled weekend. You've definitely earned it!

Mrs Gordon-Weeks

Mrs Gordon-Weeks

We would like to update you on the measures we have in place to ensure that all children remain safe and comfortable whilst at school:



- Regular rotation of classes to make use of our six air-conditioned classrooms.
- Scheduled water breaks throughout the day, with staff encouraging and monitoring children's water intake.
- Fans available in all classrooms.
- Learning activities adapted to minimise physical exertion.
- Children remaining indoors during the lunch break. We will continue to monitor conditions and assess whether it is safe for children to spend short periods in the playground during break times to get some fresher air, ensuring that no strenuous physical activity takes place.

In addition, we have delivered water safety lessons in all classes. As the warm weather is likely to encourage more outdoor play this weekend, we feel it is important to remind children of how to stay safe around water. An information email was sent to parents yesterday, providing guidance and suggestions for discussing water safety at home.

Priority: Increase opportunities to involve parents in school activities

We want our parent community to come into school more, taking part in both educational and find activities with your children. Thank you for you input in this. We have written a parental engagement strategy which we will share with you in September.

Summer Uniform is back!

Summer Dresses are back for Term 5 and 6

Pupils may wear a green gingham dress with which a tie is not needed. White socks are to be worn with the summer dresses. Please note: gingham summer shorts or all in one jumpsuits/playsuits **are not** part of the uniform.



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

What have our pupils been learning this term?

Cherry Nursery

This term our youngest pupils have been looking closely at the beautiful and unique patterns found on different animals, such as tiger stripes and leopard spots. Putting their creativity to work, the children have been busy copying and designing their own patterns to create some colourful bunting for their classroom. A wonderful way to blend understanding the world, art and design, and fine motor skills.





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Plum Nursery

This term, Plum Class has been enjoying their Growing topic, inspired by *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. The children have explored how to make their garden welcoming for minibeasts and planted seeds in their Forest School area. They have also been learning about different insects and their features. The highlight has been welcoming live caterpillars into the classroom, and the children are excited to watch them grow and transform into butterflies before releasing them into their outside area.





Reception

Peach and Pear classes have been learning about a variety of life cycles, including those of frogs, chickens, butterflies and sunflowers. The children have also explored what plants need to grow and survive, as well as the different parts of a plant and their functions. They have enjoyed caring for the plants in their garden and observing the minibeasts they have discovered outdoors.









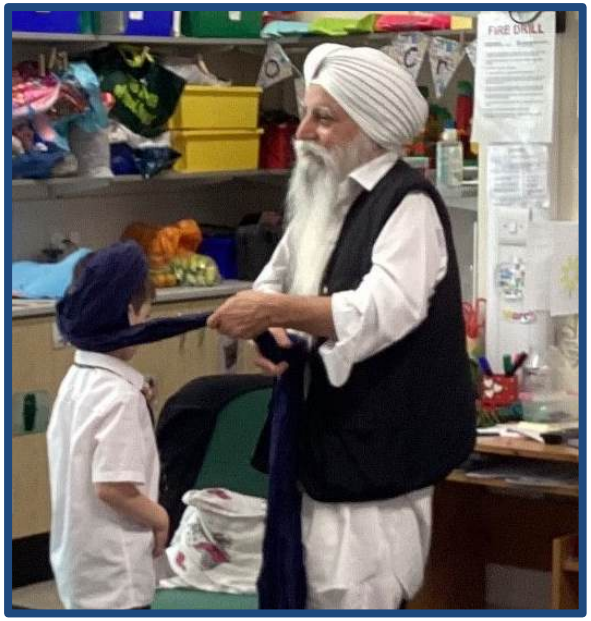


Year 1

Wow! What a brilliant and fun filled start to our last term we have had!

We have had a whole school RE day, where we had the opportunity to meet people of different religions and faith and ask them questions about their beliefs and ways of life.

We have also been absolute superstars during our Little Red Riding Hood Play. We spoke our lines with confidence and sung with so much passion. We are so proud of every single one of them.

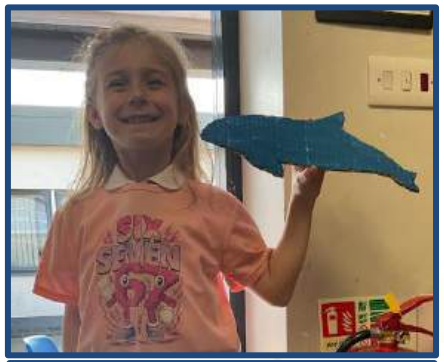




Year 2



Year 2 started the term learning about how we can look after the environment especially animals near the ocean. It was great to see them working collaboratively and creatively to create a brilliant masterpiece of a polar bear, sea turtles and porpoises!



