Barnett Wood Infant School

NEWSLETTER

March 2026

Message from Mrs Gibbard

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come towards the end of another month, it has been wonderful to put this newsletter together and look back on a full month of learning and fun at Barnett Wood. Over the past weeks, our classrooms, playground (and even the field!) have been filled with curiosity, creativity, and laughter. I continue to be immensely proud of how enthusiastically the children approach each day, and how kindly they support one another. Our staff team is working hard to create rich learning experiences, and it is a pleasure to see the children so inspired and engaged.

The month has also been enriched by a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom. From trips and visits to clubs and special events, these experiences play such an important role in broadening horizons and creating lasting memories for our children. It has also been particularly pleasing to see the very positive feedback from both our parent and pupil surveys, which reflects the strong relationships and sense of community we value so highly.

Dates for Diaries

Monday 30th March - Friday 10th April

EASTER HOLIDAYS

Monday 13th April

School closed for INSET day

Tuesday 14th April

Children return to school for Summer term.

Monday 4th May

School closed - May Bank Holiday

Wednesday 6th May

Year 1 Parents – Phonics Screening Information session - 8.45am in the Beehive

A true highlight of the month was undoubtedly Monday's Dance Showcase, where the children performed with such confidence, rhythm, and delight. It was a joyous occasion that really lifted everyone's spirits! We are incredibly grateful to Mr Rae from the Don Rae Academy of Dance, who, as always, did a fantastic job preparing and teaching the children throughout the half term. His passion and expertise shone through in every performance, and the children absolutely loved the experience. Thank you Mr Rae!

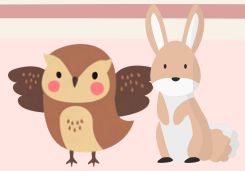
Today we said goodbye to our caretaker Mr Paul Cooper who is sadly leaving us for pastures new. Mr Cooper joined in September, taking over from his brother Bob Cooper. We would like to thak him for all his hard work and wish him all the best for future endeavours.
Mr Paul Devereux will be taking over the position after the Easter holidays - I'm sure he will get a warm Barnett Wood welcome!

Have a fabulous Easter holidays, see you all in just over two weeks!

Kind regards,
Mrs Gibbard

Year Group News

Year R
Hedgehogs and Squirrels



Year 1
Owls and Rabbits

Year 2
Badgers and Foxes

Attendance- A message from Mrs Clements

School Matters!
Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow

We firmly believe that all children benefit from regular school attendance and that

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

This year, one of our school development priorities is to maintain attendance and punctuality and to reduce the percentage of persistent absentees. Please take some time to read our Attendance and Absence Policy which can be found here: Attendance and Absence Policy

Reception		Year 1		Year 2		Whole School
						97.8%
97.6%	97.5%	97.4%	98%	96.5%	96.3%	

Congratulations to Rabbits for having the highest attendance so far this year!

What does this look like in terms of number of days absent for my child?	100%	97%-99.9%	93% - 96.9%	90% - 92.9%	Below 90%
	Attendance Superstar!	Well done, excellent attendance!	Be careful!	Improvement needed.	Persistent absentee.
Academic year Sept-July	0 days absent	approximately 4 days absent	approximately 10 days absent	approximately 15 days absent	approximately 19 days absent

Thank you to all our parents and carers for working closely with us to improve attendance this year. Your support has made a real difference—compared with this time last year, when whole-school attendance was 96%, we are delighted to share that it has already risen to an impressive 97.8%.

We have also seen a positive improvement in promptness to school, ensuring pupils start their day calmly and ready to learn. Being in school every day and on time helps children build strong learning habits, maintain friendships, and make the most of the rich opportunities our school provides. We are truly grateful for your continued partnership and commitment to helping every child thrive.

Have a wonderful Easter break, enjoy a slower start each morning for 2 weeks.

Mrs Clements

Request for leave during term time

A reminder that requests for holiday during term time will not be authorised and may inccur a fine if your child has 10 of more unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 days)

If you need to request leave for exceptional circumstances, please ensure that you have filled in a form and emailed/ handed it to the office at least 2 weeks before the start date of the period of time requested.

