



Balderstone St Leonard's CE Primary Newsletter



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

Monday 2nd September 2024

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Mrs Gow's Welcome to the new school year



Welcome back! A warm welcome to the new academic year to all our families and an especially warm welcome to our new Reception children and their parents. Welcome to the Balderstone family!

I hope you have all had a lovely break with some relaxation and fun time with your families. As usual the sun decides to make a fleeting appearance just as we are returning to school! A huge thank you to all the parents who supported our new holiday club with our new sports partners Progressive Sports. The children seemed to have a superb time with the staff and even learnt some new skills - such as chess playing! We are hoping that Ribble Valley will continue to support this provision with Balderstone as a new venue for holiday club provision - we might be small but we will ensure our families get the best provision.

It would be amiss of me not to mention the tragic events that happened in Southport, and then across the UK, during the time we were apart. The vicious attack on innocent children, I know is every parent and teachers worst nightmare and I immediately contacted the girls' primary school sending them our love, prayers and support at this horrible time for the whole community. The riots that arose after the killings made me more resolute in our school's mission to create a diverse, loving and faith filled education to ensure that our Balderstone children will be the ones who, will speak up and out against racism and intolerance, spot fake news and propaganda and will help protect and serve communities of all faiths. Rest assured that our small school shall continue in its Christian mission to be 'rooted and grounded in love', denouncing hatred, injustice and racism. This is seen in all we do, and the way that our families (of different faiths) come together in a community of respect and love. This term's worship theme has specifically been written with themes of love and diversity

at it's heart. Some parents have asked and we do have a clear lockdown protocol in place in our school - come and see Mrs Gow if you want more information.

We also had some sad news over the last week of the break, with the sudden and unexpected death of Dennis Leaver (husband of our wonderful governor, welfare assistant, FOBS team and best brew maker- Janet) and grandad to Florence and Matilda. Dennis was a committed champion of our school and gave up lots of his own time to support school events over **MANY** years, including using his renowned culinary skills at every FOBS barbecue. He will be sadly missed by us all. Our love and prayers go to the whole family at this time.

As always, there is a lot to be optimistic about at the start to a new academic year. We have had some repair and restoration work done in the school hall and on the roof to protect our beautiful old building. We are bidding for a really exciting project this year to replace ALL the wooden cladding that wraps around the whole building, providing new bifold doors to every room and new windows. The adventure playground (with help from our wonderful FOBS team - Friends of Balderstone School) is being redesigned this year and fundraising has started to help us to pay for a wonderful new play area. Our school development plan focuses, as always on academic excellence for ALL our children and this year we shall be focusing specifically on driving standards of oracy across school. Articulate speaking and active listening means that all learners can gain the most from their lessons and they can also question, explain and deepen their understanding. Mrs Heyworth and I continue to work with the National Centre for Excellence in Teaching of Maths and we have some exciting events taking place this year which always positively impact our staff and pupils. Mrs Turner continues her Artsmark work and developing the school as a beacon of excellence in the arts. We have a new sports coaching team working in school, who will be delivering some of our PE lessons with our staff team too. Progressive Sports will also be running our lunchtime clubs and offering an amazing new array of clubs/events for our children (see below for more details). Mrs Riddell and Mrs Burton are continuing our Forest school and outdoor learning progression. Mrs Cast is continuing to champion our most vulnerable and valuable children. Owl class are starting the year with their PGL holiday for the week beginning 16th September (more information to follow this week). Mrs Burton, Miss Lee and Mrs Chand will be planning our fantastic programme of parent and themed lunches that make our lunchtimes truly magical! Dates to follow at the end of the week.

As always, if there is **anything** you are unsure about or need to chat about then please get in touch 01254 769150 or email head@balderstone.lancs.sch.uk. Staff are in school tomorrow Monday 2nd if you need us.

REMEMBER TOMORROW MONDAY 2nd SEPT IS OUR INSET DAY. We look forward to seeing you all on Tuesday morning.

Blessings,

Mrs Gow

God Bless to our Year 6 leavers and new starters



Our prayers and thoughts are with our new starters and to our former Year 6 as they embark on their new adventures at secondary. We would love it if you would send us some photos of your new uniforms and keep in touch and let us know how you are getting on. We also welcome the Sarpanch family to Balderstone, as Uthalia joins us in Year 1 and Mu'aaz to Year 5.

