



Dear Parents/Carers

I am sitting here smiling after spending time in Year 5 lessons yesterday and today, listening to your incredible children debating school uniform. I was so impressed by the quality of their arguments backed up with clear research and evidence! But it isn't only me who thinks our children are amazing; every visitor we have had in to school this half term have all said the same thing. They should all be really proud of the incredible individuals they are.

Call me sad, but the addition of the new safety barrier by the main gate has also made me smile recently! A big thank you to all parents who offered to sign a petition to help to get the barrier installed. It was great that we didn't need to do that as the Council could see that it was necessary.

Attached to the same email as this newsletter is our Christmas timetable and the LBBB Holiday Club Information (HAF). We do hope that many of you will join us for the events we will be hosting.

If I had one wish during the festive season, it would be to see all children arriving at school on time. I know that mornings are cold and dark but please do your best to arrive in time for the start of the school day so that learning can start promptly for everyone.

Marie Ziane (A very worried Headteacher wondering if the Naughty Elf will appear again this year!)



Centenary Update

Thank you to everyone who supported the sale of our **centenary tea towels**.

These should all have been delivered to you now and should be a lovely memento of our 100-year celebrations.



The weather was good to us last Friday and we were able to bury the time capsules containing work produced during the two-week celebration activities. Photos have been saved on the school website. We will also be mounting a plaque to commemorate the event and to remind us of where to dig to find the time capsules in another 100 years' time!



In collaboration with BOW Arts, we have been working on an art project to also commemorate this time. All children contributed to creating a collage representing different decades they had been learning about. The work produced is now with the Bow Arts artists who are completing the designs. These will be installed in the junior playground in the next few months for all to enjoy.



Fundraising



Thank you so much for all your kind donations on Children in Need Day. **Together, we raised £244.50!** Children looked brilliant in their costumes and enjoyed a fun day carrying out their class 25 challenge!

Our **Change4Change team** are currently planning a Christmas fundraising activity as part of our Christmas Fete.





School Improvement Plan 2025-26

At Becontree Primary School, we believe that ALL children have learning, well-being and safeguarding needs; these principles underpin our exemplary inclusive practices throughout the school.



This year, we have a focus on further developing:

Behaviour, Relationships and Learning

It was lovely to hear our children speak so positively about the changes we have made to our behaviour systems when talking to two visitors from Barking and Dagenham Education Team who visited last week.

The children commented on how the recognition boards in each classroom help them to work as a team and build positive relationships with each other.

They also said they enjoyed the Over and Above Tickets and liked when they get to have a special lunch with Mrs Ziane.

It is important to us that parents hear about all the exceptional things children do at school, so I hope you have enjoyed receiving the positive notes home which have outlined the Over and Above contribution your child has made at school that week.

Next term we will be focussing on:

- Developing a shared language, this is important as it increases clarity, consistency and trust. Allowing children to feel 'safe' to take chances with their learning.

Learning is not
a place.
It's a relationship
between student
and teacher.

Meeting the needs of all children

To help children who need additional reading support, we have implemented an online programme called **Lexia**. This is a research-proven literacy programme designed to develop essential reading skills through personalised, adaptive learning paths. Year 3 are also trialling an online home learning application called **Story Zoo**. This application can adapt reading levels to individual needs and will hopefully encourage more reading at home.

Mrs Wilden (Maths Lead) has been working in the Reception, Year 1, 2 and 3 classrooms during maths lessons this term. She is supporting teachers to adapt lessons so that everyone can take part and have their needs met.



Staff have also been working collaboratively to look at different strategies to support children at the very earliest stages of oracy development. This will ensure a consistent approach to developing pre-requisite skills that children need to communicate and collaborate effectively within the classroom.





EYFS

The children in nursery have enjoyed learning about our senses. They especially loved using their sense of smell and taste when cooking and eating apple crumble!

In reception, the children have been learning all about Space. We loved making pizzas for our alien tea party!



The ARP



In the ARP, we supported Children in Need. The children challenged themselves to jump up and down twenty-five times.

Zen Dens

Children in the Zen Den have enjoyed learning traditional tales and creating characters linked to the stories.



Year 1

Year 1 had an exciting trip to the park to identify human and physical features as part of their geography unit of work.