A reminder to familiarise yourself with our Attendance and Absence Policy in line with the 'Working together to improve school attendance' DfE guidance.
Attendance and Absence Policy

Year 2 Trip to Wisley

On Tuesday the 10th March, all the children in Year 2 went on a school trip to Wisley Gardens. Everyone was excited as we got on the coach. When we arrived, we split up into groups. Some children learned about plants in the glasshouse and we got to plant our own cornflowers.

The other children explored the gardens and found out about all the different plants that grow at Wisley and saw some big sculptures like the Dancing Rabbits.

Then we had lunch in the same building next to the glass house. After lunch, we looked at the Redwood trees and compared how big they were to their pinecones. The Redwood trees were nearly as big as a skyscraper. We enjoyed seeing the different plants and learning about pollination.

As always, a GREAT BIG 'thank you' to the parents and helpers who were able to accompany us. We hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did!

World Book Day

On Thursday 5th March, we celebrated World Book Day!

The children (and staff!) were invited to come into school dressed up as their favourite book character, and they didn't disappoint.

We began the day with a parade in the hall...
There were creatures of all kinds, wizards, witches, scarecrows, astronauts, gingerbread men and unicorns! What a lovely way to start the celebrations!

It was a beautifully sunny day, so at lunchtime the children were able to enjoy reading books out on the playground in the sunshine.

GO ALL IN. National Year of Reading 2026

WORLD BOOK DAY 5 MARCH 2026

We all had a wonderful day!

Science Week 2026

British Science Week is a celebration of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

This year the focus of Science Week was 'Curiosity: What's your question?', encouraging exploration and discovery, asking questions, investigating the world around them and thinking like young scientists.

To celebrate British Science Week, Mrs Clements ran a Science Club taster session for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

To spark the children's curiosity they went onto the field to work in groups to find out 'How do birds build their nests?', their task included a challenge to use their paper beaks to collect their materials, just like a bird!

They had great fun, collecting natural resources to build a nest before testing to see how strong it was in windy conditions. The children talked about what they noticed about each nest, using their observational skills.

Science Club...Coming Summer Term!

Following the huge success of the Science Club Taster during science week, Mrs Clements will be running Science club, **Wednesday lunchtimes** in the Summer Term. Each week the children will have the opportunity to be a young scientist and develop their investigation skills through a range of activities including the 'pot of gold' experiment, exploring static electricity and more!

Summer 1: Open to Owls, Badgers and Foxes starting Wednesday 22nd April
Summer 2: Open to Hedgehogs, Squirrels and Rabbits starting Wednesday 10th June

In order to resource the club, we will be charging a small fee of £5 for 5 sessions.

There are only 20 spaces per half term available on a first come first served basis.

Please email the office if your child would like to join. You will then recieve confirmation of your child's place and payment arrangements.

This month's highlights

"It was really fun, my Mummy and Daddy came to see me" Max

Dance with Mr Rae

"It was so fun. I loved the Bamboeo song" Leo

"We wore whatever we wanted to raise money" Reese

Red Nose Day

"We designed our own red noses!" George

Ducklings

Reception's Tonie Boxes

"We love listening to the stories"