To our new starters - we can't wait to meet you. Mrs Turner and the EYFS team are raring to go! To mums and dads getting ready to leave your precious ones in our care, try not to worry. We promise to look after them as if they are our own and we will always ring you if there are any issues. Although it is really hard, the best thing to do at drop off time is be positive, brief and upbeat. Mrs Gow will meet you around the corner with the tissue and a cuddle if you need one!



A huge congratulations to Mrs Turner, our EYFS team supported by Mrs Burton and the staff team, as we have just be awarded the Lancashire quality award - Step Outside! This award recognises the school's commitment to outdoor learning in the early years/infants and also the progress that has been made in developing the outdoor areas for learning. Thank you so much to Mrs Turner, Mrs Burton, Mrs Draycott, Mrs Riddell, Mrs Hussain and Mrs Chand for their hard work and to the rest of the staff team who helped develop the outdoor provision ready for our new Reception Rabbits and Bunnies. As always our commitment to Forest school and outdoor and adventurous activities continues this year with Mrs Riddell and Mrs Burton continuing with our Forest School Monday afternoons.

Wraparound care and lunchtime clubs



We are thrilled to be working with our new sports and wraparound care providers Progressive Sports. You may know that we offer, with Mrs Heyworth's oversight, two daily lunchtime clubs for all children. It's amazing but EVERY child in the school gets to take part in at least one club every week. The range of clubs offered by Progressive Sports is fabulous and we are looking forward to introducing the children to some new sports.

Breakfast club is available from 7.40am every day and there are two options for after-school provision.

1) **Active attain** - 3.15pm - 4.30pm with 40 minutes of sports club followed by a quick snack and then 40 minutes of independent learning guided by the staff (reading activities, maths games, spelling activities, arithmetic, times tables)

2) **Full fun session** 3.15pm - 5.45pm including the Active Attain session, snack and then arts, crafts, play and choice time. This session comes with another, more substantial snack at 5.15pm.

Our providers are OFSTED registered which means you will be able to pay with salary sacrifice voucher schemes. If you wish to book a place and pay using vouchers then in the first instance please contact James via email j.evans@progressive-sports.co.uk and he will sort out the logistics for childcare vouchers.

Mrs Johnstone will no longer be taking the bookings for the club, as Progressive have their own digital bookings platform. You can access and book a slot up to the lunchtime of the day you need provision, eg, 12pm on the day you need after school club. Bookings can be made on an ad-hoc basis OR you can reserve a regular slot. The website for bookings is <https://enrolmy.com/progressive-sports-south-lancashire/activity/2-Progressive Kids Breakfast Afterschool club at Balderstone>

We are looking forward to meeting the team next week and the **two** members of staff who will be joining the Balderstone staff family. Here is a brief introduction to the company from James and the team:

Progressive Kids Introduction



WELCOME TO PROGRESSIVE KIDS, WHERE WE'RE PASSIONATE ABOUT PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY BREAKFAST CLUB, AFTER SCHOOL CLUB, AND HOLIDAY CLUB CHILDCARE FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN.

At Progressive Kids, we know how challenging it can be to balance a busy work schedule with ensuring your child is cared for in a safe and nurturing environment.

At Progressive Kids, our focus is on delivering trusted, reliable, and expert childcare that extends your child's school day with enriching and inclusive activities.

Every child is unique and we want to celebrate this by providing an enriching, inclusive experience that provides every child with a safe, caring, active and happy environment for them to be themselves.

Our experienced and friendly staff are trained to provide a nurturing and supportive environment that fosters learning, exploration, and fun for all children.



More information can be found on our website at:

<https://enrolmy.com/progressive-sports-south-lancashire>

Uniform and back to school reminders



A huge thank you in anticipation for maintaining our high standards of appearance. A few reminders to help us get off to a smart, calm and organised start!