They have also learnt all about plants and grown their own beans! It has been great to see year 2 taking care by watering their plants to make sure they germinate.

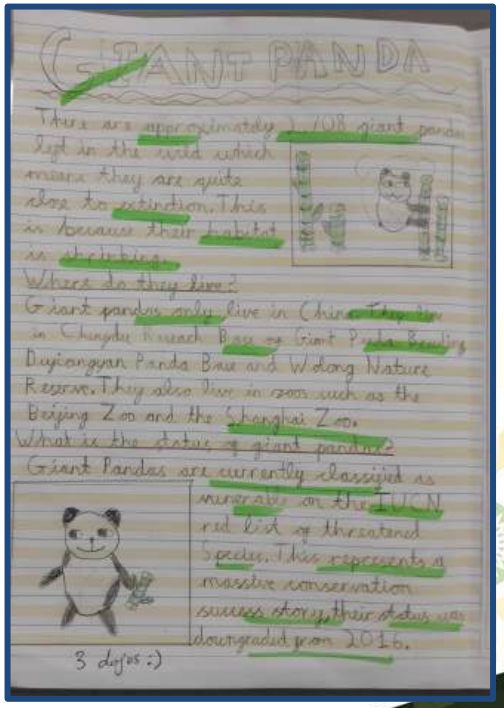


Year 2 have also written some amazing pieces of writing especially describing the colourful city based on our new book 'The extraordinary gardener!'

Year 3



This term, Year 3 has explored a range of exciting topics. We started by celebrating World Environment Day by creating an interactive gallery for the rest of the school, which showcased the processes of the Water Cycle. In Maths, we have been learning real-life skills. We started with money and are now learning to tell the time in 5 and 1-minute intervals. In literacy, we have been researching endangered animals and have an educational report on how to support the conservation of an animal of our choice.

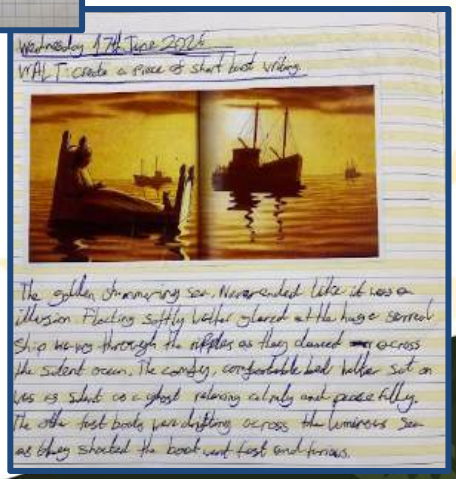


Year 4

What an amazing start to the term we have had! In literacy, we have been reading the story Just a Dream by Chris Van Allsburg. We have looked at the dreams that Walter, the main character experiences, and the impact his decisions are having on the environment. We then wrote a piece of short burst writing based on the illustrations in the book. Mrs O'Neill and Miss Hempstock were astounded by the creativity we showed in this piece of writing. In maths this term, we have been focusing on position and direction, which helped us prepare well for Camp Night. We focused on plotting and reading coordinates before completing the challenging task of translating shapes from one coordinate to a different coordinate.







Year 4 Camp Night

What an incredible experience we have had! Camp Night has been a highlight of Term 6 for both the children and staff. Everyone was engaged with all the activities across both days, and it was amazing to see everyone supporting each other to build confidence when staying away from home for the first time. The children used their creativity and critical thinking skills to keep an egg from cracking when dropped from a height, and their communication and collaboration skills during our carousel of team building activities. We hope that this experience has helped develop key life skills that the children will continue to use throughout their lives.

Year 4 Camp Night















Year 5

Year 5 had a very enjoyable time working towards our spectacular World Environment Day outcome. Our focus was 'What will the towns of the future look like?'. The children worked collaboratively to create examples of renewable energy sources including, wind turbines and solar panel farms. They also highlighted the importance of green spaces in cities as well as planting on the buildings. Transport examples were electric trams and cycle lanes as well as couple of flying cars… you never know!

