



Balderstone St Leonard's CE Primary Newsletter Welcome to Michaelmas term!

"rooted and grounded in love..." Ephesians 3:17

Sunday October 29th 2023

In This Issue



In this week's edition of the newsletter

- **Mrs Gow's Words for the week - open week thanks**
- **Forest School Fun**
- **Absences and holidays**
- **Balderstone Brightness**
- **Reminders - School dinners/healthy packed lunches, Harry Potter themed lunch**
- **FOBS dates - Bonfire night fun! Pans plea**
- **Safeguarding section - Parent guide to Tiktok**
- **Stars for the Half term**
- **Dates for your diary**
- **Contact Us**

Mrs Gow's Welcome back words...



I cannot believe that we are already at the end of October and that the clocks have gone back! I hope you have had a blessed and restful week with your families.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped support our school's open week. A special mention to our governors who rallied around school and supported staff in promoting the school. Year 6 were outstanding in their role as tour guides and really were the best possible ambassadors for our school. The videos on our new showcase reel were not scripted and the children spoke from the heart about their school. It made my heart sing to hear them talking to prospective parents, councillors and guests about how special our school was and how happy and safe they have been at our school. Every single one of the children talked about our school as a family and that it is a place where they feel safe to be themselves and to be the best they can be.... what more could we ask. Thank you children for being the best advertisement for our school there could be! A great big Balderstone thank you also needs to go to Blackburn FM 102.2 who supported our school with our very own advertisement for Open week (attached below). We are hoping that over the coming weeks we can forge a strong relationship with the station and get our very own podcast team with our MH Musa on the airwaves! Do check out the latest podcast on the school website - it is always a brilliantly entertaining summary of all that is happening at Balderstone. Thank you to Mrs Turnet and the podcast team

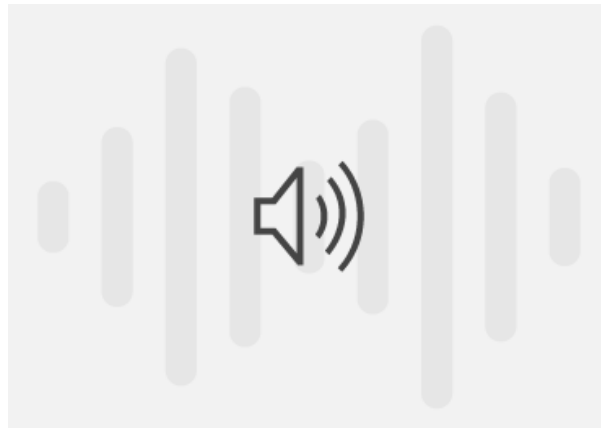
<https://balderstoneschool.ovw7.juniperwebsites.co.uk/page/?title=PODCASTS&pid=213>

This half-term, the Michaelmas term, is a long one (at nearly 8 weeks long) and is always one where we come to school in the dark and go home in the dark! However, despite this, it is one that is filled with so much joy, light and life - with so much to look forward to in the coming term - the nativity, carol concerts, swimming for Foxes, kurling competitions, Harry Potter themed lunches, bonfire night celebrations (one of our most popular family evenings of the year) and the first ever Balderstone Brightness parade on 31st October! All this and some wonderful topics to really boost our learning

power! Although there seems to be so much darkness in the world at the moment, as a church school, we hold on to the power of prayer and the fact that the Bible clearly tells us that "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." This term we shall be celebrating everything light in our worships focusing on peace, prayer and preparation for Jesus' birthday!

Many blessings,

Mrs Gow



<https://sway.office.com/DwAm7IDCUxfiZ0AA#content=XBMjSsq8f8b6eJ>

Forest School fun - Get prepared Year 4!



This half-term it will be the turn of Year 4 to go out and enjoy Forest School. So please make sure, Year 4s that you have warm, spare clothes, waterproofs, hats, gloves, spare warm socks and wellies

in school. Mrs Riddell and Mrs Burton will go out in every weather - so be prepared for Monday 30th October!

Year 2, 3, 4 and 5 loved their Forest School sessions before half-term. What a fantastic day we had during our open day, exploring the brook, making conker people, mini beast hunting and natural art!







Attendance makes all the difference!

