Dashwood Banbury Academy
an Aspirations Academy

Dashwood News
Friday 23rd October 2026

Together, we create a safe, inclusive, and inspiring community where every child feels valued, every voice is heard. Empowered through strong connections pupils achieve their full potential. Through respect, compassion, and high expectations, we enable all learners to belong, succeed, and thrive.

Aspirations Academies Trust
in association with Quaglia Institute

A note from the Principal…
Where has this first term gone?

The pupils who started with us in our nurseries and reception have completed their first term at school and everyone has transitioned into their new year groups extremely well. Our new year 6s have really stepped up to the mark and all of our student leaders have settled into their new roles with ease. This week they have had some official leadership training with Andy David, who leads Student Leadership across all of our Aspirations Academies. This is our Power Skills in action and certain build characters and resilience. We have a range of leadership roles in school: Head Pupils, Aspiration Councilors, Anti Bullying Ambassadors, Junior Leaders, House Captains, Eco Warriors Librarians and our new digital leaders and Safeguarding Crew. Next term we'll share an update of their work in school and the impact they are having.

We have also had a quality assurance visit from the Trust this term. They were very impressed by the pupils' behavior and the quality of work in their books- they are really taking care with their handwriting and presentation which we have really been working on this term. It was also noted how incredibly smart our pupils were in their uniform- they certainly where them with pride.

It has been great to see so many parents at our workshops for phonics and spellings – I think seeing the children actually doing the lessons was a big hit so we will continue with this model. We also have really enjoyed running our new Parent Pods this term. Look out for the story sack session for our EYFS and KS1 families – we will be hosting this after school in Term 2 (Information on the next slide).

It just leaves me to say have a lovely half term break and we will see you back on Monday 2nd November. Just a reminder, we swap to our winter uniform so please pack the summer dresses away until term 5.

Mrs Gordon-Weeks

What have our pupils been learning this term?

Cherry Nursery



Our two-year-olds have continued their exciting Transport topic, getting creative by making paper plate cars and fantastic rockets! They have loved singing and dancing along to *The Transport Song*, joining in with the actions and moving to the music.



The children have also been busy exploring autumn-themed resources, scooping, filling, emptying and transferring natural materials using spoons and containers. As they play, they are discovering different textures, shapes and sizes. They have shown a real interest in the weighing scales, beginning to explore how to weigh and compare the resources.

Plum Nursery

Plum Class have had a lovely few weeks of learning. They have been exploring the signs of autumn, noticing how the leaves are changing colour and creating some beautiful autumn-inspired artwork. In maths, they have been strengthening their number skills, practising counting in different ways and ordering numbers to 5. The class have also enjoyed bringing their Traditional Tales topic to a close with lots of fun, story-inspired activities. One favourite was writing a letter to help the Big Bad Wolf say sorry for his actions! We have loved seeing the children's creativity, growing confidence and enthusiasm for learning shine through.







Reception

Peach and Pear classes have enjoyed exploring a range of traditional tales and singing their favourite nursery rhymes. As part of their learning, they took on the challenge of designing and building a new house for the Three Little Pigs, carefully selecting suitable materials and thinking about the features needed to make their structures sturdy enough to protect the pigs from the elements. The pupils have also been working hard in phonics lessons, developing letter formation and early reading skills.



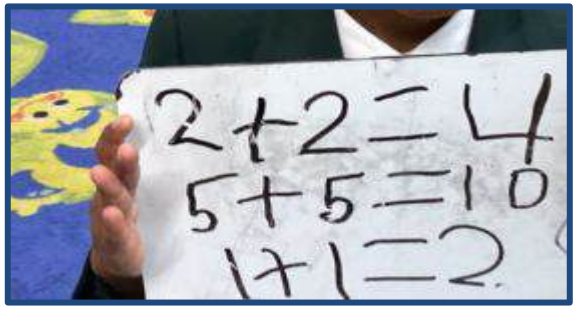


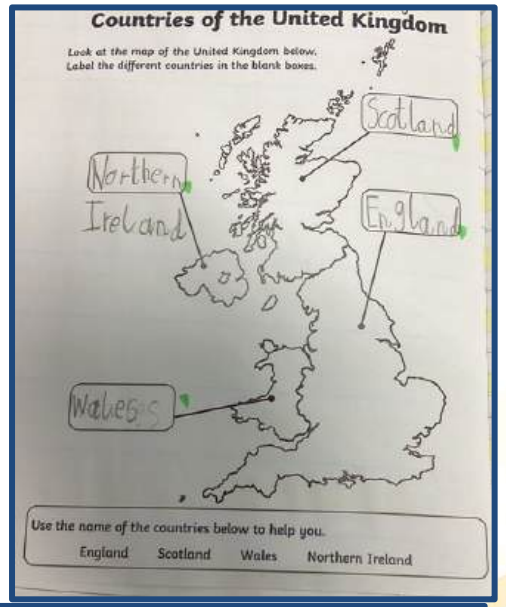


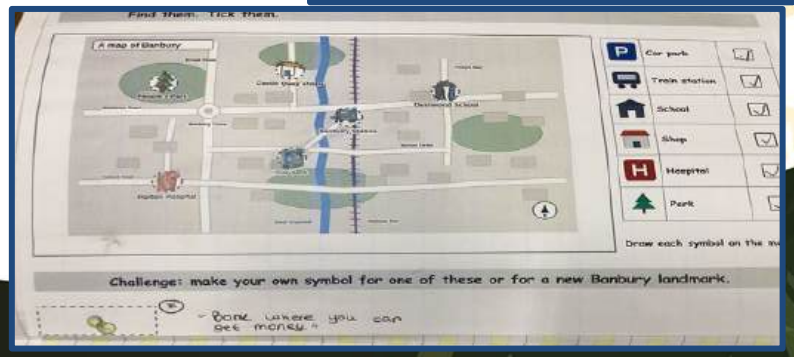
Year 1

It has been a busy and exciting time in Year 1! Holly and Hazel class have been fantastic geographers, diving into local features to compare our town of Banbury with the bustling city of Oxford. They have also put their map skills to work, exploring the four countries of the United Kingdom and learning all about their capital cities. Meanwhile, in maths, the children have been master mathematicians, using hands-on resources and visual models to solve addition problems

up to 10.





