



Balderstone St Leonard's CE Primary
Newsletter 14th March



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

Friday 14th March 2025

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Weekly Words



Hooray - I hope we are all starting to feel the first signs of Spring breaking through. We have been working hard in school to help the children really understand that we are truly blessed by God's seasons. We are trying to help the children see the seasonal changes that happen and to take notice of the rhythms and cycles of nature. Please help us and talk to your child about why March marks the start of Spring. I know that Wren and her family have been busy delivering new lambs over the past few weeks and we are really looking forwards to meeting some of the new life being born on our local farms in the coming weeks. With Lent and Ramadan falling in Spring this time, it helps as a faith family to focus on that period of preparation and fresh starts.

Next week, some of the FOBS leadership team and I are meeting with some designers of our new adventure/trim trail. We can't wait to share the designs with the children and to show you the fantastic plans for the development of our outdoor play area.

This week I had the pleasure of accompanying Mrs Riddell, Mrs Turner and Mrs Cummins to the Winter Gardens with some of our Fox class to see them perform in this year's Let's Go Sing concert. Honestly, there are moments every week at Balderstone that fill my heart due to the moving spirit of joy in our school and this was one of them. To see our children standing so tall and confident on this HUGE stage and singing, signing and putting their all into their performances made me so very proud of them all. It takes a lot of effort to learn these musical pieces by heart and academically has such a profound impact on their concentration, coordination, memories and self-control. It also is a fundamental expression of the human condition to express joy, sadness and emotions through music. Well done to all the children who took part in the concert and thank you to the parents who attended or supported this amazing experience by encouraging their child to take part. We, as always, have passed on our request for the concert to not take place during Ramadan. A huge thank you to Mrs Riddell for her outstanding organisation and commitment to music in our school - even though she volunteered me to take part in the staff song with no rehearsal!

A huge thank you to Sawdah and Aminah's mum, who came into school to share her medical/anatomy expertise with Owl class this week. She showed them the structure of the heart and really brought their learning to life! There was some definite awe and wonder about God's intricate design of the heart. We love it when our incredibly gifted school family members share their expertise and gifts with us. I think Mrs Patel may have inspired a new generation of medical practitioners.

St David had a super reward morning at the cinema this week, as a congratulations for being last half-term's house point champions. Thank you to the staff/volunteers who supported the trip.

Have a wonderful weekend and enjoy the start of Spring!

Mrs Gow

Joyous news - we have a new vicar!



Welcome to the family!

We have some joyous shared news with our church and benefice this week - we have a new vicar! Reverend Nathaniel will be joining us after May half-term. We pray that his new role will be a blessed part of his ministry. Rev'd Nathaniel loved looking around school on his interview day and keenly advocated for our very special faith mix in our school. We look forward to building our faith friendships and giving him a radically hospitable Balderstone welcome to our school family and the benefice of Balderstone, Mellor and Samlesbury.



From the Bishop's Chaplain

Rev'd Sam Cheesman

Bishop's House, Ribchester Road, Blackburn, BB1 9EF

Telephone: 01254 248234 Email: chaplain@bishopofblackburn.org.uk

13 March 2025

**NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT AND INSTITUTION
The Rev'd Nathaniel Gilmour**

It was announced on Sunday 10th March 2025 that The Rev'd Nathaniel Gilmour has been appointed as the next Vicar of Balderstone, Mellor and Samlesbury, subject to the usual safer recruitment checks. Nathaniel is currently Assistant Curate at Broughton St John the Baptist in Preston Deanery.

The Bishop of Blackburn will institute, and the Archdeacon of Lancaster will induct Nathaniel as Vicar Balderstone, Mellor and Samlesbury on Sunday 25th May 2025 at 4.00pm at St Leonard Balderstone.

Dance competition - This Tuesday



Miss Estelle's dance club are off to take part in the Dance show on the stage of Burnley Mechanics Theatre.

The children have been working really hard finalising and refining their dance for next week. They will be having rehearsals IN SCHOOL on Monday and Tuesday of next week. On Tuesday, we will be leaving school at 2pm and children will be transported by Mrs Gow, Mrs Heyworth and Mrs Lever (all DBS cleared). Please send in a named booster seat with your child if they are in need of one (under 135cms).

