



BALDERSTONE ST LEONARD'S CE

NURSERY, PRE-SCHOOL & PRIMARY

JOIN OUR SMALL SCHOOL FAMILY!

WE WELCOME 2 - 11 YEAR OLDS

A **small** school with **outstanding** opportunities!
Come and see our school family in action.

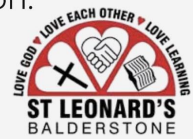
Open day is EVERY day!



<https://www.balderstoneschool.co.uk>



01254 769 150



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

Friday 26th September 2025

In This Issue

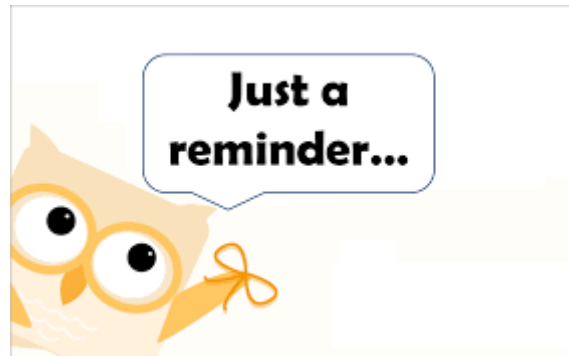


In this week's edition of the newsletter

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- Dates for the diary
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Dates and reminders



Every week, I'll try to start with the key dates and any reminders for the week - so if you are really busy you have a quick summary of important things from this week's newsletter.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Monday 29th September - Forest school for Year 1 and 2

Tuesday 30th September - Girls' football competition (parentmail sent out to the team) at Ribblesdale 4-6pm

Anderton Centre residential for Year 3 & 4 children Tuesday and Wednesday

Thursday 2nd October - School council elections

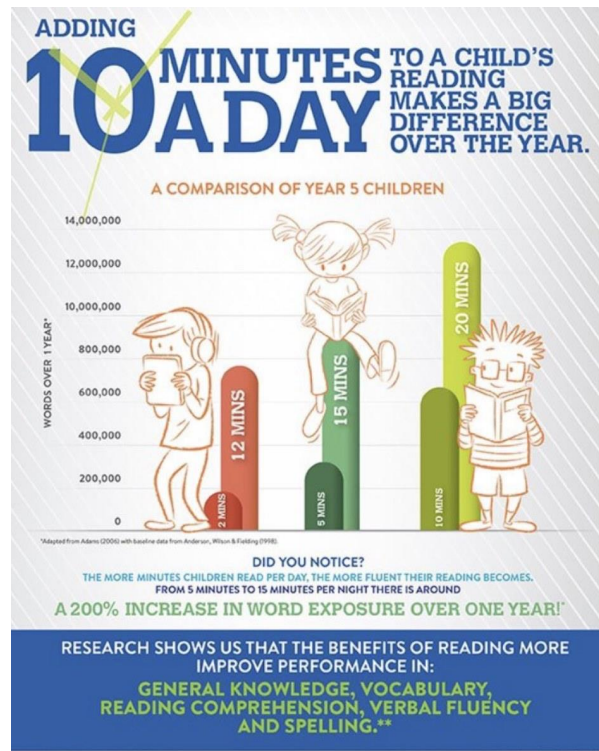
Weekly Words



*It has been a busy learning week in school. with lots of focus on high quality work and on good listening. In these first few weeks back after the holidays we focus on a **calm**, **connected** and **consistent** start to school to ensure that everyone knows they belong, knows how to learn effectively and gets used to their new class routines and high expectations. The transition back into school can be a tricky one after the summer holidays (and that's just for the staff!) It has been really lovely to spend time in each class this week and see just how settled, busy and engaged the children are.*

A huge thank you to the parents/grandparent who attended this morning's Phonics Family session with the EYFS team. Early reading, communication and language are absolutely central to ALL the learning that follows and working in partnership with our wonderful parents makes all the difference. It is also lovely to welcome so many dads to these sessions, male reading role models are so critical to our children. Please can I reaffirm our plea that ALL children are reading as part of their home learning, every night (in the car home or as

you are making food, after bath time or before bed) please prioritise 10 - 20 minutes of reading time daily for all children from Brambles to Year 6. The statistics on the impact of reading, being read to, hearing and enjoying stories and reading independently are very clear - children who read and increase their vocabulary do better academically, socially and in terms of their own wellbeing and mental health. Readers are our next leaders!