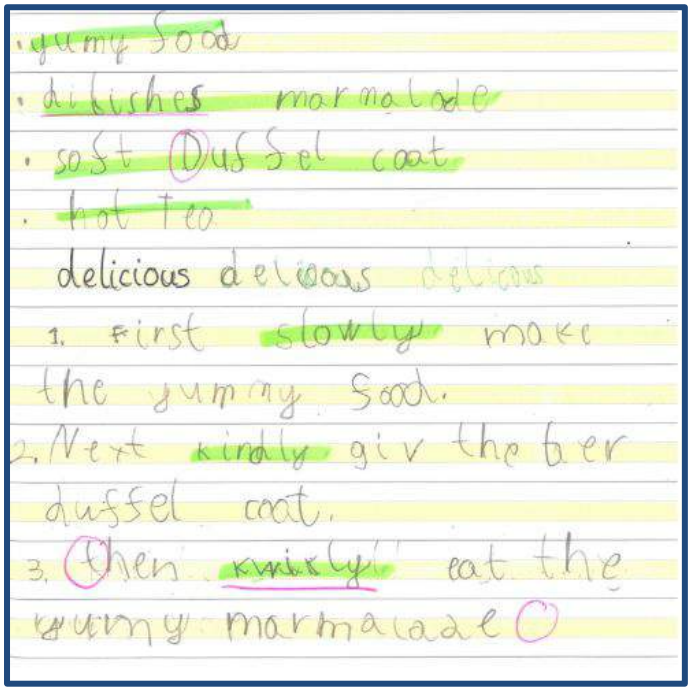


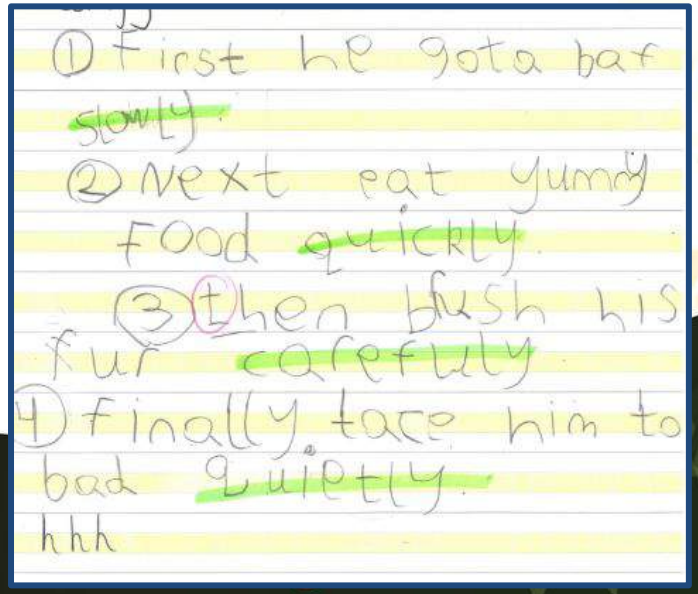
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Year 2

It has been another busy and exciting time in Year 2! The children have been super authors, putting their creativity and critical thinking to work as they wrote step-by-step instructions on how to care for Paddington Bear. They used brilliant communication to make sure their guides explained exactly how to keep our favourite marmalade-loving bear safe, happy, and well-fed! The classroom then transformed into a royal palace as our young historians showed fantastic collaboration, working together to act out the King's coronation and learn all about the Royal Family. Throughout this term, Year 2 have demonstrated wonderful character, showing great respect, hard work and enthusiasm.





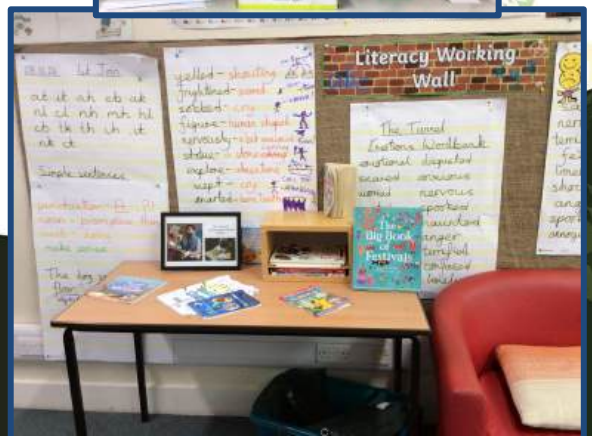
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Year 3

As term 1 draws to a close, the students in Silver Birch and Ash classes have been reflecting on what a wonderful term we had. We loved our 'Dinosaur' topic specially the trip to the museum of Natural history in Oxford. In the last couple of weeks, Year 3 has focused on Addition and subtraction in Maths and have enjoyed carrying on their brilliant learning from Year 2. In Literacy, we have exploring the book 'The tunnel' by Anthony Browne and have used this exciting text to reinforce and expand our literacy skills. We all are looking forward to Term 2, where we will be going on a trip to Horley to learn about sustainability in our community.



