



RAF Benson Community Primary School



Newsletter

May 2026

Dear Parents,

What a wonderful term we have had! I am sat here with the school quiet and still and my office transformed from a fridge at the start of this week to a sauna now! Clearly I am not complaining as it appears that summer is here and we have a forecast of sun for the holiday ahead! At the end of the day today, you will have seen the big smiles of the staff releasing the children ready for a nice week of rest, relaxation and a glass of their favourite beverage... They have been truly amazing and we are so lucky to have the staff team we have here.

We have had many memorable moments this term which I need to share with you.

The Year 3 and 4 residential to Hill End was just amazing. Again they were lucky with the weather and the children (and staff) had a fabulous time. All of the children enjoyed the problem-solving activities and the topic specific workshops they had. Hill End is a great environment for running safely through the forest and learning how to light a fire safely. The s'mores in the evening around the campfire were a welcome treat before the children headed off to sleep. A huge thank you to the staff team who went out and gave up their evening with their families and their comfy beds to allow our children to have amazing memories to treasure for years to come.

We are all extremely proud of our Year 6 who breezed through SATs week earlier this term with ease and big smiles. Nothing was a challenge for them and they all showed amazing growth mindsets which is testament to all the staff who have worked hard with them over the years and especially in Year 6 to ensure that these end of Key Stage tests were a positive experience and nothing to be feared – I'm sure it had nothing to do with the toast.... Well done to them all.

The bingo help at the end of SATs week was such fun – apologies to those parents who collected children who were visibly enthusiastic with 'dabbing' their bingo cards and ended up with ink over their hands.... We have noted which pens not to use next time! Everyone had a great time and thank you to the adults who came along to help and support the event – we couldn't have done it without you! A special mention and thank you to Mr Goral for making some of the prizes too.

Now is the time of the school year where we now start looking ahead to September and finalising our plans around what our school will look like – an activity that has been extremely important in recent years given the drop in numbers due to waiting for the NMH. If you know that your child will not be returning in September due to posting or another reason, please let us know as soon as possible by completing the posting notification form that can be found at the link below:

<https://forms.gle/PmvaLcPxYboVzxQR8>

Thank you to those who have been able to support the Fabulous Fundraising Forum meetings. We have discussed a number of items to support fundraising and these are listed below – we look forward to your support.

I also have some staffing updates for you. We were hoping to tell the children this news before the holiday as we always let the children know however, this has not been possible and some of you may already know!

Mrs Whitty – After 19 years will be leaving at the end of the school year to take on other new and exciting adventures - we did try to persuade her to stay on one more year to make it a round number! I would like to thank Mrs Whitty for all that she has done over the years to support the

children and the school. She has given our children the most amazing experiences with learning French and other areas of the curriculum – Year 2 music on a Tuesday is a delight to hear her encouraging the children to sing at their best – genuinely! She has also willingly and fabulously stepped in to teach classes on a long term basis when we have experienced staffing challenges.

Mrs Pring – We will be saying a sad farewell to Mrs Pring and her family at the end of this school year as they have been posted to Cyprus! Who would decline such an amazing opportunity? I would like to thank Mrs Pring for all she has done to support our children and families moving in, moving out and staying behind and all the other support behind the scenes she has done to ensure that our children thrive pastorally whilst they are with us. We are in the process of recruiting to this post and I will share the news once we have it.

Like you, we will very much miss both Mrs Whitty and Mrs Pring being part of our school community and all that they do to support our children and the school and we wish them and their families all the best as they move on to their next exciting adventure.

We also have had a few new additions to our staff team that you will have seen around school over the last few weeks. Mr Ganguly – known as Mr G – will be teaching Year 2 three afternoons a week and Mrs Harding will be teaching Lynx Class three days a week with Mrs Laidlaw and Mrs Naya doing their amazing double act. We have also welcomed back Mrs Wilson from maternity who is really enjoying teaching Year 2!

We are now waiting to hear the exciting news of Mrs Barker and the arrival of her baby – we send her very good wishes and all the best.

Finally, you may have heard that we are embarking on a 'Spitfire 90' project which supports the refurbishment of the Spitfire Gate Guardian. The project was launched on Monday with Station Commander Alice visiting assembly and the children received a presentation about the Spitfire on created by project manager Tony Hoskins. We heard stories about three Spitfire pilots (Flying Officer Mouson from Belgium, Flight Lieutenant Puysaelayr from Belgium, Flight Sergeant William 'Bill' Johnson from the UK) who were all based at RAF Benson as part of Photo Reconnaissance Unit and we have been asked to vote for which Spitfire pilot should be represented on the Gate Guardian with their markings – how exciting! I wonder which pilot will win the vote? We will be learning more about the Spitfire during next half term ahead of the exhibition mentioned below.