Year 2

Year 2 have been using an atlas to locate different parts of the UK and continents across the world. They will use the research to write an information leaflet in their writing lessons.



Year 3

Year 3 have been busy exploring and learning in exciting ways! In science, they created shadow puppets to investigate how light and shadow work, making some fantastic discoveries along the way.



Year 4

Year 4 have enjoyed learning about human nutrition and digestion in science. They are also doing really well in their weekly swimming lessons, and many children have already gone up a group.



Year 5

Year 5 have enjoyed exploring how different materials can be separated using sieves, filtering and evaporation.



Year 6

Year 6 enjoyed a visit to the Natural History Museum as part of their exit task for their science unit on evolution and as an introduction to their new geography topic on physical geography, including volcanoes, earthquakes and climate.



Amazing Becontree Writers

We have amazing writers at Becontree, and we want to celebrate some of these children with you. These children are resilient, try hard and do not give up! These are key attributes of any successful author. Each term, we will alternate between the year groups in each phase to celebrate everyone's efforts. Please look at our school website to see their amazing efforts. Please use this link. <https://becontree.secure-primariesite.net/amazing-writers-1>



Pupil Leadership 2025-26

Our children continue to play a huge part in the day to day running and development of our school. Read below about some of the work they have started or have planned for this year.

Our **School Council** has had a purposeful term. Councillors gathered ideas from their peers about how we can continue improving our school and represented their classes with confidence. At the end of the month, they will visit Lidl to buy essential food and sanitary items for St Thomas Church Food Bank. This project shows their commitment to helping others and making a positive difference in our community.



Year 6 Prefects are now into their second half term and have had the opportunity to experience different roles. They continue to work hard, and Becontree staff are very appreciative of all the help they provide across the school. Some of the prefects have particularly enjoyed supporting the ARP children during lunchtimes while others have been an enormous help in preparing PE equipment for afternoon lessons.



Our **Playground Leaders** have continued to work actively across both the KS1 and KS2 playgrounds. They have been supporting children with their games, provided equipment for all to play with and helped to ensure the playground is a safe and tidy place. Over the next term, we will be looking at ways, alongside Mrs Ziane, on how we can develop our playground to ensure all our children's playing needs are fully met.





Pupil Leadership 2025-26

Our **Maths Ambassadors** have started to support teachers in preparing resources for lessons. They have also started to support the year 4 pupils to learn their times tables during their lunch time club.



Our **Digital Leaders** have been hard at work this term, confidently carrying out their responsibilities around the school. They have been ensuring the devices in the school are ready to use and have shown a great commitment to their role. We are looking forward to gathering them together soon for a Digital Leaders' meeting to plan next steps in their work.



The **Eco Committee** launched a whole school recycle project to commemorate Remembrance Sunday. Children were asked to use recycled materials to make a piece of poppy artwork. There was lots of amazing artwork produced using a variety of recycled materials. Well done to everyone who took part. The Eco Committee are also pleased to announce that the **Scooter Park** has been extended by the addition of two new scooter racks funded by a company called RUND who worked in the local area.



The **Travel Ambassadors** gave a short presentation to some of the Governors at Becontree Primary School about the activities and tasks they took part in last year, such as Road Safety workshops and competitions, attending a seminar about an Active Travel project, organising a Walk to School Week and taking part in various workshops linked to travel. All of these projects helped our school gain **Gold accreditation on the TfL Travel for Life** programme which looks at ways to travel actively, responsibly and safely. They spoke about their role, what they enjoyed and what skills they have gained or improved on whilst being a Travel Ambassador. Take a look at a video of their presentation on the school website under Travel Ambassadors.

TfL Explorers Travel Ambassadors



WE HAVE ACHIEVED



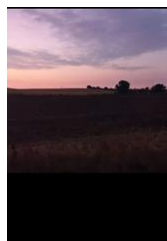


Parent and Community Partnerships CONNECT – COMMUNICATE – COLLABORATE

I love hearing about children's and parent's achievements outside of school, so please keep sending them in! In this edition of the newsletter, we celebrate Charlie (5L) and Mr Watts (children in Year 2 and Year 5).



We are all very proud of Charlie's gymnastics skills. She is already working hard to move up to the next level! Go, Charlie!