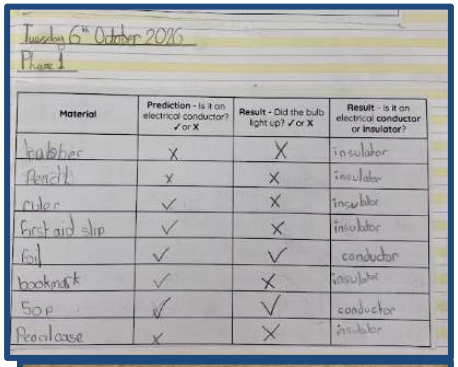




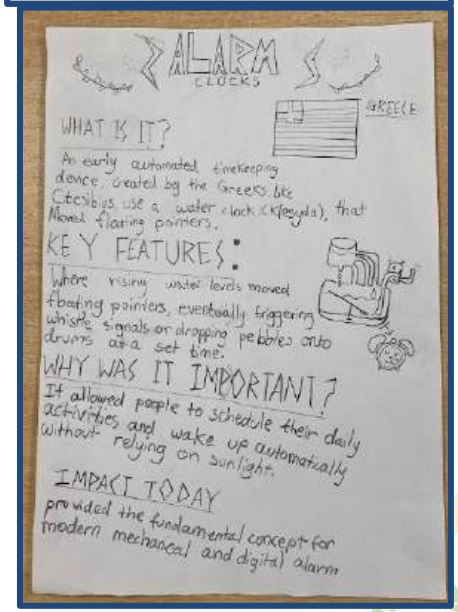
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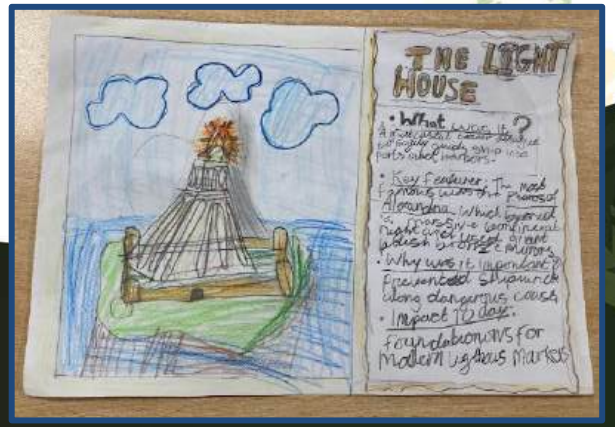
Year 4

What a fantastic end to the term we have had! Following our Europe topic, we went back in time and explored the lives of the Ancient Greeks! As historians, we researched Ancient Greek inventions and showcased our learning by creating wonderful, informative posters. We are excited to continue learning about the Ancient Greeks next term. In science, we concluded our electricity unit, investigating bulb brightness and testing materials to discover conductors and insulators. Miss Hempstock and Mrs O'Neill were so proud of the curiosity and creativity we have shown this term!


Tuesday 6th October 2026
Phase 1

Material	Prediction - Is it an electrical conductor? ✓ or X	Result - Did the bulb light up? ✓ or X	Result - Is it an electrical conductor or insulator?
rubber	X	X	insulator
pencil	X	X	insulator
ruler	✓	X	insulator
first aid slip	✓	X	insulator
foil	✓	✓	conductor
bookmark	✓	X	insulator
soap	✓	✓	conductor
Pencil case	X	X	insulator





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Year 5

Year 5 have had a wonderful term learning all about the Amazon and levers, pulleys and gears in science!

They enjoyed a brilliant day out at Little Rollright Farm! Our pupils visited Little Rollright Farm discovering the journey of their food from farm to fork.

The children got hands-on with farm life—meeting the free-range chickens, visiting the cattle, saying hello to the resident donkeys and pigs, and exploring the orchard to see where local fruit grows. It was fantastic to see their curiosity come alive as they connected what's on their dinner plates to the countryside around them.

A huge thank you to the team at Little Rollright Farm for welcoming us so warmly!

Farm Visit





Our gears!

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Year 6

Blue skies (some rain!), big leaps, and an abundance of resilience!

From the second they arrived at Rock UK, the amazing children in Chestnut Class and Oak Class dived headfirst into every single challenge of their residential trip.

They faced big fears—flying down the zip line, conquering new heights abseiling, and taking massive leaps of faith on the plank! Team spirit hit an all-time high with raft building. A bit of classic British weather didn't dampen a single smile—if anything, it just powered up their enthusiasm (and their absolute love of getting stuck into the mud!).

Watching these moments unfold has been pure magic. Beyond the adrenaline and non-stop laughter, Chestnut and Oak Class built true lifelong skills: communication, teamwork, and trust. They pushed past comfort zones, lifting each other up, and creating memories that will last a lifetime.

To say we are proud of our Year 6 pupils would be a huge understatement. But best of all, you can see just how proud they are of themselves!

Back in school pupils used their collaborative and communicative skills to work on projects and even created their own websites. There was even a spot of baking too!

What amazing adventures, collaboration and a super end to a great term!