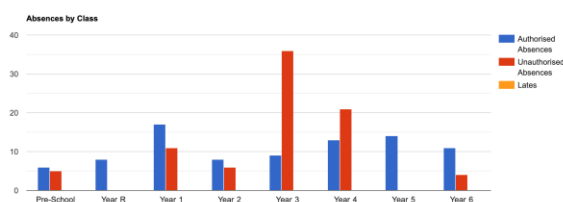
Attendance Matters



Over the coming term, as a school, we shall be monitoring attendance very carefully as the correlation between poor attendance and poor learning outcomes is closely linked. Data from 2019 onwards shows that 84% of Key Stage 2 pupils (juniors) who had 100% attendance achieved the expected standard at Year 6, compared to 40% of pupils who were persistently absent across the key stage. We have an increasing number of families requesting leave of absence for family holidays. As much as we sympathise with the financial reasons for booking in term time; the impact on your child's learning can be severe. In missing even one week, your child will have missed 5 lessons from a maths unit and 5 fluency sessions. Repeated absences on a Monday can mean your child misses 50% of their Science curriculum in Year 5/6 over a half term.

As a school we are trying to put in place lots of interventions to support achievement and progress, but this can only work if the children are in school and regularly attending. In line with our attendance policy, Mrs Gow or Mrs Johnstone will be contacting any parents with children with persistent absenteeism daily if they are not in school.

A huge well done to Year 5 for having the highest attendance in the last half term 98.53% - playtime of your choice when we get back to school Year 5.



1 - The blue bar shows authorised absences (illness, other education events etc)

The red bar - unauthorised absence (eg, family holidays in term time)

Balderstone Brightness!



Balderstone Brightness is happening this Tuesday – it is on Halloween but it's all about light. Come along to show off your decorated lantern and shine a light in the darkness! There will be lots of treats throughout the parade (wear your wellies!) with our wonderful FOBS team bringing lots of treats (so you don't need to go out trick or treating - all the treats you need will be here at the parade). Come along at 5.30pm. We already have more than 30 families signed up. Bring along your lantern if you made one. A few are still in school waiting for you! Thank you to FOBS for supporting this event. Refreshments will be available and donations would be appreciated. A donation from the parade will be sent to Save the Children to support the children caught in the darkness of war.



Safeguarding Section



Over the coming half-term we are going to feature parental advice about key games and apps that we know that some of our children are using (or wish they could!). It is a minefield trying to keep up with the latest games and apps as a parent, so hopefully these potted guides will help us to be aware of potential pitfalls in terms of keeping our children safe, This week Tik Tok!

what-parents-need-to-know-about-tiktok

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION
13+
(certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

TikTok is a free social media platform that lets users create, share and watch short videos ranging anywhere from 15 seconds to 10 minutes in duration. The app gained notoriety for its viral dances, trends and celebrity cameos and can be a creative, fun platform for teens to enjoy. Now available in 75 languages, it has more than a billion active users worldwide (as of spring 2022) and is most popular with the under-18 age bracket. In fact, a 2022 Ofcom report found TikTok to be the most-used social media platform for posting content, particularly among young people aged 12 to 17.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's "Following" feed only displays videos from users someone follows, "For You" is a stream of clips based on their previously watched content. Most videos on a child's "For You" feed will therefore be light-hearted and amusing, but it could potentially surface something unsuitable. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the sheer volume of uploads mean they aren't manually monitored and vetted.

18
CENSORED

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase emojis in the app. These emojis are then sent as rewards (retaining their monetary value) to other users for videos they've created. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; TikTok's policy is that they can't be bought by under-18s, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birthdate.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Like all social networking platforms, TikTok can be addictive: figures show that young people are investing increasing amounts of time in it. In the UK, children with TikTok spend an average of 102 minutes per day on the app, versus 53 minutes on YouTube. This compulsive repeated use can interfere with their sleep patterns – leading to irritability – and distract them from other activities.

TIKTOK NOW

Introduced in late 2022, the 'TikTok Now' feature lets users post a daily video or photo at the exact same time as their friends. Users receive a synchronised notification at a random time of day, giving them three minutes to take a video or real-time photo. This addition can not only be a distraction to young people but could lead to them inadvertently sharing private content such as their location.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With around 1.1 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-18s (or youngsters using a false date of birth) are set to public by default. This not only means that someone's profile is visible to everyone else on the app; it also lets their videos be suggested to others and enables anyone to comment on them or download them.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS & CARERS

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account with their child's and control their settings remotely. Parents can then, for example, turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content); set screen time limits; and manage their child's ability to send messages (and to whom). Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

MAKE ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Although under-18s will have their TikTok account set to private by default, bypassing this setting is relatively easy. However, parents have the ability to manually set their child's account to private – meaning that their videos won't be visible to strangers and they won't be able to exchange messages with people who aren't on their friends list.

LIMIT IN-APP SPENDING

If your child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter the settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend that you enable this feature, as it's quite easy for a young person – without realising what they're doing – to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins so they can unlock more features of the app.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If your child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's crucial to talk about the potential risks in this type of app. For example, ensure they understand not to share any identifying personal information – and that they realise they could be exposed to inappropriate content. Thinking critically about what they see on TikTok can help children become generally more social media savvy.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that your child might be spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something inappropriate or upsetting that they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the possible signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as are failing to complete homework or regularly not eating meals.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The Inquirer, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.