Girls will need a pair of black leggings, hair bobble and trainers and the boys will need a pair of black tracksuit bottoms and trainers please. *All parking around the venue is pay and display/ car parks in Burnley town centre.*

We will leave all belongings, (apart from coats, packed tea/snacks, and water bottles) in school. Snacks/packed tea and drinks can be sent in a **clearly named plastic bag.**

We will be performing in the first half of the show and will be the second school to perform.

If you would like to take your child home at the interval, we completely understand as we have a lot of younger children performing this year.

At the end of the performance please could **ONE** parent meet their child **at the bottom of the main stairs from the auditorium**, as there are 17 schools/teams participating, we will not allow any child to leave us until we have physically handed over the child to the parent who is responsible for collection. We can't wait to see you perform on stage - how exciting!

Volunteer drivers



We absolutely rely upon our parents/carers support for transporting our children to and from extra-curricular and enrichment events and we are **INCREDIBLY grateful** for your generous support to take children to and from events. The phenomenal cost of mini-bus and coach hire would make it impossible for us to afford to attend the number of events/trips we do at Balderstone. I attended new Lancashire educational visits training on Friday and as a result we need to tweak some of our current procedures:

Staff must have business insurance added to their policies in order to provide transport. School will look into a policy to cover our staff, but obviously this will come at a premium,

Extra curricular events/parent drivers - parents who are unable to transport their own child to/from events **must organise their own arrangements with other parents**. We are able to assist with sharing contact details (with your permission) or passing on messages, but school is no longer able to ask for, OR coordinate, lifts with/from other parents - as these arrangements must be informal and not coordinated by school otherwise every driver has to be DBS cleared through school. School already have a bank of DBS cleared volunteers who may be able to help. To help us to coordinate this, we shall be asking any parents who might be able to help with transport to indicate that they would be willing to share their contact details (mobile number) with other parents so lift/communication channels can be made. We are incredibly grateful to those parents who regularly offer to take children to and from events. If you are a regular transporter for us, we may approach you to ask if you would be willing to have a Disclosure and Barring service check completed. There is a cost to school for each of these checks.

It is also **ESSENTIAL** that if your child is being transported to or from an event by staff/other parents they **MUST** have a car seat/booster if they are under 135cm tall, otherwise staff/parents will not legally be allowed to drive them. We do have a few boosters to loan out from school, but not many.

Potential for 2 year old provision (responses needed)



As you may know, we are awaiting a result from the Department for Education on whether or not they will help fund the development of our two year old room. However, they have now told us that schools will **not** find out the result of our bid until the end of May now, and the provision would need to be open from September! I know many current parents are keenly awaiting the results of this bid (as we are), as you would love to enrol for this provision. As a school whom always tries to provide the best support for our families, we are currently getting building quotes to see **IF** we could feasibly afford to fund the build ourselves **IF** the DfE bid is not successful (I know there are a lot of IFS in this sentence - but I want us to be forewarned and forearmed to act in the best interests of our families no matter what the outcome). In order to ensure that the provision would be well received and viable I would ask that if you would be interested in a 2 year old place from September 2025, that you would let Mrs Gow know via email. head@balderstone.lancs.sch.uk - giving me an approximate number of hours you would like to be considered for. I can then take all of this information to our governing body at the end of the month to explore options and feasibility.

Spaces in school - spread the word!



We are now at that transitional time of year where our Year 6 children have discovered their new secondary school allocations and where we are awaiting confirmation of our new Reception intake for 2025 from Lancashire admissions on Wednesday 16th April. As a Christian school we strongly believe in God's plan for us, and know that God's hand is always in the placement of families and children in their school families. However, we also need to be proactive and support the promotion of our school to ensure that Balderstone is known in our local communities, especially as we don't really serve a residential village! Therefore, you may know of friends, family, neighbours or faith friends who are looking for positions in school in the near future or may be moving into the area. The government VAT on private school fees may also be a critical factor in some local parents considering alternative options for schooling. That is where we can all play a role in promoting Balderstone as a welcoming school family.