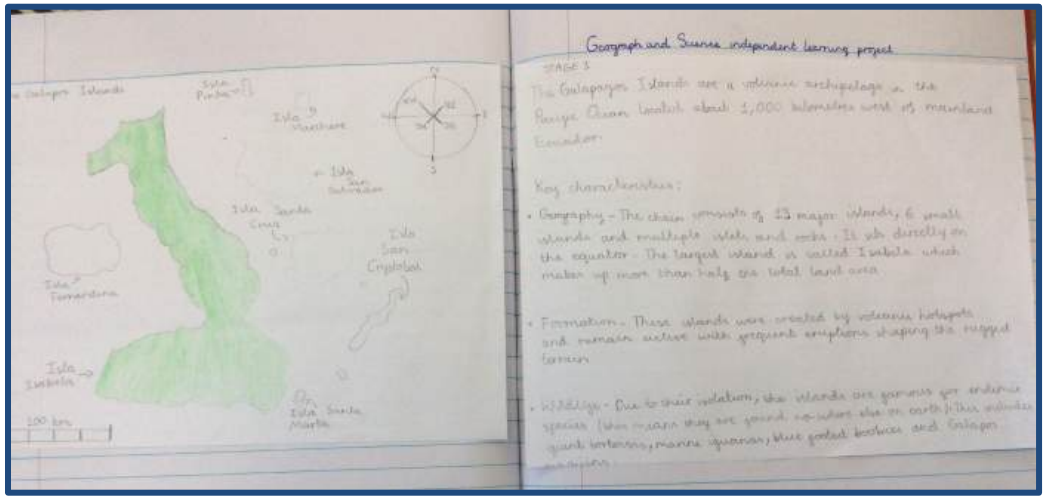


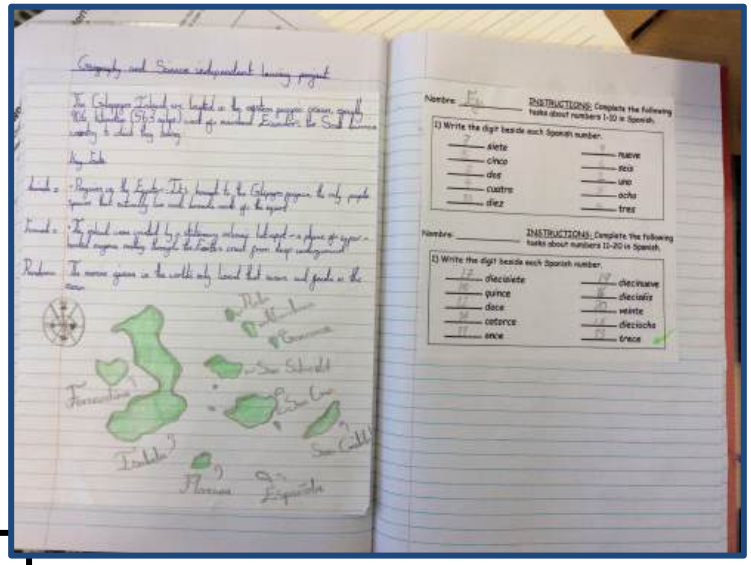


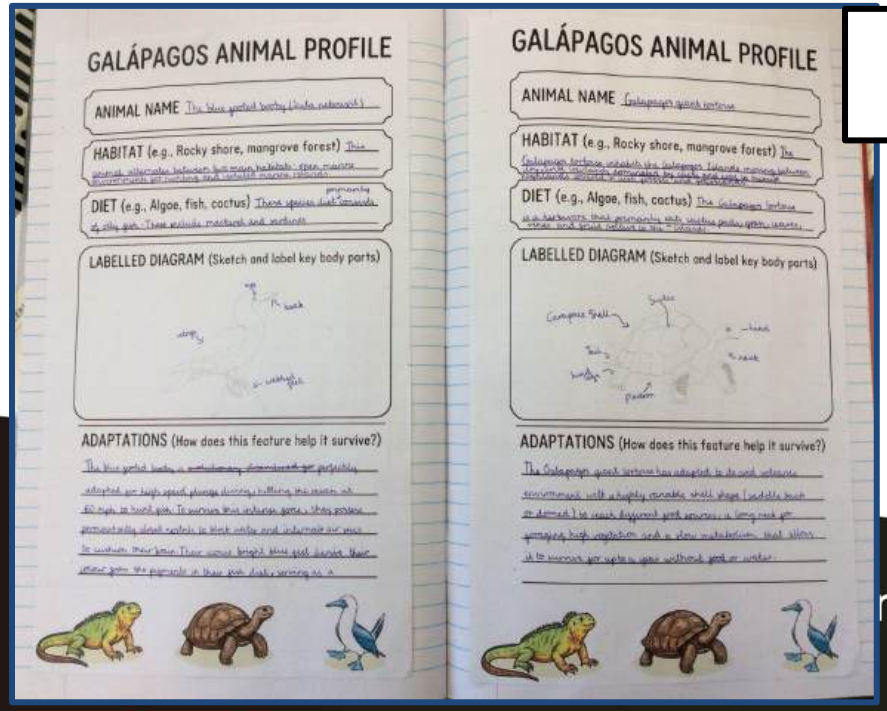


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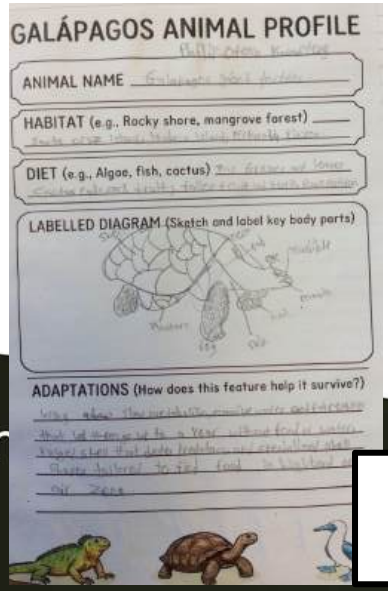
Sharing the amazing year 6 projects created this week!



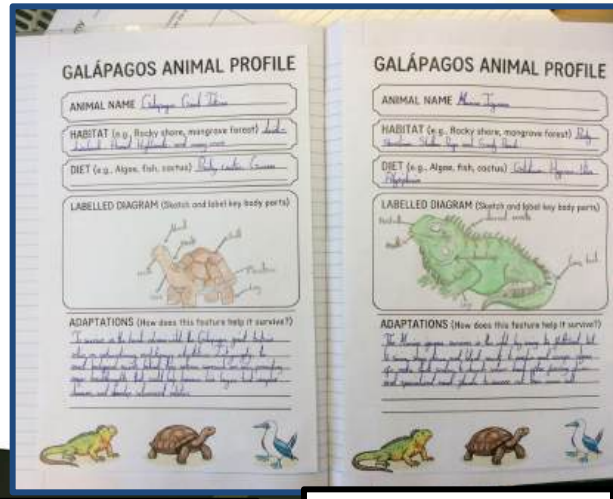




Estelle



Philip



Efe

What are you aspirations for your future?

Following their recent conservation visit to Hidcote, Rafe and Laura (Year 6) returned full of enthusiasm to share the fascinating variety of careers offered by the National Trust to our Year 3 - 6 pupils.

Our pupils were captivated to learn about unique roles they had never even heard of before—including stonemasons, conservationists, and even traditional thatchers!

The assembly was packed with lively discussion as pupils reflected on their own dreams and future aspirations. From marine biologists, environmentalists, and dentists to bakers, shop assistants, medical professionals, and even Formula One drivers, the room was buzzing with ambition!

It was wonderful to see our young learners so inspired by the endless possibilities ahead. We can't wait to see which paths our Dashwood pupils choose to explore in their bright futures!

Carry on the conversation at home…chat to your child/children about what career they are interested in or what jobs people in your family do!