Here are a few dates of upcoming events and some notices for you. We have quite a few events coming up with a couple of google forms for completion and your swift action on this would be appreciated.

Dates and Events

Please keep an eye on the school calendar for these dates and events – you are able to subscribe to this so that you don't miss anything coming up. <https://www.raf-benson.oxon.sch.uk/diary/subscribe/>

Friday 22 May – Last day of term finishing at 3:15pm. We expect all children in school on this day please ahead of the May break.

Monday 1 June – Back to school for the final term!

Friday 12th June – Summer Disco. Taking place in the school hall 4:30pm – 5:30pm. Ticket cost will be released after half term on Eduspot.

Wednesday 17 June – KS2 Urban Strides day – We will be welcoming our friend Andy Instone back to school for a dance day with KS2. We will be inviting you in for the showcase but are in the

process of confirming timings. We will let you know what time in the afternoon this will be. As always, it will be an energy filled session that we are all looking forward to.

Thursday 18 June – Sports Morning and Family Picnic – We are just seeking confirmation from the Station that we can use the rugby pitch on this day, however we invite you to attend our Sports day starting at 9:15 am with dances from each class linked this year to a colour followed by a short break and then into the competitive races on the rugby pitch. This year, we have some parents willing to sell some refreshments (bacon baps and drinks) between drop off and the start of the dance showcases as well as cold soft drinks during the races – all for adults only – which I am sure will tempt many of you to stay and enjoy.

Following the sporting events, you are very welcome to join your child's class for a picnic lunch (weather permitting!) on the field after this, there will not be any hot school meals on this day. You will be able to book a packed lunch provided by our kitchen staff or your child can bring a packed lunch from home.

Friday 19 June – Fathers' Day Big Breakfast – everyone join us in the hall for a sausage or bacon bap to celebrate and thank the fathers, brothers, uncles in our lives who help us. Doors open at 08:15 and is open to mums and sisters too!

Friday 26 June – CAMO Day – one of the MASSIVE highlights of our year is CAMO Day where the children get to celebrate the wonderful things that RAF Benson showcases the activities and stands on the day. Children (and staff!) wear camo clothes for the day and simply have the time of their lives! A lot of work goes into planning this and thank you to those parents who give their time to support this event that the children (and staff!) just love.

Due to the logistical nature of the day, there will not be any hot school meals on that day. You will be able to book a packed lunch provided by our kitchen staff or your child can bring a packed lunch from home.

We will have the Station Photographer taking photographs of the children taking part in the bases and I need your permission for your child to be included in any images they (or we) may use for social media showing the children having an awesome time. As always, if your child appears in any image, they will not be named. We need the form completing for every child please by COP on Friday 12 June - we do not have time to chase those who do not meet the deadline so your cooperation with this will be much appreciated.

Photo Permission - <https://forms.gle/1eZBFCLm8po1fytQ8>

Friday 26 June – Summer Fair – as if the day wasn't exciting enough, we will be holding our annual summer fair after CAMO Day 4pm until 5:30pm. If you can help with the event, help with collecting food and drink from places like Tesco and Cost-co, setting up the event, helping on a stall or help clearing up at the end to let staff escape swiftly after a long day, please email the school office or mention it to me or any other member of the team when you see us around and about. Any help no matter how small will be very much appreciated. If you can't help on the day, here are a few ways you can help:

Mug Tombola stall – This is an extremely popular stall where we need your help please. We ask that you send in a mug with goodies such as pencils, sweets (no chocolate as it melts), bath and shower items - anything you might like to receive! We will have a nonuniform day on Monday 22 June in return for filled mugs please only to be brought in on that day. Thank you.

Cake Stall - We know we have some stunning bakers out there (thank you to those who have left samples in the staffroom over the year!); we would be very grateful for some of your lovely cakes to be able sell on the refreshment stall. Please send in cakes to the

school office on the morning/afternoon of Friday 26 June so that we can prep them for the stall.

Raffle Prizes – We are going to be holding our summer raffle, if you are willing and able to donate a prize to this (or know a company or someone who could) we would be very grateful if you could email Mrs Bevis in the school office.

