

Beechwood Newsletter



Well done to all the children for their hard work and achievements this half term. We hope you all have a restful and enjoyable break ready to start the Summer term.

Ofsted Report

We received our Ofsted report last week which was sent home for parents and carers to read. The report is also available to view on the Ofsted website. We are very pleased with the outcome of the inspection and how well it reflects our school. Our staff, children, parents and governors should all be very proud of their ongoing dedication and achievements.

Attendance

As we approach the end of the spring term, we are thrilled to reflect on the incredible attendance achievements this term. Spring term has been a testament to the remarkable dedication within our school community, with over 200 children achieving an impressive attendance rate above 95%. Additionally, we are immensely proud to announce that more than 50 children have accomplished the exceptional milestone of a perfect 100% attendance.

This outstanding commitment deserves recognition, and we will be celebrating these achievements during our end-of-term assembly. Classes that have demonstrated excellent attendance, and good punctuality will be rewarded collectively for their efforts, while classes requiring improvement will be encouraged to make positive changes.

We encourage all students to regularly monitor their attendance and stay informed about the best strategies to meet school targets. Individual postcards will continue to be awarded throughout the term, acknowledging

students' hard work and dedication to maintaining excellent attendance.

Looking to the future, we are excited to introduce new opportunities to motivate and celebrate attendance successes. Starting next term, we will be implementing a monthly "Attendance Spotlight," where outstanding attendance by individuals, classes, or year groups will be highlighted and celebrated on our school website and newsletter. This initiative aims to inspire all students to strive for improvement, as every day counts towards their success.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our parents, children, and teachers for their unwavering support. Together, we have demonstrated that a collective commitment to attendance leads to exceptional achievements. Well done, everyone! Let's keep building on this fantastic progress as we move forward!

Trips, Visits and Experiences

D:Side Drug Awareness Lessons

D-side visited school and held workshops in Reception to Year 6. The younger children learnt about how to stay safe around medicine and the older children learn about the effects of alcohol and tobacco on the body. This supported the PSHE topic for Spring term.

Steel Pans Concert

On the last day of term, Year 4 and 5 Steel Pans Groups performed a short concert for Key Stage 2. They showcased their musical talents with confidence and enthusiasm, entertaining their peers with a variety of songs. It was a great end to the term, and showed how much the steel pans groups had learnt this term and grown in confidence.

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Easter Assembly

We welcomed Rev Anne to school to deliver an Easter assembly. She explained the historical context of the Easter celebration and the reasons why we give Easter eggs as gifts today. The children loved the assembly and Rev Anne kindly brought Easter eggs for each class to share.



Climate Conference

Last week, 10 children from Year 4 and 5 took part in a very special climate focused day at Leeds Civic Hall. They had to talk to other schools about Beechwood's climate work and get ideas for our next steps by listening to what other schools are doing. In the afternoon, Artis helped us teach the other schools one of our climate songs. Everyone loved joining in with us and we hope that they will use the song to teach the importance of climate action in their schools.



Child Friendly Leeds School Holiday Activity Guide



Young Carers

We are excited to announce an upcoming whole school assembly focused on young carers. Professionals from Leeds City Council will visit Beechwood Primary School to deliver valuable insights into the experiences of young carers and the support available to them. Additional information about this event will be added to the school website. If you are a young carer, or if you know someone who is a young carer, please use the details on our school website to self-refer or contact the school directly for further support and guidance.

[Young Carers | Beechwood Primary School](https://www.beechwoodprimaryschool.co.uk/category/holidays/)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

This week's online safety focus is on how using technology safely can help to boost your child's reading skills as it now plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional texts remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, engaging and interactive. The guide has 10 top tips for parents and carers on how to support children to access this safely and effectively. See below for more information.

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Staff News

At the end of this term, we say goodbye to Mrs Lyons who has a new job working for Leeds City Council. We thank her for all her hard work and wish her every success in her new role.

We welcome Mrs Matharoo, who has been teaching in class 5, as our new nursery teacher after the holidays. We look forward to having her as a permanent member of staff in school. We are pleased to have Mrs Merritt returning to school at the start of the summer term in Class 5. We are sure the children will be very excited to have her back.

At the end of term, we say goodbye to Mrs Galloway, one of our lunchtime supervisors. We wish her the best of luck in the future.

Safeguarding

If you are worried about any safeguarding situation or about your child being harmed, then you should contact Miss Roberts (Designated safeguarding lead), Mrs Giles (Deputy designated safeguarding lead) or Miss Ileana (Deputy designated safeguarding lead) to share your concerns.

Key Dates

Training Day - School Closed on Tuesday 22nd April

School reopens to all children on Wednesday 23rd April

Residential Balance Reminders

Year 4 Lake District Residential Balance is due by 4th April

Year 5 Herd Farm Residential Balance is due 25th April

Year 6 London Residential Balance is due by 2nd May

School Grid

If your child normally has, or would like to have a school meal, please pre order their meals for the week via *School Grid*.



School App

Please remember to download the *School App* so that you don't miss any communication.

<https://www.theschool.app/>



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.

1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT

Before integrating technology, consider the types of text that a child engages with. If they need help on occasion, digital reading pens can assist by scanning and reciting words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used in exams if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.

2 READING ON SCREEN

Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability. Adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles – such as dyslexia-friendly fonts – are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.

3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS

Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in Settings under Accessibility and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments, who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.

4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES

Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.

5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS

Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogues and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve storytelling, puzzles or problem-solving often include large amounts of text – encouraging children to read these texts aloud or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.

6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS

Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Repeatedly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.

7 USING AUDIOBOOKS

Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to a narrator, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.

9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY

Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most smartphones, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight a passage or sentence and press Play to hear it read aloud. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.

8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING

Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to have their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.

10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13–16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media videos include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educational online environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowri is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neuroteachers, which offers a library of short, 'how-to' and explanation videos for educators. Catrina also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.



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