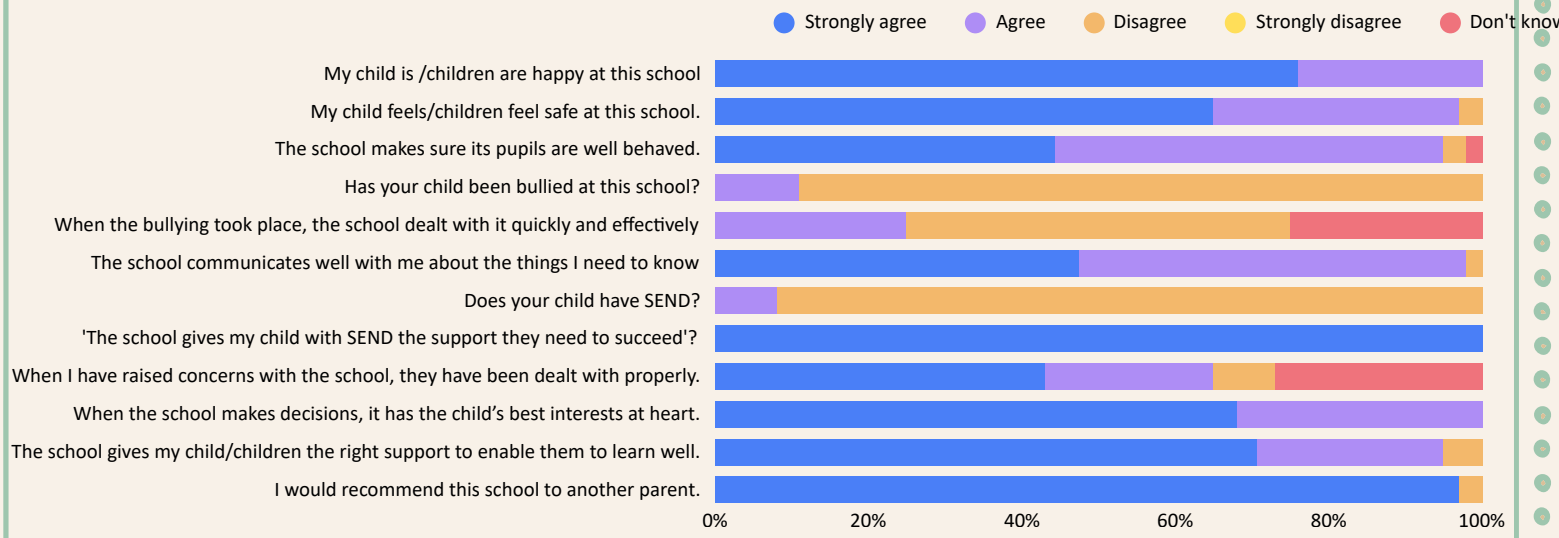
"We raised money for Downs Syndrome and planted sunflower seeds" Sienna

World Down Syndrome Day

"I loved that I got to have a photo with everyone else's socks" Mia

Parent Survey Spring 2026

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our Spring Parent Survey. Your feedback is invaluable and helps us continue to make Barnett Wood the best possible place for our children to learn and grow. We are delighted to share some of the key themes that emerged.



What parents feel we do well

Across the survey, parents were overwhelmingly positive, with the vast majority strongly agreeing that their child is happy, safe, well-supported and enjoys school. Common strengths highlighted included:

1. **A nurturing, caring environment** - parents consistently described Barnett Wood as:

- A place where staff "know the children well" and "care about them as individuals"
- Warm, welcoming and inclusive
- A school with "a lovely family feel" and "a wholesome vibe"
- Strong community spirit and clear values
- Children who are happy, confident and thriving

Many commented on the strong relationships between staff and children, and how this helps pupils feel happy and confident.

2. **High-quality teaching and learning** - parents praised:

- Support for children's individual needs, including SEND provision
- Excellent early reading and maths teaching
- Staff professionalism and dedication
- The positive learning experiences created across the school

Several families noted the excellent progress their children are making, especially in reading.

3. **Communication and community** - parents valued:

- The welcoming start to the day and friendly atmosphere
- The newsletter and whole-school communication
- Great extra activities, including sports, swimming, fun days and after-school clubs
- The school has an amazing community, with caring teachers