NOS National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

@ www.nationalonlinesafety.com W' @natonlinesafety n /NationalOnlineSafety @ @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into, current as of the date of release: 23.11.2022

Stars for the Half-term



A huge well done to the following pupils who have shone **all** last half-term in their learning, love of each other and love of God.

EYFS. Eesa T

Year 1 Ebrahim

Year 2 Adah

Year 3 Aaminah

Year 4 Sophia

Year 5 Eshaal

Year 6 Falak

Special mention this week to Abigail - who has received a commendation from a parent this week for the difference she is making to her buddy's life at Balderstone.

House point winners



Well done to St David who won the half-term house point competition. it certainly was a close one this last half-term with only two points between the 1st and 2nd place teams. To recognise St David's achievements we shall be going to the cinema on Tuesday 7th November. You will get a letter Parental tomorrow if your child/children are invited to see the Minion Movie at Blackburn.

Lunch Reminders for the new half-term



Just a few reminders of things that make a difference to our school lunches:

- We are trying to cut down on kitchen waste as part of our stewardship drive so please remind children that they need to have the lunch they have ordered with you from the menu. Changes will only be allowed if there is enough food left at the end of serving everyone's first choices.
- Packed lunches - please pack your child a lunch that is NUT free (including no Nutella/chocolate spreads). This is essential as we have some children who have been recently diagnosed with a serious nut allergy. Please also ensure that your child's lunch is balanced and healthy. We don't mind the odd treat of course (especially on a Friday) but at the end of term we had some children with very sugar laden lunches and this doesn't help concentration levels in the afternoons. A huge thank you to the parents who send waste free lunches to school.
- On Tuesday we are having our famous Harry Potter themed lunch - where our school hall is transformed into Hogwarts and we are served a host of delicious, magical delights. Please make sure Mrs Johnstone knows if your child is having school dinners on this day.

Prayers for Peace



As a school we believe that prayer makes an impact, and therefore we want to encourage our families and children to use our school's interfaith prayer space. This space is in the school library and will be open at lunchtimes Monday and Friday and on a **Tuesday morning from 8.30am** for

ANYONE who wants to come in and pray. Please use the main entrance to school. It is really special to have our children and staff of different faiths praying alongside one another.

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" When we gather as a school family to pray, we cultivate a sense of togetherness and strengthen our bonds

Balderstone Bonfire Night - This Saturday



It's nearly Bonfire Evening again - one of our main events in the FOBS social calendar and one of the best attended and loved evenings of the year! Come and join us for some old and new treats - delicious food (curry and BBQ, waffles from our favourite Stiks and other tasty treats and a wonderful bonfire and firework display). There are glow wands available too. Cake donations welcome (please identify any allergens - nuts etc) and come along and join the fun. Our newest pre-school families and prospective families are warmly invited to join us and find out what a great, fun family we are! Wrap up for all weathers. Hope to see you there.

PS Is there anyone who could help us out by letting us borrow some BIG pans for the curry chef please? Please let Mrs Gow know.



FOBS & upcoming event dates



Please pencil in the following dates in your diary:

Bonfire Saturday **4th November** (see poster attached)

Children in Need **17th November** - non-uniform day/cake donations and money needed for the fun stalls

Non-uniform – chocolate gift donation please **24th November** for Church Christmas fair

Hamper gifts in return for Non-uniform - (more details to follow on year group donations) **8th December**

Church Christmas Fair **Saturday 9th December**

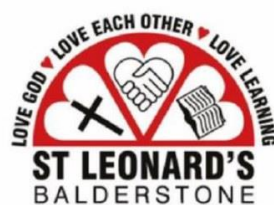
Infant Nativity in church - all EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 involved **Wednesday 13th December** 1.30pm and after -school performance

Carol service at Blackburn Cathedral (whole school going and joining with Mellor and Samlesbury school too) **Thursday 14th December 12pm**

School Christmas Disco and Christmas dinner **Wednesday 20th December**

Summer fun Saturday **29th June** (provisional date - the best event of the Summer!)

Contact Us



**A small school
with a big heart**

**We are currently accepting
applications.**

Join us for our Open Week 31st
October – 4th November. Ring
school to book a tour.



For more information visit
 **www.balderstoneschool.co.uk** 
or contact **01254 769150**

Keep in touch with the school family using the details below (or call into the school anytime to see us)

Balderstone St Leonard's CE Primary school

Commons Lane

Balderstone

Blackburn

BB2 7LL

01254 769150

head@balderstone.lancs.sch.uk

Visit us on the web at <http://balderstoneschool.co.uk>