Laurel Class

Laurel Class are coming to the end of a fantastic term. The major highlight has been using our persuasive writing powers to convince Mrs Gordon-Weeks to keep the green spinner. The class were passionate about the fact it should remain at school, and they engaged with this project fantastically!

Take a look at Oskar's persuasive writing!

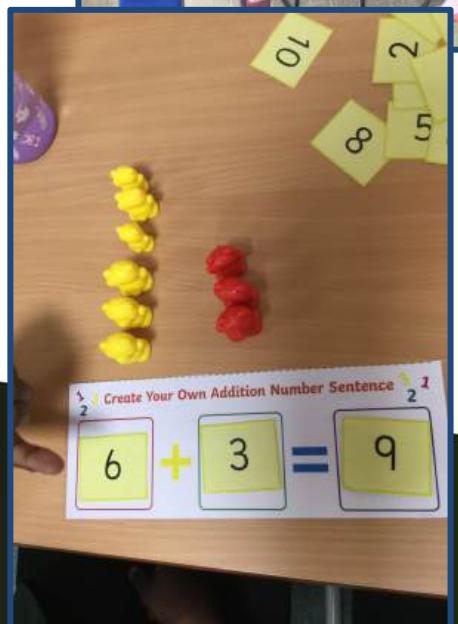
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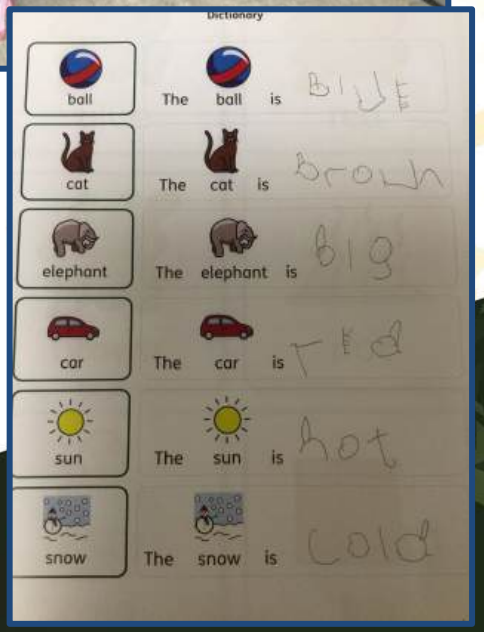
Dear mrs gordon-weeks,
I am writing to you because
I do not agree with your
Decision to ban the spinner.
Firstly one reason you should't ban
The spinner is laurel class are
Always safe using the spinner so it
Is unfair to take it away from us.
Secondly, if you take the spinner
Away you will make lot's of people
Sad to prove this 7/10 people love
The spinner and use it everyday.
My last question to you is do you
Want to make all of us angry and
Upset for the rest of the time
We are at school?
Mrs Gordon Weeks i hope this changes
Your mind and you never take away
The best spinner please please
From Mr galloway and Oskar.

The Treehouse

Treehouse Class pupils have been learning about adjectives and practising their writing. They have been adding groups together and exploring number sentences. Best of all, they have been having fun in our outside area underneath the new canopy - even in the rain!







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Up and coming events and dates for your diary for the new year

ADD LINK

Year 1 - 3 Author Visit

Years 1 - 3 will be joined for a very special assembly on Tuesday 17th November by children's author Georgina McKinlay who will share with the pupils all about what it is like to be an author and her new book Hamish McAfferty and the Giant Cavity!

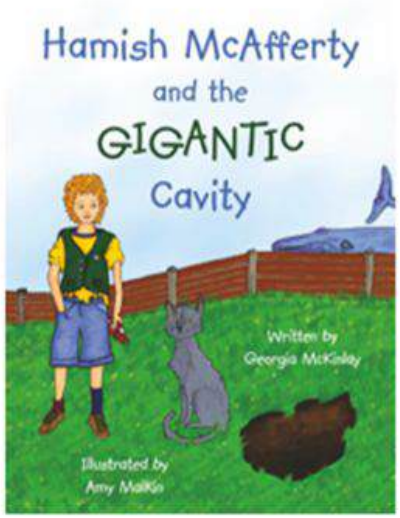


If you would like to pre-order a signed copy of the book that your child can collect on the day (this is open to all pupils in any year group) please follow this link of see information below:
https://forms.gle/6kcsSyY2XaY9Gx2z6
or
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfIR-V9WIDwJuEqjYanN5x_CCIKaCW5iL_3Ehhdmh9RSANoQg/viewform?usp=dialog

Using code: DASH

Hamish McAfferty and the Gigantic Cavity

Book information sheet



When Hamish finds a mysterious hole in the garden, he and his cheeky cat embark on a quest to fill it with the most nonsensical things imaginable.

From piles of plums to a yodelling whale, this whimsical tale celebrates the messy, marvellous magic of a curious mind.

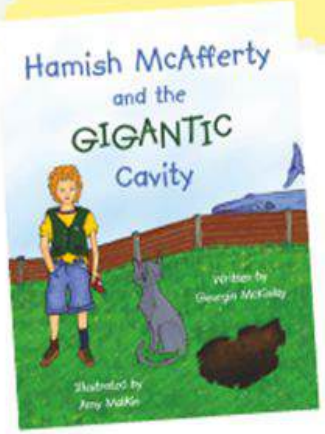
- A humorous story for children ages 3 - 8 following Hamish as he discovers a mysterious hole in his garden.
- Written in rhyming verse, the vocabulary choices are designed to stretch language skills and subtly encourage children to engage with reading on a slightly deeper level.
- Promotes natural curiosity and provides an ideal platform for children and their grown-ups to continue the conversation after reading.

Publication date: 28 Oct 2026
ISBN: 9781806347315
Category: Young children
Format: Paperback

Dimensions: 216mm x 280mm
Orientation: Portrait
RRP: £9.99
Pages: 32

Troubador Publishing

Meet the AUTHOR and ILLUSTRATOR team



Amy and Gina are the creative team behind 'Hamish McAfferty and the Gigantic Cavity' and they've been friends for well over two decades. Find out a bit more about them here.