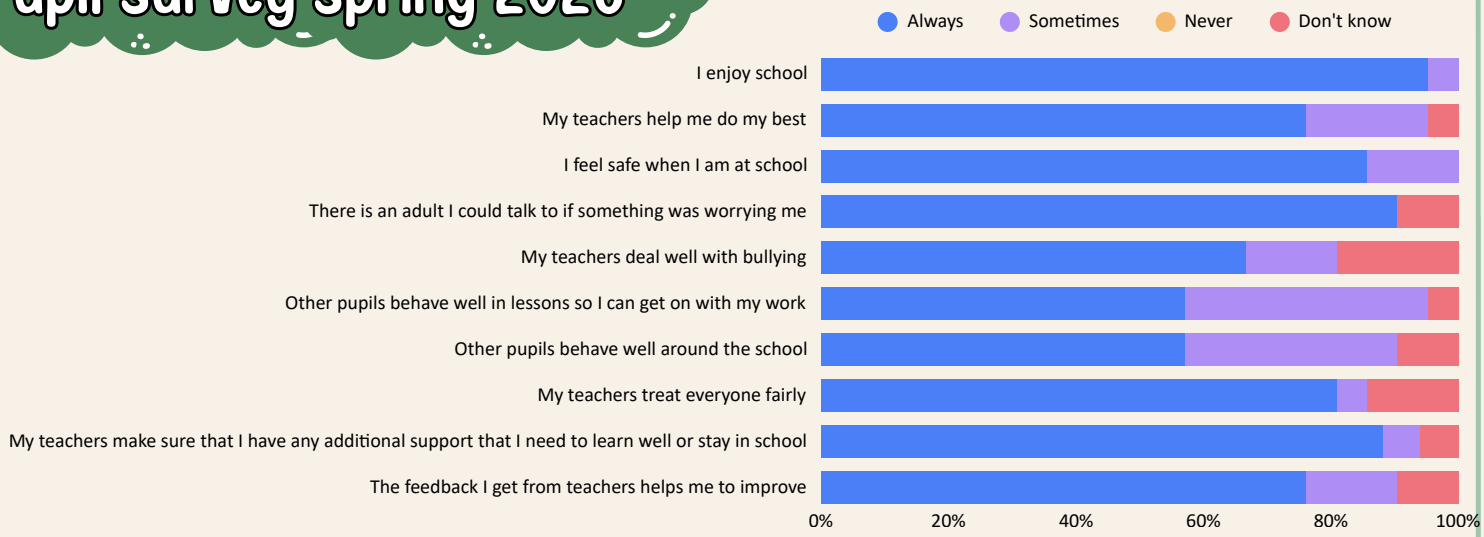
Suggestions for improvement

While feedback was overwhelmingly positive, a few helpful areas for development came through:

- More individual communication where needed
- Additional clubs (music, languages, arts)
- Clearer behaviour expectations for children
- More detailed updates from year groups about classroom learning
- Healthier lunches
- Fewer items brought from home
- Helping children better understand neurodiversity
- More urgent communication about accidents/incidents

Thank you once again for your thoughtful and constructive feedback. We will continue working on the areas highlighted and are proud to celebrate the many strengths recognised across our community.

Pupil Survey Spring 2026



What children love most about Barnett Wood

Some favourite things mentioned were:

- Kind teachers who help and care for them
- Learning new things – especially reading, phonics, maths
- The playground, including the field, toys and space to play
- Swimming in the pool
- Time with friends
- Fun, safe lessons and special activities (including Tonie boxes!)

Ideas pupils shared for making school even better

Children suggested:

- More playground equipment (swings, slides, a climbing frame, an undercover hut)
- More clubs or choices at lunchtime or after school
- More computer time
- Playtimes with smaller groups for Reception

A few adorable suggestions:

"Nothing. It's perfect!"

"If it was made out of chocolate!"

"A unicorn."

Thank you to all the children who shared their thoughts in our Spring Pupil Survey. Their feedback helps us understand what they enjoy most about school and how we can continue to make Barnett Wood a safe, happy and exciting place to learn.

Friends of Barnett Wood

Don't forget our Easter Egg Hunt takes place tomorrow and Sunday - details below.