To our Year 5 children who are sitting the Clitheroe Grammar entrance examination this weekend, we send you our love and prayers. As we always say here at Balderstone, trust that God will clear the path and open the doors that are right for **you**. For some children this is the Grammar school; for others this is another local secondary. Do your best and for all the hard work that has gone into the preparation for the exams - we are very proud of your efforts (and we shall continue to be proud of you, whatever the results!)

Have a lovely weekend team Balderstone and we look forward to an exciting week with our Year 3 & 4 class going off on their residential outdoor and adventurous holiday. Let's pray for some sunshine!

Mrs Gow

The adventure begins....the opening of the new Balderstone Adventure and Toddle Tyre Track



The sun came out to bless our new Adventure trail and Toddle Tyre track opening. A huge thank you to everyone who turned out to make this such a lovely moment for our school. So many years of fundraising has taken place to make this vision a reality. To the FOBS (Friends of Balderstone School) committees of past and present a special thank you for all that you have done and do to create so many community and family-friendly events to raise funds that our school on these child focused enhancements. It was also lovely to have our Balderstone Parish Council represented and to have Colin Everett (the chairperson) come along so we could thank Balderstone Parish council for their support of the project too. Our very own courageous advocates pupil team were there too to help cut the ribbon - a special thanks to them and their families for all the sponsorship and fundraising they championed to help make this a reality. Every child in school has already benefited from this amazing new school development. Thank you team Balderstone!









Thank you to our community centre friends




The former team from Mellor Brook toddler group (who ran the group from the community centre) with Mrs Britcliffe and Mrs Leaver (and helpers) kindly donated many of their resources to us at school this week. It was like an early Christmas....with new bikes and cars, wooden toys, craft materials and tables and chairs for outdoors. We are incredible blessed by your kindness and thank you for thinking of us! Our 2 year old Brambles class LOVE all their new jigsaws. In gratitude for your kindness we shall be making a donation to the Community Ukes group who we know are close to your heart and which some of the local people attend.

SEND and Inclusion Information



Please see the below poster from Barnados. It looks like a super session.

SENDCO email details: j.cast@balderstone.lancs.sch.uk



DECIDER LIFE SKILLS FOR PARENTS

ABOUT THIS EVENT...


JOIN US FOR AN EXCITING ONLINE EVENT DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR PARENTS! THE DECIDER LIFE SKILLS FOR PARENTS WORKSHOP AIMS TO EQUIP YOU WITH ESSENTIAL SKILLS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE RECOGNISE THEIR OWN THOUGHTS, FEELINGS AND BEHAVIOURS, ENABLING THEM TO MONITOR AND MANAGE THEIR OWN EMOTIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH.

THIS EVENT WILL BE A PACKED INTERACTIVE SESSION LED BY EXPERIENCED PRIMARY MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT WITH OTHER PARENTS, SHARE EXPERIENCES, AND ASK QUESTIONS. YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT 'THE FIZZ', HOW THE BODY RESPONDS TO WORRY AND STRESS, AND HOW TO INCORPORATE AND IMPLEMENT EACH OF THE 12 DECIDER LIFE SKILLS INTO EVERYDAY LIFE. RESERVE YOUR SPOT NOW FOR THE DECIDER LIFE SKILLS EVENT AND EMBARK ON A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY TOWARDS INCREASED MINDFULNESS, LESS STRESS AND MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

• ALL SESSIONS TAKE PLACE ON MS TEAMS ON THE FOLLOWING TUESDAYS FROM 4-5PM


- 15 APR 2025 • 19 AUG 2025
- 27 MAY 2025 • 30 SEPT 2025
- 8 JUL 2025 • 11 NOV 2025

PLEASE SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION



TO BOOK A PLACE PLEASE SEND YOUR PREFERRED DATE, NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS TO THE INBOX BELOW

pnhw.mytime@barnardos.org.uk




Open week at Balderstone



We are preparing for our own Open week at Balderstone and this is where we need your help. We need you to spread the word about our rather splendid small school and ensure that LOTS of people come to find out more about our school family. Please make sure our current pre-school families, that you remember to apply (even if you have siblings at our school already or are in our pre-school). We have a new admissions criteria this year that helps our siblings and our pre-schoolers gain places. See our website for more information.