- The new Balderstone PE kit is available from Ribble Valley Supplies (RVS) and the t-shirt and shorts are also available from Whittakers from October. The kits and tracksuits have sold really well and Stephen from RVS is going to be placing a restock order as soon as term starts. I'll send out some pre-orders and size preferences at the start of term. The new PE kit is only **compulsory for our new Reception Rabbits** (not pre-school) and children who have bought the kit in **Year 3-6 can wear it for school on their PE days** (see chart below) instead of their normal school uniform. I am aware that the new kit is pricey and that there have been some issues with stock running out. Because the new kit is expensive, we have made the decision to let the children wear the new PE kit on their PE days (junior children only) plus it is really smart and practical so we want you to get your good value and wear from it!
- Children in Pre-school will only need a spare change of clothes - pumps, red polo shirt and shorts, spare underwear and socks, spare tracksuit pants in a drawstring bag. The pre-school children will not need to get changed for PE as they are already wearing their informal uniform that is suitable for PE.
- The children in Reception will need to bring their new PE t-shirt and shorts, with a spare pair of tracksuit trousers, red school t-shirt, pumps and underwear (including socks) in a drawstring bag. The **Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children WILL be getting changed for PE,**

as dressing and undressing is a really important life skill that we can help teach the children in the infants.

- The children from Year 3-6 can come to school wearing their PE kit on PE days but will need their **trainers with them EVERY day**. On non-PE days the children must wear their full school uniform and have their trainers in a bag on their peg ready for lunchtime clubs. The children must wear school shoes (not trainers) on non-PE days. The children who are taking part in lunchtime clubs will be encouraged to change into their trainers (to save the life of the school shoes). Please do make sure that your child has velcro fastenings if they are in Reception and Year 1/2.
- FOR THIS TERM ONLY (UNTIL THE NEW TRACKSUITS HAVE BEEN RESTOCKED AT RVS) CHILDREN MAY WEAR THEIR **NEW PE T-SHIRT AND SHORTS WITH A RED SCHOOL JUMPER/PLAIN BLACK TRACKSUIT TROUSERS** ON PE DAYS ONCE A PRE-ORDER REQUEST HAS BEEN FILLED IN FOR THE NEW TRACKSUIT as we are aware that the sizes in the tracksuit are out of stock. Children who do *not* have the new PE kit will need to wear their school uniform to school on their PE days and they will have time to get changed in/out of their kit in school as they have done previously.
- Children will be allowed to come to school wearing their NEW PE kit if they are attending a sports event after school on that day even if it is not their PE day - eg, if there is a tournament/match after school.
- Earring and jewellery must **NOT** be worn on PE days and on non-PE days the children may wear **one pair of plain stud earrings (if their ears have been recently pierced) and a wrist watch**. We do NOT allow the children to wear smart watches with video/call/messaging/photo or video recording capabilities.
- Haircuts/styles need to be easily manageable for school/safe for all lessons. We suggest that all long hair is tied back, especially on PE days (and to avoid little nitty friends!) We ask that all hair accessories are kept plain and simple school colours, to avoid children being upset if they are lost/broken. Lines/tramlines and cuts below a grade 2 are not allowed in school (in line with all our local primary/secondary schools) - with the exception being if children have returned from pilgrimage and have had their heads shaved for religious reasons.
- **PLEASE LABEL AND NAME ALL UNIFORM** including shoes, trainers and wellies! School cannot reunite your child with their lost kit if it is not named.

EQUIPMENT/BAGS/WATER BOTTLES and PENCIL CASES

- children in Pre-school, Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and 4 must have a school red book bag (to fit in trays/boxes)
- children in Year 5/6 may bring a rucksack (with handles/large enough to fit on pegs)
- children in EYFS, Year 1 & 2 do not/should not bring a pencil case/stationery or toys to school unless it is their Show and Tell day in EYFS
- children in juniors (Year 3-6) need to bring their own labelled, filled pencil case with their black/blue pens, pencils, rubber, pencil sharpener, small ruler, glue stick and pencil crayons. Please do NOT let your child buy/bring stationery that could distract from their learning OR expensive/branded items that could cause upset if misplaced.

- Your child should bring a water bottle to school. In EYFS and Reception these should be a personal design that the children can recognise as their own (dinosaurs on, pink spots etc). In other classes simple, plain, school designed named bottles are essential. Children should NOT bring AIR UP bottles to school please to avoid issues with pods/missing bottles. Children should have water/still flavoured sugar free still water in their bottles.

Provisional PE days (Autumn term)



RECEPTION/PRE-SCHOOL PE days are Tuesday and Thursday (they will need their PE kit in school on their peg all week though)

Year 1 and 2 PE days are also Tuesday and Thursday (they will need their PE kit in school on their peg all week though). **Year 1/2 will need their FOREST SCHOOL kit on MONDAYS this half-term!**

Year 3 and 4 can come to school in their **new PE kit** on **Mondays** and **Wednesdays**. If your child doesn't have the new kit then please send them with their red polo shirt, shorts and trainers and leave this in school.