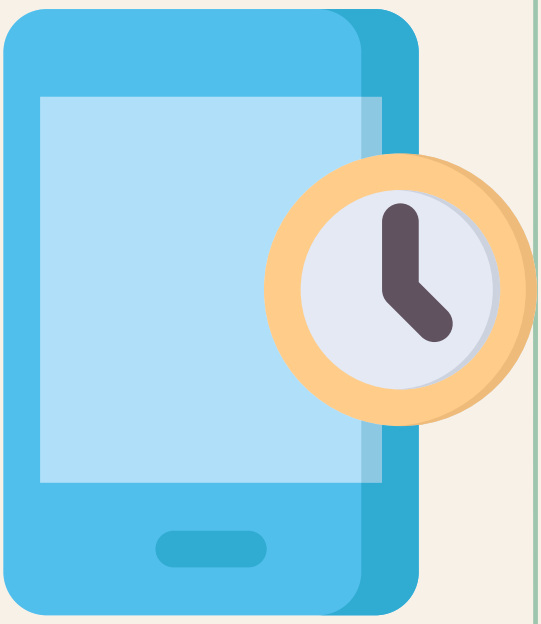
Hope to see you there!

Safeguarding

New Government Screen Time Guidance for Under-5s

You may have seen in the news yesterday, the Government published its first national, evidence-based guidance to help families manage screen use for babies and young children. The advice was developed with experts including the Children's Commissioner and early years specialists, following feedback from over a thousand parents who asked for clear, practical support.

What the new guidance recommends



- Under 2s: Avoid screen time altogether, except for shared activities such as video calls with family that support bonding and communication.
- Ages 2 to 5: Aim for no more than one hour of screen time per day. Try to keep mealtimes and the hour before bed screen-free, as screens can disrupt sleep and reduce valuable family interaction.
- Content choices: Choose slow-paced, age-appropriate programmes rather than fast-paced, social-media-style videos. Avoid AI-powered toys and tools designed for older users.
- Watch together: Children learn more when adults co-view, talk about what they're watching, and ask questions. Solo screen use is linked to poorer sleep and reduced physical activity.
- Parents as role models: The guidance encourages adults to be mindful of their own phone use, as young children copy the behaviours they see.

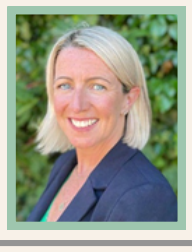
Why limiting screen time matters

Research shows that too much screen time in early childhood can crowd out the activities that matter most — physical play, sleep, creative learning, and conversation.The early years are crucial for building language, social understanding and emotional development, and shared, interactive activities best support this.

Simple ideas for families

The guidance suggests easy swaps to build healthier habits:

- Read a story instead of watching a bedtime video.
- Play a simple game at the table rather than using a screen during meals.
- Use background music, colouring or "I Spy" as alternatives when children need occupying.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Mrs Anne Gibbard Headteacher	Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is: Mrs Becky Clements Assistant Headteacher	Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is: Mrs Leonie Theobald Senior Teacher
		

The DSLs can be contacted via the school office
on 01372 272701 or via email: dsl@barnett-wood.surrey.sch.uk

General Reminders

- **Timings:** Gates open at 8.20am, classroom doors open at 8.30am. Gates/doors close at 8.35am and collection for all at 3.05pm.
- **Snacks:** Children are provided with a piece of fruit/vegetables at break time. Please be aware that a number of our children have severe allergies and therefore we are a nut and egg free school - please respect this and ensure no products containing nuts are included in packed lunches or snack boxes.
- **Named water bottles to be in school daily** - no squash or juice please!
- **Absence –** please phone (01372 272701) or email (info@barnett-wood.surrey.sch.uk) school as soon as you know that your child will be unable to attend school that day and any subsequent days.
- **Sickness / tummy bugs –** please remember that children cannot come into school until 48 hours after the last episode of sickness or diarrhoea, in order to prevent spreading the infection.
- **Named clothing and personal items –**please ensure that all items are named as we cannot guarantee lost unnamed items are returned to the owner
- **Coats –** please remember that your child/ren need a coat suitable for the weather to be in school with them. Our outdoor learning spaces are used every day.

Our remaining INSET days for this academic year are:

Monday 13th April 2026
Monday 1st June 2026