Amy Malkin, illustrator



Amy Malkin, otherwise known as Calypso Mayhem, is an artist, illustrator and crafter based in Stourbridge. Her whimsical illustration style brings stories to life in a burst of colour and fantasy.

Amy has been an artist since the day she first picked up a pencil and has a particular love for tattoos and the geometric. Her creative talents also extend to cooking, crochet and crafts - and, if you're really lucky, she might even sing to you as she creates!



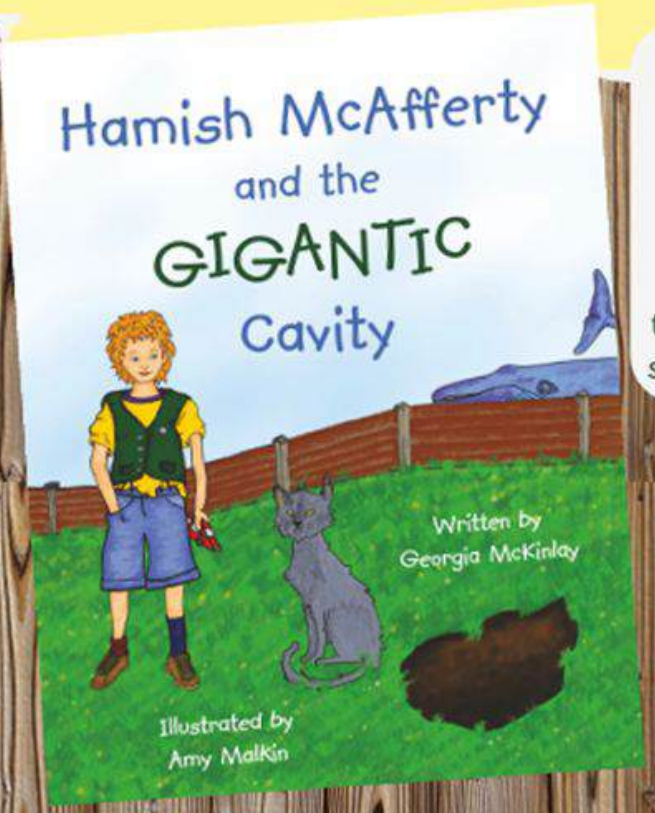
Georgia McKinlay, author

An ex-teacher and true logophile, Georgia McKinlay (whose real name is Gina Parle) has always been interested in helping the next generation discover the joy of words. Georgia has lived in four countries and speaks three languages fluently. Her own love of language grew from listening to the stories her grandma and mum would tell her as a child. She now lives in Oxfordshire with two crazy, wonderful kids and one terrifically tolerant husband. Georgia prefers to be barefoot, laughing and surrounded by books.

Information on how to order an author signed copy!

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PRE-ORDER INFORMATION



PRE-ORDER
your signed copy now
then collect from school on the day

ORDER DEADLINE
Friday 13th November 2026 5pm
Enter code: **DASH**

RRP: £9.95 Direct from Georgia: 1 copy £8.50 / 2+ copies £7.50 each

How to order:

1. Go to https://forms.gle/6kcsSyY2XaY9Gx2z6
2. Complete the simple form, entering the code from this poster (see above).
3. A payment link will be sent to you within 48 hours.
4. Once payment has been made, your order is confirmed!
5. Your signed book(s) will be available for collection from school from the date of Georgia's visit.

Job role posts

We are looking for Early Years Teaching Assistants and details can be found here:
https://www.tes.com/jobs/vacancy/early-years-teaching-assistant-early-years-practitioner-banbury-2353049

We are also looking for another Lunchtime Supervisor and the details can be found here:
https://www.tes.com/jobs/vacancy/lunchtime-supervisor-oxfordshire-2353419

Brand NEW Parent Pods

We are excited to introduce our new **Dashwood Parent Pods**, which will be replacing the Dashwood Action Committee!

We will be hosting informal, drop-in sessions twice a term, each focusing on a different helpful topic. There is no pressure to stay for the whole session—please feel free to just pop in and pick up our information packs.

As always, every session is a space for you to raise any questions, ideas, or feedback. We want to work closely with you to help our school and wider community continue to grow!

Please see next side for the overview of Parent Pods and their focus. If you would like a hard copy, please ask the office.

More information about the Dashwood Parent Pod. We look forward to welcoming you to the sessions.

See the full flyer at: https://www.dashwood-aspirations.org/about-us/dashwood-action-committee/

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1:1 LAMDA Sessions in school time with Anna

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm Anna Fisher, a CPD-trained LAMDA teacher and drama coach at Dashwood Banbury Academy. I help children build confidence, communication skills and self-expression through fun, supportive drama and LAMDA sessions.

🎭 **Thursday After-School Drama Club**
Our Thursday drama club is now **FULL**, but there is a waiting list if you'd like your child to be added. Please get in touch to register your interest.

🎤 **1:1 LAMDA & Drama Coaching**
I offer 1:1 sessions during the school day on Wednesdays and Thursdays, helping children develop confidence, communication and performance skills. There is no obligation to take a LAMDA exam.

I'm have **limited free 30-minute trial sessions** for children who would like to have a go before deciding whether to continue.

For more information, please email me at anna.fisher@fisherfamily.co or visit annafishercoaching.com.

Best Wishes

Anna Fisher
Anna Fisher Coaching / CPD Trained LAMDA Teacher
07704905942 / annafishercoaching.com

Anna is offering a free session for 1:1 LAMDA - contact her for more details!

Cherwell Languages for French Clubs with La Jolie Ronde

See the full flyer at: https://dashwood.academies.aspirationsacademies.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2026/07/French-Newsletter-2026.pdf

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CHERWELL LANGUAGES
Fun French Clubs with La Jolie Ronde

e: cherwell.languages@gmail.com
w: https://www.facebook.com/cherwell.languages/
t: 07963 086582

La Jolie Ronde
Happy Language Learning

Dear Parents,

Our first year of Dashwood French clubs has been... magnifique!