The deadline for Reception applications for 2026 is **15th January 2026**.



Join THE BALDERSTONE ST LEONARD'S SCHOOL FAMILY... THE SMALL SCHOOL WHERE EVERY CHILD IS KNOWN, NOTICED, AND NURTURED

LOVE GOD • LOVE EACH OTHER • LOVE LEARNING
ST LEONARD'S BALDERSTONE

Oxford Good Provider

A small school with a big heart - for learning, for God and for each other!

Balderstone St Leonard's CE Primary, Pre-School & Nursery

We understand that choosing the right pre-school and primary setting for your child is crucial. That's why we'd like you to come and spend some time getting to know us - tour our small school, meet our wonderful staff team and pupils and get a feel for our exceptionally caring ethos. If you are looking for a small sized, caring, rural school with a diverse, outstanding and faith-filled education, then we are the school for you! Balderstone is a place where your child can thrive in an ethos of love and excellence. Small intake of only 15 children ensures every child is known, noticed and nurtured!

- Outstanding Pre-school education from **2 years of age**
- Incredible **outdoor learning and play-based exploration** (limiting screen time & prioritising learning outdoors)
- **Maths mastery** school & outstanding reading and phonics attainment
- **BRAND NEW EYFS unit**, outdoor area, adventure trail and bike track (with over £380,000 investment in 2023)
- Incredible Forest School provision & qualified staff
- **Platinum** school games accredited school.
- Two residential holidays for every child
- **Gold** Artsmark school & History Quality Mark, Step Outside EYFS award
- Wraparound care from **7.30am till 6pm**. Holiday club provision too.
- **Free breakfast club for ALL children from 8am every day**

Open week Monday 13th - Friday 17th October 2025
Showcase day
Thursday 16th October 9.30am - 7pm
with Headteacher talks at 9.30am, 1.30pm and 6pm, Forest school experience, chat to current parents and governors, share refreshments & enjoy a pupil led tour

01254 769 150 @BalderstoneSchl
www.balderstoneschool.co.uk

RING NOW TO BOOK YOUR TOUR



SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PRIMARY

APPLY NOW!
at lancashire.gov.uk/schools

School and Academy places September 2026

You must apply if your child has a 4th birthday between 1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026.

You must apply even if an older brother or sister is already at the school, or the school is linked to your child's nursery.

If you're a non-Lancashire resident apply through your own local authority.

Please read the admission criteria for your chosen schools on the website or get a copy from them.

CLOSING DATE
15 January 2026

School transport

If travel cost is an important factor in your school preference, search 'school transport' at lancashire.gov.uk or scan the QR code.

Lancashire County Council

lancashire.gov.uk

Progressive Kids



Hi all! Coach Joe here,

We have had so much going on in our first few weeks of wraparound. Plenty of fun, laughter and learning for all to enjoy. Our clubs have made a great start and been full of enjoyment, but we would love to see more of you there to share in all the fun!

Clubs

Clubs will be running until 4:15 PM when all wraparound members can enjoy their snacktime provided by us. Pickup will be anytime between 4:15-4:30. Our list of club activities is as follows:

- Monday - Board games/card games. All years.

We will introduce and play various different games from Go Fish, Uno and 7s to Snakes and Ladders, Articulate and (Coach Joe's favourite) Chess. These and many more can be enjoyed so children of every year group can find a love of board/card games.

More and more of us seem to be enjoying the wonderful game of chess in school during breakkie club and wet play. It would be fantastic to see more of us on Monday nights where Coach Joe can take us all through all parts of the game, relative to different age groups. This can be from learning how the pieces move to more advanced ideas such as openings, defences, middle game strategies and endgame tactics.