We currently have capacity in:

Current Year 1 (Year 2 in September) 10 places - we had NO siblings at all in this intake, hence why it was so small. This gives these children a wonderfully small class to thrive in and a great opportunity to join the school family in this early year group.

Current Year 3 (Year 4 in September) 2 places

Current Year 5 (Year 6 in September) 1 place

Depending upon circumstances we may be able to offer places in other year groups (but not Reception). Please do help us to fill the school as the impact on school funding is *considerable* when we have a full roll,

Pre-school places available for September 2025



Our flourishing pre-school **currently** has places available for children who are 3 years old. Children can start in pre-school the term after they have turned 3 years old. We are still waiting to hear from the DfE if we can expand to 2 year old provision from September, but you will be the first to know when we hear from them.

Do you know of anyone who might want to join the Balderstone family? All 3 to 4-year-olds in England can get 570 free hours per year. It's usually taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year and we currently have places for children from September/January or April start. These places do fill up quickly, so please do come and see Mrs Johstone to book your place.

You may also be eligible for 30 hours free childcare. See <https://www.gov.uk/check-eligible-free-childcare-if-youre-working?step-by-step-nav=f517cd57-3c18-4bb9-aa8b-1b907e279bf9>

for more information. Please spread the word to family, neighbours and friends as we want to continue to grow and resource our very special Balderstone, pre-school provision.

Remember that our Reception place admissions criteria has also changed from next year - so if your child attends pre-school for their 15 universal hours, they are higher up our admissions criteria to gain a place in Reception the following September - which is exciting as we want our pre-schoolers who we get to know and love to be a long-term part of our school family so we can invest in your family for the whole of their primary school time!

Football focus - year 5/6



A huge thank you to our Year 5/6 football team who played with real determination and perseverance this week. Although the scores didn't go our way - they worked well as a team and gave it their all. A special thank you to the parents who helped us to transport the children to and from the tournament. We couldn't do it without your support.



Friends of Balderstone School presents

Chocolate

B I N G O

Friday 21st March
Doors open at 6.45pm
Eyes down 7.00pm

No admission charge

Refreshments
Beer Wine Soft drinks Tea
Coffee Cake Sweets Crisps

RAFFLE

Bingo books £1 each
or 6 for £5

A fun night for all the family

Red Nose Day 2025



Next Friday our very own School Council are leading on Red Nose Day 2025. On Friday 21st March 2025 we will hold a non-uniform day, cake sale (all donations VERY gratefully received) and a teddy bear raffle in aid of Comic Relief. Every child can also bring to school their favourite joke (written down) for our comic lunch!

This week's flourishers



A huge congratulations to the following flourishers who have shown a love of God, love of learning and a love of others this week:

Rabbits.	Khalid
Squirrels	Muhammad Aidan
Year 3	Adah
Year 4	Eeva
Year 5	Rollover
Year 6	Liyaana

TESCO - Community grants - Collect your blue tokens!

16:31

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Starts *Helping children thrive*

Vote for the project that means the most to you. Each project could receive up to £1,500.

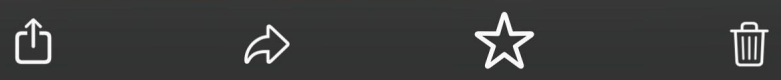
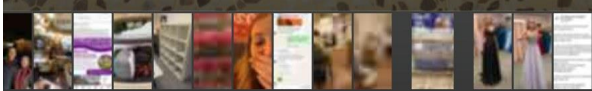
<p>Balderstone St Leonard's CE Primary and Pre-school</p> <p><i>Trin Trail Togetherness</i></p> <p>Building a new sustainable adventure playground for school, toddler group and community use, giving our diverse families a place to meet, play and have fun together.</p> <p>Balderstone</p> <p>Vote in-store until 31 March 2025</p>	<p>The BIG Sing SOUL administered by Imagine The Day</p> <p><i>FREE Music for Children</i></p> <p>Support mental health, wellbeing, increase self-confidence, reduce social isolation for children by delivering FREE positive music resources at Oakden Primary School.</p> <p>Blackburn</p> <p>Vote in-store until 31 March 2025</p>	<p>Cruse Bereavement Support Lancashire</p> <p><i>Bereavement Support for Children</i></p> <p>Grief can be devastating. Can you help us be there for more children and young people who are struggling with the death of a loved one in the Blackburn area.</p> <p>Blackburn</p> <p>Vote in-store until 31 March 2025</p>
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Every little helps