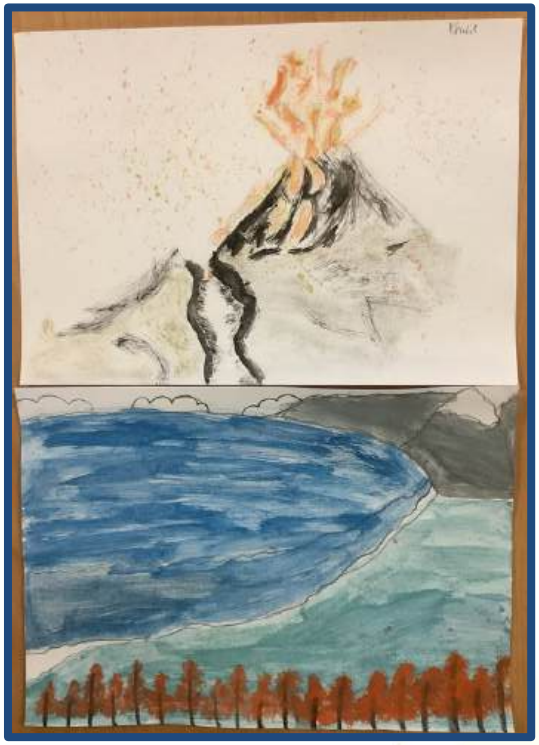






Year 6

Year 6 have had a fantastic start to Term 6. They have been doing lots of writing for different purposes including a report and flashback narrative linked to environment day and a hotel review. We have been very impressed with their ideas and how the finished pieces have come together. Moving forward, we will be continuing to look at the book 'The Arrival' and using this as a creative hook for future pieces. Furthermore, they have been working hard on their end of year play, with plenty of practicing going on. They also had a great time visiting Junior Citizens in Oxford where they learned all about how to keep themselves and others safe in various scenarios. Finally, in science they have been learning about fossils and evolution and have done a great job creating their final projects.





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Laurel Class

Laurel Class have had a great few weeks. We have been looking at the planets, their order and their features. We have established which ones we could land on and which ones we couldn't. We have started making paper mache planets. We have also been spending time looking at data in maths, understanding tally charts and trying to make sense of what they are telling us.

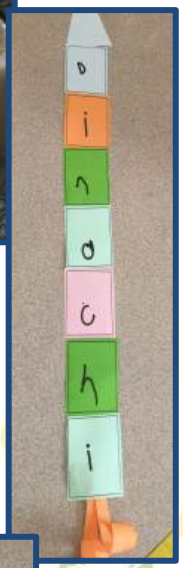


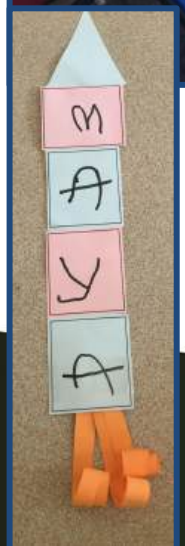
The Treehouse

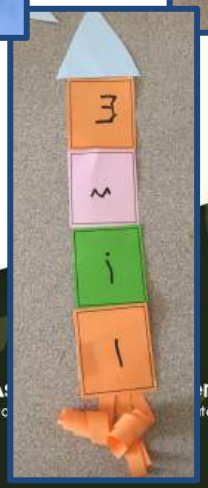
Recently the treehouse have been reading the Very. Hungry Caterpillar which has gone down a storm! Pupils have enjoyed looking at which foods the caterpillar is eating and have been starting to remember and recall the story. More recently, they have take multiple trips to space using a new projector feature. The lights have been turned off and we have gone a virtual tour through space, looking at the planets as they fly by!











World Environment Day - Our shared planet!

As a whole school, we came together collectively to celebrate World Environment Day and spread a powerful message about protecting our planet for the next generation! Every child used their five key power skills - **communication, collaboration, creativity, character, and critical thinking** - to bring this incredible day to life. From building eco-cities to raising climate awareness, our students had a brilliant day and made many marvelous memories. Take a walk through our corridor to see the amazing work of our future changemakers!

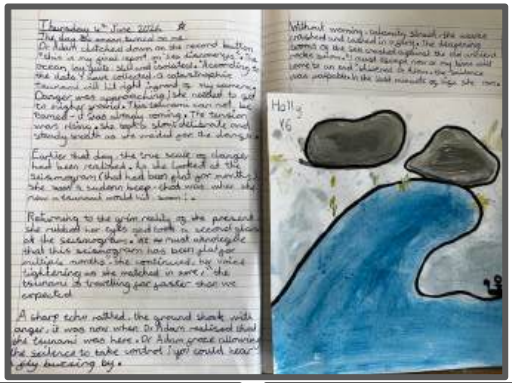








World Environment Day continued..