Thank you so much for your support towards this very important fundraising event, we love the community feel it has right from the madness of the start straight after CAMO day to clearing up the very last bit of bunting at the end of the day.

Wednesday 1 July – Transition Morning 1 - Children will know who their teacher (hopefully) will be for next year and we will let you know during the day. It will be an exciting day all round especially as we will be welcoming our new Reception 26 parents to school for a meeting on that day too!

Monday 6 July – Brass Showcase at 2:40pm (Date and time to be confirmed) - Our children in Years 4, 5 and 6 will wow us all with what they have been learning since half term. It will be a spectacular performance so much so, you will think it is the RAF central band!

Tuesday 7 July – Spitfire 90 Exhibition. This will be the culmination of our Spitfire 90 project and we invite you into school (time to be confirmed) to see the work the children have done and some other artifacts linking to the aircraft.

Wednesday 8 July – End of academic year Parents Evening - A final opportunity to hear from your child's class teacher for this academic year and to see how they have performed in national assessments and what they need to do ahead of their next year. Bookings will go live 1 week before the event

Thursday 9 July – KS2 production – the theatrical event of the year! This year we are being entertained by the Gladis Baker, Gladiator and this 'West End' production will take place in the school hall starting at 5pm. Refreshments will be on sale.

Wednesday 15 July – Leavers' Assembly - Taking place in the hall with the provisional time of 1:45pm – this may change to 9:30am if the weather is forecast to be very hot.

Wednesday 15 July – Last day of the school year. School finishes at 3:15 – Happy Holidays!

Thursday 16 / Friday 17 / Monday 20 July – INSET Days

Thursday 3 September – Start of 2026/2027 Academic Year – Welcome back!

Notices

Deadlines – Can we please encourage you to submit information by any deadlines given. A large amount of time is being spent chasing missing permission forms or payments. We try to give as much notice as possible and deadlines are now communicated to parents via email, app messages as well as the Friday Forecasts. - thank you!

Absence – Just a reminder that, in line with our Attendance Policy, if you need to take your child out of school then you must complete a Leave of Absence request form which is available from the office. This will then be followed up with a meeting with Mrs Fawdry who will discuss the absence. We appreciate that in very rare occurrences, there will be family emergencies however, we do urge you not to take children out for a family holiday during term time.

Thank you to those parents who have been honest around holiday absence and not phoned your child in sick. Children, as well as their class mates, often do tell us and we do work on an honesty

is the best policy basis. You will have noted that we have put our INSET days at the end of the academic year again. We do this in the hope that you may be able to enjoy a cheaper and early summer holiday get away therefore we do not expect holiday requests in that last week and for children to be in school for the various transition activities and other exciting end of year events we have on in the last week this year. Thank you for your support and for ensuring that your child is in school every day possible to enjoy learning.

Parent Governor – Laura Whitby, parent governor, will be leaving the Station after her child leaves Year 6 and with her new works commitments will not be able to continue therefore we will have a vacancy on the governing body for a parent governor from September 2026. We would like to thank Laura for all her hard work and dedication to moving the school forward from a strategic perspective and the valuable contributions she has made in supporting the leadership team during the last 4 years she has been in post and all the very best for her new ventures ahead.

Being a parent governor is very rewarding and from a school leadership perspective, brings the view of a parent to strategic discussions. The role is one where you are a parent representative and not a representative for the parents, a subtle yet important difference.

We are looking for a parent governor with a strong financial background to join the board, so, if that is you, please do read the pack and complete the form by 3pm Friday 5 June 2026 should you wish to nominate yourself. As mentioned in the pack, if we have more than one person nominated, we will need to hold a ballot. Please see more information at the link here: <https://www.raf-benson.oxon.sch.uk/attachments/documents.asp?id=800>

Summer Uniform – Now we have the lovely weather here I just wanted to remind everyone about our summer uniform policy which can be found here: <https://www.raf-benson.oxon.sch.uk/school-uniform-2> . Please also remember to ensure your child has a sun hat, filled water bottle and has had sun lotion applied for the day.

I think that is all for this month – sorry this newsletter is longer than usual – lots to celebrate and lots of important information to share to get us happily to the end of the year.

Hope you have a lovely bank holiday weekend and half term week ahead and we look forward to seeing everyone back in school on Monday 1st June.

Best wishes



Steph Fawdry
Headteacher