Mr Watts took part in an endurance walk to help raise money for the Gurkha Welfare Trust. In a group, he walked from Southend to Chelmsford overnight and raised nearly £4000.00. Incredible! I bet his feet ached the next day!

And what about Mr Harvey? A while back you will remember that he ran the London Marathon. Now he has only gone and ran the **New York Marathon**! We are super proud of him! His medal is amazing!



Christmas Fete

Wednesday 17th December 2025



Please join us after school for some festive fun at our Christmas Fete. We'll have Father Christmas and lots of great activities for everyone to enjoy.

Tickets are on sale now in the office and at the school gate.

Everyone is welcome – this is an event you won't want to miss! We are always looking for volunteers to help at the event, so if you are free, please let Jackie (PSA) know.

Many thanks!





Language and Communication Corner



Follow the Child's Lead and Interests

WHY?

This lets the child learn at their own pace, strengthens their attention and turn-taking skills, and builds connection.

HOW?

Watch what the child is focussed on and join in without taking control of their play. If they are stacking blocks, stack blocks with them. If they knock them over, join in and talk about what is happening. Following their lead shows that you are interested in what they are doing and keeps them engaged.

Language of the Term

Our current language of the term is **Romanian**.



Did you know?

Romania has one of the biggest buildings in the world located in Bucharest.

The building is called The Palace of the Parliament.

The building is 240 meters long, 270 meters wide and 86m high.

Makaton

✿ BIG NEWS... Makaton Is At Our School! ✿

We're super excited to announce that our children have started learning Makaton. It's a lively, engaging way to communicate using signs, symbols and speech! ALL pupils will be joining in as we bring Makaton into our classrooms and celebrate communication for everyone.

Why Makaton?

Because it's amazing! Makaton helps every child feel confident, connected and understood. It boosts language skills, strengthens friendships, and gives children another brilliant way to express themselves, especially when talking is tricky. It's fun, inclusive and empowering for all!

Parents, watch this space!

In our next newsletter, we'll be sharing some exciting Makaton signs for you to try at home. Get ready to join the fun!

Hands up... and let's get signing! 🙌 ✨

Rights Respecting School Award

We are still working towards achieving our **Silver Rights Respecting School Award** and children knowing about their rights is important.

We have been learning about **Article 2** which focuses on ALL children have rights no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion or ethnicity is. Children have been learning that everyone should be treated equally and fairly.





Online Safety

As part of our ongoing commitment to keeping every child safe online, we thought it would be useful to highlight some of the current risks that are particularly relevant right now. Children are increasingly exposed to online scams and misleading content, and the rise of AI-generated media (like deepfakes) means we need to be more vigilant than ever. There's also a greater risk of harmful contact when using chat apps, as well as concerns about screen time and how it affects children's wellbeing. New age-verification rules are coming in under the **UK's Online Safety Act**, so it's important for us to talk regularly with our children about what they do online, how they feel, and how they can stay safe online.

For more advice on keeping children safe online, you can visit the NSPCC and Internet Matters for practical guidance and tips.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety>

<https://www.internetmatters.org>

Governors

Governors have already had **three** meetings so far this year; a full governing body (FGB) meeting to set priorities and governor roles, a quality of education (QED) committee meeting and a site and financial management (SFM) committee meeting. I know that governors were really impressed by the Travel Ambassadors' presentation at the SFM committee meeting.



This year, governors are looking at how they can make sure that the time they spend in school is as effective as possible. At the meeting in December, they will be considering a **timetable for visits in the spring and summer terms** linked to our School Development Plan priorities.

Polite Reminders

Ordering school lunches from home

Please remember to order your child's lunches at home.

There are still a few children who waste part of their lunchtime because they have no pre-order. Please ask at the office if you need any help.

Midday Assistant Vacancies

I am pleased to say that we have quite a few applications for the roles recently advertised. Candidates are being shortlisted now, so we are hopeful of some new faces joining the team in January 2026.

WHAT'S NEXT?



Road Safety Workshops
Week beginning 19th January



Parent/Teacher Consultation
Week
Week beginning 2nd February



Year 5/6 Trewern Week
Week beginning 9th February



Children's Mental Health Week
Week beginning 9th February