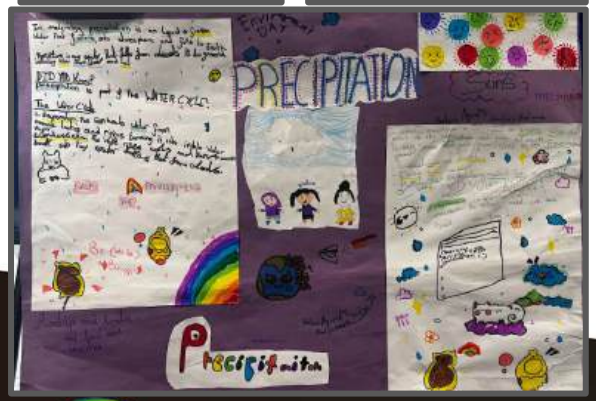












A huge well done to all- an incredible day!

Bring nature back- our rewilding journey!

Step into a space transformed! The Eco Warriors (with the help of some lovely volunteers!) have poured their hard work into turning this once-neglected area into a sanctuary for both wildlife and our school community, helping us achieve our **Green Flag Award**.

By introducing perfect plants for bees and butterflies, we've invited nature right back to our doorstep. The pond is now teeming with life, already playing host to **frogs and newts**.

This outdoor classroom is a place to explore, reflect, and satisfy our curiosity. We look forward to caring for this beautiful space today, tomorrow, and for all the future generations of students yet to come.







After a lot of determination, it ended up looking like….

this..!













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Planting in the Park

Double Award Success for Dashwood!

A massive congratulations to our Year 5 and 6 Eco Warriors who competed in the **Planting in the Park** competition! They had a tremendous day filled with lots of fun, teamwork, and brilliant creativity. Thanks to their incredible hard work, they came back to school with two fantastic awards:

- **Bronze** for Best Planted Bed 🥉
- **Silver Gilt** for Best Centre Piece 🥈

Our Eco Warriors truly worked their socks off and did Dashwood incredibly proud. Well done, superstars! Your green fingers have really shone through! Check out how we did on your next visit to People's Park!









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Up and coming events and dates for your diary

https://dashwood.academies.aspirationsacademies.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2026/06/Term-6-dates-2026-Updated-June-2026.pdf

Dashwoods Got Talent Auditions

We are delighted to announce that auditions for this year's Dashwood's Got Talent is :

Tomorrow!

Slips will be given out on the first day back and then need to be handed in by Friday 5th June to the office where there will be a box.

Parent and Carer Support Section

NSPCC - Speak Out. Stay Safe. Activities for home

This is great resource for parents to do activities with their children at home with lots of advice and support:

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/safety/activities-safety-kids/?utm_old=SOSSactivities

Community Music Opportunities for those who play an instrument.

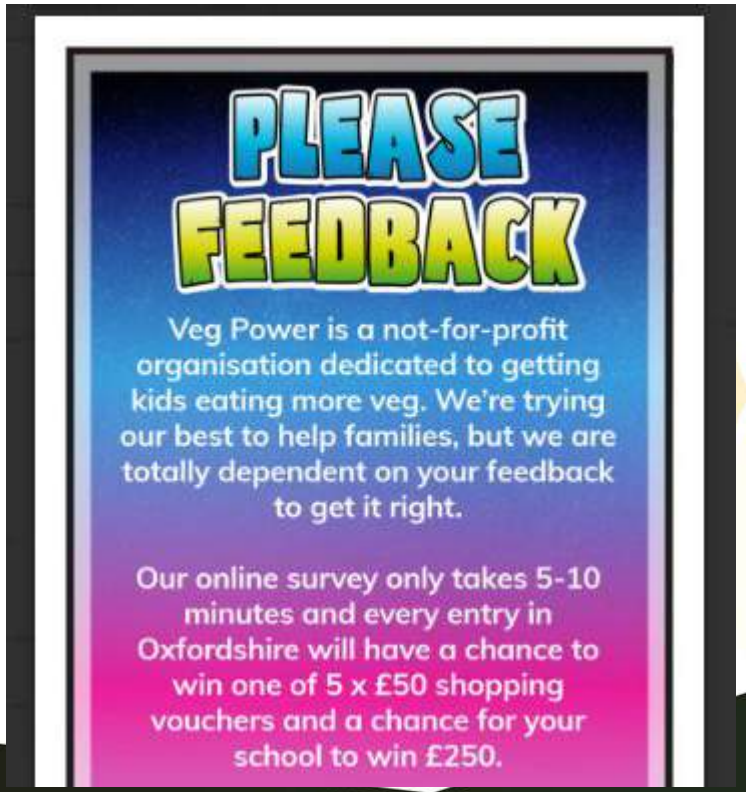


Support videos from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.





Please complete the survey below:
https://eatthemtodefeatthem.com/oxfordshire-survey/



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.

2025 - 2026 Term Dates

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

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