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Reply



IT'S THE LAST FEW WEEKS - please get collecting your tokens. This money will make a massive difference to our new adventure trail project!

The blue token scheme fundraiser finishes at the end of March. All of the three charities in stores is worthwhile, but we do need your help to spread the word. Our project - Trim Trail togetherness - aims to raise money so we can build our new adventure playground (with community access) so our children and families can come together to actively play together, bridging all divides!

You can vote for Balderstone at the following stores:

Blackburn Superstore BB1

Darwen Express Express BB3

Blackburn Bank Top Express Express BB2 1TN

Roe Lee Blackburn Express BB1 9AX

Livesey Blackburn Express BB2 5AY

[Forest School](#)



This week in Forest School we decided to go deeper into the woods to explore! We looked for signs of spring, searched for our favourite sticks to take back to school (some were a little too large to carry!), played games in the woods and then searched for treasure as we

crossed the brook back to our Forest School area. It's amazing what treasures we can find when we take our time and look closely at everything around us!





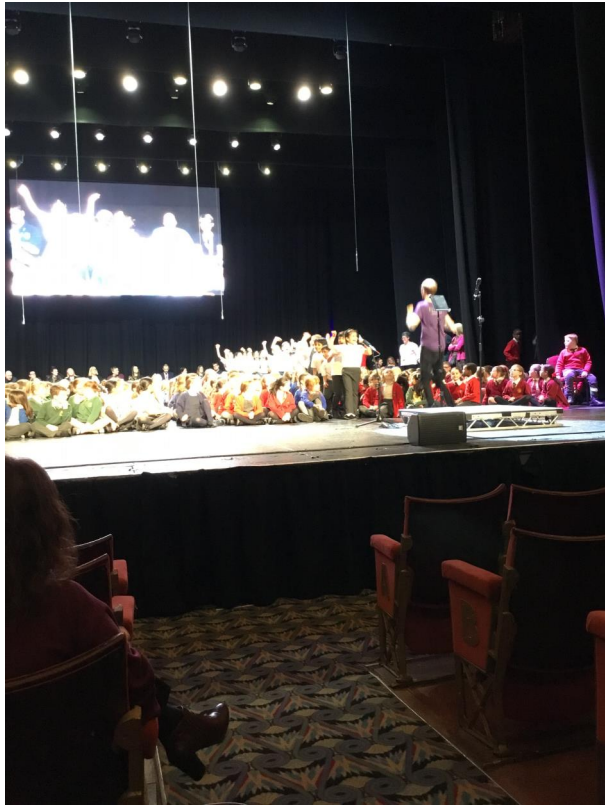


Let's Go Sing Concert!



On Tuesday evening Year 3 and 4 performed at the Let's Go Sing concert in Blackpool at the Opera House in the Winter Gardens. We had an amazing time! The children have been working so hard since September on learning the songs and they performed them magnificently! We were so proud of every one of them. It was such an amazing experience to perform to such a huge audience on such a big stage (apparently the second largest in Europe but better known for Britain's Got Talent!). Thank you to Mrs Cummins, Mrs Turner and Mrs Gow who came with us and to those families that came along to support us. We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did!







Church and Community Corner



Mothering Sunday Service



Balderstone Church
Sunday 30th March 11am

Dates for the diary



- Mon 17th March.** Junior Girls' football tournament at Edisford 3.45pm onwards
- Tues 18th March** Dance club performance at Burnley Mechanics Theatre
- Wed 26th March.** Y5/6 trip to Salford to Imperial War Museum and The Lowry



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

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