Year 5 and 6 can come to school in their **new PE kit** on **Wednesdays** and **Fridays**. If your child doesn't have the new kit then please send them with their red polo shirt, shorts and trainers and leave this in school.

Attendance and Holidays



You are well aware of the phenomenal impact good attendance has on your child's academic achievement and social skills. Moments do matter and attendance really does count! We are very proud of our school's excellent attendance and our children's punctuality. Please could I ask that you are extremely conscious of the time your child is absent from school this year! At Balderstone we prioritise attendance but we also listen and respond to parental needs, concerns and requests. With this in mind I am setting up a Parent Panel to meet up to discuss and share parental views on key issues in school - the first Parent Panel will discuss attendance and the holiday pattern for 2025-2026. If you would be interested in joining the parent panel to share your ideas/thoughts and preferences then please come and sign up at front office or email me on head@balderstone.lancs.sch.uk

Please do NOT book family holidays during term time unless in exceptional circumstances, as the impact of these on your child's learning (for some families this is a repeated annual absence) **can** be severe. As teachers we absolutely understand and empathise with the hike in holiday pricing in school holidays (we suffer the consequences too). I also understand that many family trips are also educational and have benefits for our children/families too. I always treat each holiday request individually BUT Lancashire's policy is NOT to authorise *any* holiday request (unless in **exceptional** circumstances). Currently, we do not fine our parents for unauthorised absence but given governmental changes to parental fines and pressure from Lancashire to follow local policy, it is likely that this will have to change this year. We are also not allowed to authorise any religious observances for more than 1 day. I will keep you updated weekly on attendance rates and class averages. Let's see if we can keep your child's attendance over 98% this academic year. PLEASE REMEMBER TO USE THE SCHOOL ABSENCE LINE 01254 769150 (follow the option to report an absence) to let school know if your child is poorly/going to be off school.

With good attendance in mind, Lancashire are desperately encouraging parents to ensure that their child's immunisations are up-to-date as both measles and whooping cough are spreading at alarming rates in the county.

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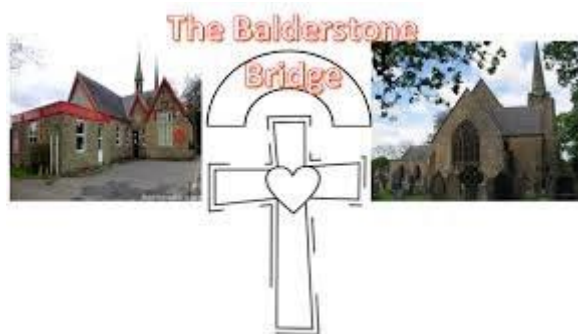
School Office info & new time for Celebration worship



Our wonderful Mrs Johnstone is changing her working days to help school run smoothly on a Friday (when so much happens each as Coffee Creative, Parent lunches & Celebration worship). This means that our school office will be open on a Friday now but our office will not be staffed by Mrs Johnstone on a Monday. Mrs Gow will be at the front of school on a Monday and will be able to answer most phone calls, but please be patient with us and make use of the answerphone if needed. Mrs Gow will be teaching every Thursdays and Friday - so please bear this in mind if you need to get in touch with her.

Celebration worship will now take place every Friday at 2.35pm with brews available from 2.20pm. Celebration Worship will *mostly* take place in school to help Mrs Gow as Friday is one of her teaching days, but once a calendar month Rev Karen will join us and then we shall be in church.

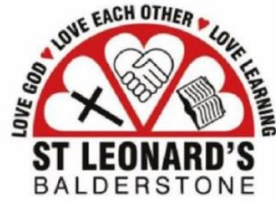
Church and Community Corner



Our church has an exciting new venture to share with you - the launch of Cafe Church. This is a family friendly, all-age worship where we can come together informally, with fun, faith, fellowship and food at the foundation of the service. Cafe church will take place in the school hall and there will be a different foody theme every time! The very first Cafe style church will take place on Education Sunday (a Sunday in the church's calendar where we give thanks for our education system and all those who work and play in them!). EVERYONE is welcome and it would be especially nice to catch up with our Year 6 leavers and new Reception families to see how their first week has gone!

Cafe church in the school hall Sunday 8th September 4pm. Come and join us!

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)

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