- Tuesday - Let's get messy! All years.

Imagine every kind of messy play ever invented! Sand troughs, playdough, paints, glues, slimes. All of these are fair game for the children to enjoy in this session. Let's get messy!

Mrs Barton has been busy providing all things messy. This week we have been painting Autumn leaves and have seen some wonderful paintings from our children.

- Wednesday - Football. Years 3-6.

Enjoy football? So does Coach Joe! Our junior football sessions are a great way to develop football skills, enjoy the sport with school mates and burn off some energy after the school day. We will cover many parts of the game such as technical/tactical skills, positional play and an enjoyable amount of games and matches.

This week we had a very technical session based around ball control. In particular, the importance of a good first touch. These sessions that can be done on an individual basis are so helpful for a player's technical development.

- Thursday - Dodgeball. Years 3-6.

What a game! Dodgeball is always great fun and a fantastic laugh and it is also a sport full of different skills and techniques to learn. In our junior dodgeball sessions we will be learning and developing these skills as well as learning and playing the official game of dodgeball and different varieties of the game like Joker Dodgeball and Jedi Dodgeball. (You might also get to throw a ball at Coach Joe).

This session has been a little slow on the uptake and Coach Joe has a very round head that a dodgeball would hit perfectly! Book in if you'd like to make it happen.

- Friday - Retro video games. All years.

Time for that Friday night chill out? For ours, we're going back in time. Coach Joe will be bringing his retro consoles from the 1990s and 2000s. We have available Nintendo's Gameboy, DS and Wii as well as the original Xbox and the Xbox 360! There will be many well known names from times gone by such as Sonic, Spyro, Crash Bandicoot, Wii Sports, Just Dance, Pokémon and many more. All games are PEGI age rated, offline and only games of appropriate age groups will be played.

Since last week we have started our old school adventure. We now have a school profile on Pokémon Diamond and GBA Spyro. Mario Kart has also seen a few playthroughs. For our next session, we'll be bringing in the Nintendo Wii for some Wii Sports, Wii Music, Pokémon on the big screen and a variety of dance based games.

Wraparound

As usual, we also have our wraparound childcare available with our four zones that all contain a variety of games and activities where children can enjoy playing and learning. Our wraparound zones include:

- Active Zone

Where children can enjoy activities that have them getting up and getting active. This could be tag games, ball games, skipping games and more.

- Creative Zone

Where children can explore their creative side with colouring sheets, paints and other arts and crafts. All things bright and colourful are welcome.

- Discovery Zone

This is our child-lead area that contains games, building blocks and toys for the children to play with and to run their own supervised games. Here they can find their own way to play.

- Wellness Zone

Need a breather? We all do at some point and this is where to come. This zone is a comfy area where children can chill out in their own space, read a book and decompress in a more relaxing environment.

Half Term events

Planning is well underway for our first half term event of the year! As soon as dates are confirmed, we will send all the details over and hopefully see you all there!

Thanks all and have a lovely weekend!

Coach Joe





Forest School



What a fantastic start to our Forest School for Year 1 and 2! We started with a scavenger hunt on the field then made our own mud paint. We loved trying it out, painting something

we could see on the field although many of us just loved painting ... everything! Don't forget your Forest School clothes again this Monday, year 1 and 2!







Baby and Toddler Squad (B.A.T.S)



Mud, mud, glorious mud!

It was great to see so many of you at our first B.A.T.S. Forest School session. Before we left school, we used our mixing skills to make chocolate crispy cakes with strawberry lace worms. We then ventured down into the forest area, mixed mud and water to make our own mud paint and enjoyed painting material flags. We also loved exploring the brook! Many of us wanted to stay splashing around all morning but we headed back up to school for a story and to enjoy eating those delicious cakes.


We're looking forward to seeing you all again for an indoor session next week and then the next Forest School session on Tuesday 7th October. It was lovely to meet so many new families and some familiar faces too. Feel free to come along and join us for our next sessions.