Through fun activities, games and songs the children have made **terrific progress** in their French language skills. You may have seen three of our learners appearing in the **Dashwood's Got Talent** shows this week, confidently performing **"J'aime les chats"** (a song about animals) to pupils, teachers and parents alike…



French clubs will return in September!
WEDNESDAYS, 3.15-.45pm (Years 1-3); 4.00-4.30pm (Years 4-6)



New, high-quality
La Jolie Ronde programmes

Costs only £8 per class

We're now taking bookings for continuing and new pupils… so don't delay!

- New pupils – to enquire and enrol, please contact me (contact details at the top of this letter)
- Continuing pupils – you will be automatically enrolled, details to follow

Parent and Carer Support Section

Uniform

Thank you for ensuring that your children are wearing the correct uniform.

Uniform Letter to Parents:
https://dashwood.academies.aspirationsacademies.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2026/07/Uniform-letter-full-2026.pdf

Uniform Policy:

https://dashwood.academies.aspirationsacademies.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2026/07/Dashwood-Uniform-Policy-2026.2027.pdf

At Dashwood Banbury Academy, we are proud of our smart uniform as it supports our pupils' sense of belonging. We are so pleased that you choose to send your child to Dashwood and when you made this choice, you agreed to follow our Dashwood Uniform Policy. We understand that it can be frustrating when children mislay uniform, ties get lost, or shoes break but these do need replacing promptly. Please do not hesitate to come and see us if you need support with any uniform. We do have a 'new to you' second-hand uniform stock - please see the office for more information.

Uniform

Acceptable shoes within our policy:



Please note: Laced trainers are **not** part of our Dashwood Uniform, they need to be actual school shoes. Trainers can only be worn for PE.

Halloween Drama Session with Anna - October Half Term

Book here: https://forms.gle/YbT6DgVp6GqG8Cc3A



SATURDAY ART CLUB
CREATIVITY FOR ADULTS

PRINTMAKING FOR WELLBEING
DRAWING AND PAINTING
MIXED MEDIA FOR THE MIND
RELAXED AND FRIENDLY
ALL LEVELS WELCOMED

JOIN US!

SATURDAYS
10:00 - 12:00

£ 5 / PERSON

NEXT SESSIONS:

26-SEP
03-OCT
17-OCT
21-NOV
28-NOV
05-DEC
12-DEC

GRIMSBURY COMMUNITY CENTRE
BURCHESTER PLACE, BANBURY, OX16 3WT

hector.world
Cherwell DISTRICT COUNCIL NORTH OXFORDSHIRE
GRIMSBURY COMMUNITY CENTRE

THURSDAY PRINTMAKING
CREATIVITE ARTS FOR ADULTS

ROLLER AND MONOPRINTING
STENCIL PRINTING
EXPERIMENTAL COLLAGE
RELAXED AND FRIENDLY
ALL LEVELS WELCOMED

JOIN US!

THURSDAYS
12:30 - 14:30

SUGGESTED DONATION
£ 3 / PERSON

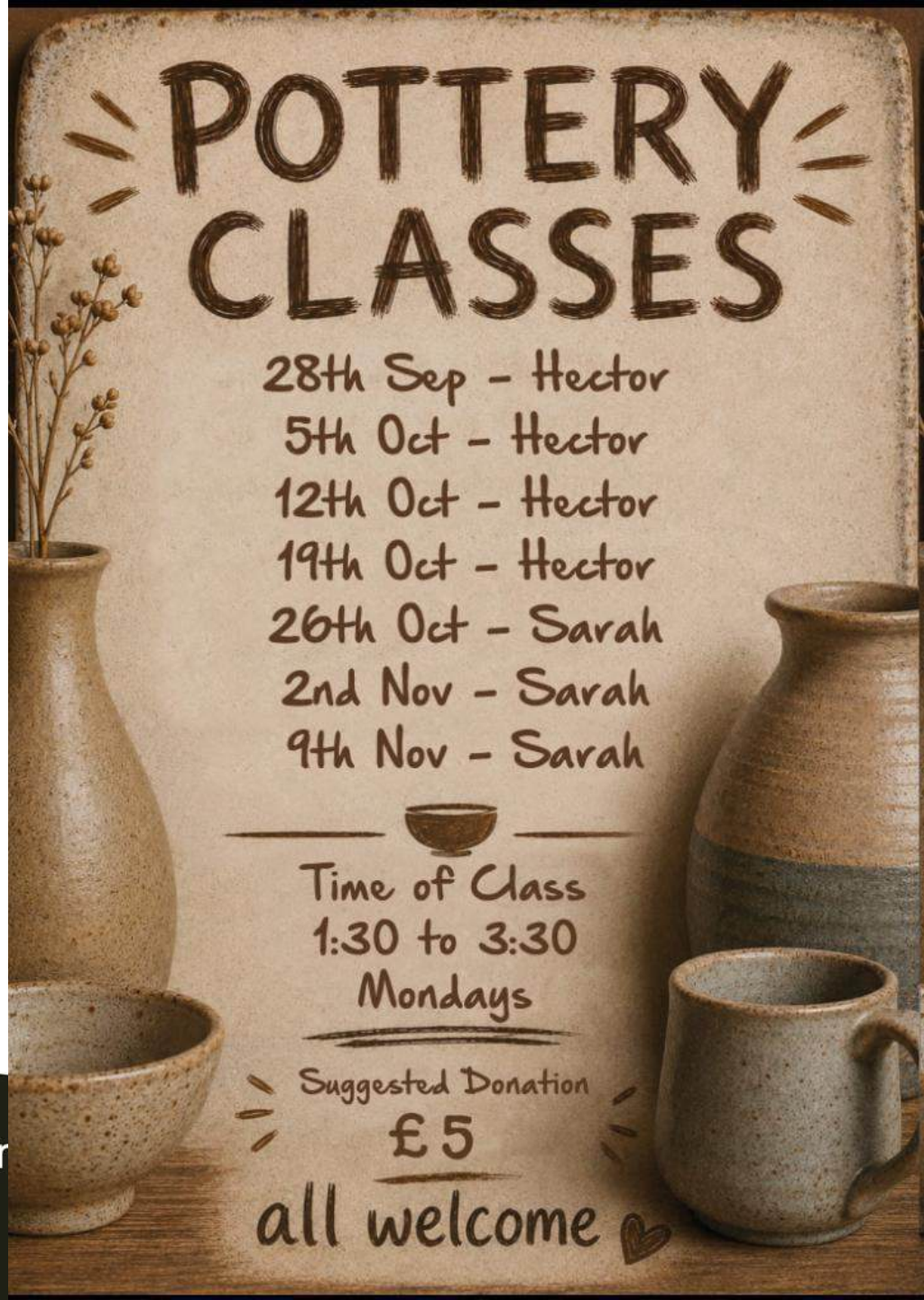
NEXT SESSIONS:

24-SEP
01-OCT
08-OCT
15-OCT
22-OCT
19-NOV
26-NOV
03-DEC
10-DEC

GRIMSBURY COMMUNITY CENTRE
BURCHESTER PLACE, BANBURY, OX16 3WT

hector.world
Cherwell DISTRICT COUNCIL NORTH OXFORDSHIRE
GRIMSBURY COMMUNITY CENTRE

For Adults


POTTERY
CLASSES
28th Sep - Hector
5th Oct - Hector
12th Oct - Hector
19th Oct - Hector
26th Oct - Sarah
2nd Nov - Sarah
9th Nov - Sarah
Time of Class
1:30 to 3:30
Mondays
Suggested Donation
£5
all welcome

For families



Dashwood Banbury Acade
an Aspirations Academy

STANDING in the GAP

Supporting children to manage their emotions

www.standinginthegap.uk

Standing in the Gap is an early intervention mental health charity based in Bloxham, Banbury.
We support preschool and primary aged children and families by providing the tools to build emotional wellbeing and good child mental health.

Managing Anger
in 4–11 year olds

Does your child get really angry, shout and break things?
Do you want to support them but aren't always sure how to?

Come along and join one of our monthly online **Managing Anger workshops**. We look at:

- Understanding the thoughts and feelings behind the Anger
- Practical interventions to build your own toolkit
- Meet our Elves



Every parent who has attended the workshop would recommend it to another parent:

"This was an informative and easy to follow session with useful tips on helping your child manage their anger. I would highly recommend it."
"Hugely informative, exactly the right pitch and speed, and loads of practical useful stuff as well as background and context."

How to book your place on the workshop

Scan the QR Code or visit:
https://standinginthegap.uk/managing-anger
Book ONE ticket per family group
We will send you a link 48 hours before the workshop

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Managing Anxiety
in 4–11 year olds

Does your child get anxious, worried or wobbled about doing things?
Do you want to support them but aren't always sure how to?

Come along and join one of our monthly online **Managing Anxiety workshops**. We look at:

- What causes Anxiety and what it feels like
- Practical techniques that can help
- Meet our Elves



Every parent who has attended the workshop felt more confident at managing their child's anxiety:

"It was really informative and reassuring, I feel supported not isolated."
"This was great, not too long and fun for the kids".
" A good overview of causes and feelings and ideas for tools, Sam was brilliant and explained everything".

How to book your place on the workshop

Scan the QR Code or visit:
https://standinginthegap.uk/managing-anxiety-workshop
Book ONE ticket per family group
We will send you a link 48 hours before the workshop

Early Help in school

Do you have concerns about your child? Are you worried about money or housing? Or you don't know who best to contact for general support?

You can access early help support through school by contacting our Welfare & Inclusion Manager Katy Bennett. She can help with a range of issues and refer to other agencies as needed.

Appointments can be made by contacting the office.

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:

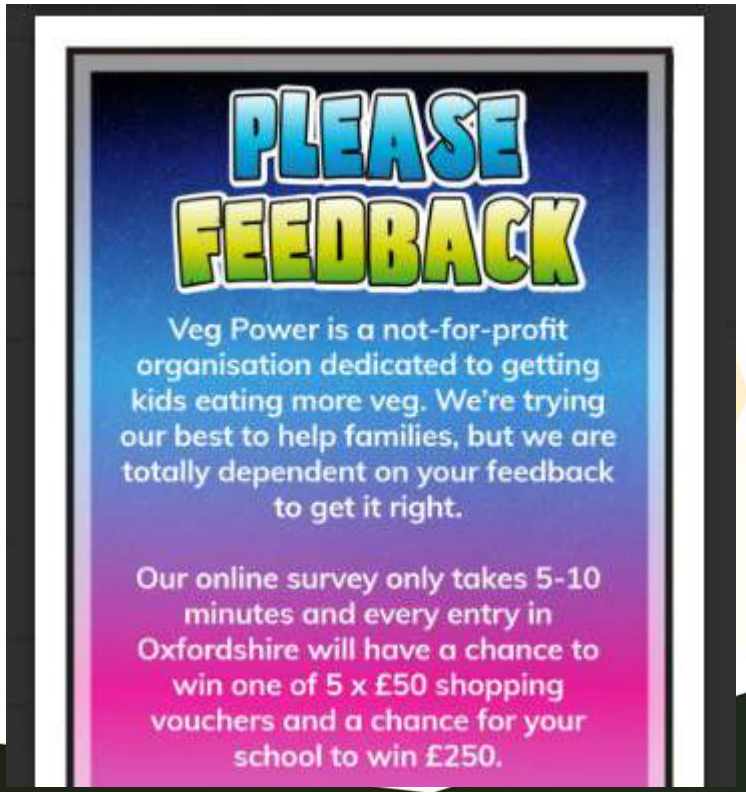
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/safety/activities-safety-kids/?utm_old=SOSSactivities

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.

Surplus food services and apps

Too Good to Go - lets you purchase heavily discounted surplus food from restaurants and supermarkets (Greggs, Costa, Co-op). You reserve a bag on the app and pick up at a designated time.

Olio - connects you with local shops (Sainsbury's, Lidl) and neighbours who give away surplus food for free.





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