**Balderstone
B.A.T.S**
eee



**Toddler
Forest School
Group**

**Tuesdays
9.30am -
11.30am**

Come and join us at our all new Toddler Forest School session (led by our own Forest school teacher) in our magical Forest school and stream!
Refreshments from 9.30am and outside from 10-11am. Songs and games till 11.30am.

Dates

- Tuesday 23rd September
- Tuesday 7th October
- Tuesday 14th October
- Tuesday 21st October
- Tuesday 4th November
- Tuesday 11th November

You will need:
eee

Warm waterproof clothes, a hat, gloves and wellies, a sense of awe and adventure and an adult to help with the fun! Only £3 a session

Contact details
eee

Balderstone St Leonard's CE Primary, Pre-school and Brambles Nursery
Commons Lane, Balderstone, Blackburn. BB2 7LL
01254 769150
Come along and join the forest fun!

Food for Life



Gardening Club's harvest continues! This week it was carrots, a few more beans and tomatoes and also apples from the tree on the field. If you'd like some apples to cook with, please help yourself and pick the apples from the tree. Make sure you pick them from the tree rather than picking them up from the ground. We don't know if they are eaters or cookers so best to cook them! Happy baking!



Safeguarding section



We're supporting the smart-phone free childhood movement!



We're hearing more and more from parents who feel uneasy about the growing role of smartphones in children's lives – especially as they enter the later years of primary and start secondary school. The reality is, these devices are becoming part of childhood far earlier than most of us expected.

While smartphones have their place, they were designed for adults – and there's now clear evidence they're not always good for children. From rising anxiety and sleep issues to online bullying and distraction, many families are questioning whether early smartphone use is really in children's best interests.

That's why we're supporting a simple but powerful idea: the Parent Pact, part of the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign. It's a growing national movement of families choosing to delay giving children smartphones until at least age 14, and social media until 16 – and doing it together, so no one feels like the only one holding out.

You can learn more and watch a [short video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFsiYAsgx7U&t=3s)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFsiYAsgx7U&t=3s>

and if it feels right for your family, [sign the Pact](https://sfc-db29be.webflow.io/sign-up-to-parent-pact). <https://sfc-db29be.webflow.io/sign-up-to-parent-pact>

It's already been signed by families at 45% of schools in the UK, and you can see live data for which schools have the most Pacts signed in our area.

As a school community, we're lending our support to this movement – not because we believe there's one right way to do things (or because we hate technology - because we LOVE new and innovative tech), but because we think this is an important conversation for all of us. We know that every family's situation is different, and many of you may already have devices in your household – for your child or their siblings. It's never too late to reset boundaries, build healthier screen habits, or take small steps toward a more balanced digital

life. If you're interested, we're also sharing some helpful tips from [Dr Rangan Chatterjee](#) on how families can navigate this together.

But we also know that together, we can reset that expectation that kids have smartphones – and give children at this school more time to grow up without the pressure of constant connectivity.

We're aware that many families want to be able to contact their children, especially as they begin walking to school alone. There are some great alternatives to smartphones that offer calls and texts, without internet access or social media. If you're looking for ideas, have a look at this [child-friendly phones guide](#).

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/alternatives> for some simple phones designed with kids in mind.

Church and Community Corner



SAVE THE DATES:

Sunday 12th October Harvest festival 11am

Sunday 23rd November Forest Church 4pm

We are really looking forward to Harvest Festival at church on Sunday 12th October. Harvest is a time for us all, from every faith, to come together to thank God for His creation and food. At a time when so many are going hungry and when Food Banks are in such high demand, school will be collecting dried/tinned goods for Blackburn Food Bank and also

collecting for the Bishop's Harvest appeal and Red Cross for Palestine. Find out what is happening at our church at:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/11534/service-and-events/events-all/>

Get in touch



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

Please note: our office and telephones are only staffed in the morning sessions. Please leave a message on the absence line if you need us at other times. Thank you.

head@balderstone.lancs.sch.uk or bursar@balderstone.lancs.sch.uk

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