



# Barlby Primary School Newsletter 3

Friday 30th January 2026

## In this edition of Barlby Primary School News:

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## A Note from the Headteacher



Dear Parents & carers,

*We are already four weeks into the spring term and have covered so much learning in that time. The children have enjoyed their new units of work and we have all settled well into 2026. The new year discos were a highlight in January and we have our International Food Taster evening booked for Thursday 12th February- this is always a highlight of the Barlby calendar and a great opportunity for the community to come together. As you know from our communications, attendance is a huge focus for us at the moment and I am very pleased to share the news that this week we reached national figures for attendance for the first time in many months. Thank you for your support in this key aspect of school life.*

*During February half term we will be making some further adaptations to our school building so you will notice a few changes after the holiday. We are adding a gate to the main entrance to further support security for the children and our Year 1 outdoor terrace will also be re-surfaced with a soft play surface. In addition, we will be extending our EYFS outdoor learning space to incorporate our learning sheds and maximise on opportunities outdoors for our youngest children. RBKC are funding these site works and I am confident that our much needed wet weather canopy can also be installed later this year. Your efforts, support and partnership is as ever, very much appreciated. Have a lovely weekend.*

*With best wishes,*

Anthony Mannix

Headteacher

## School Procedures

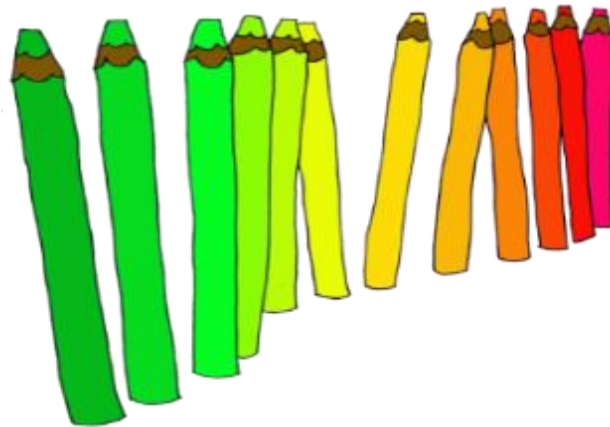


***Please see below for some gentle reminders regarding our school procedures:***

- *Children going home alone: please inform the teacher and school office by email.*
- *If your child is going to be absent: please inform the school office in the morning of the absence.*

- *Appointments: please make these out of school, if this is not possible a letter or text must be given to the school office.*
- *Please note that school starts between 8.30- 8.40am, please make sure your child/children arrive on time. **If they are late you must sign them in at the office.***
- *Late pick up: please inform the school if you know you are going to be late collecting your child/children. Please let the office staff know you have arrived to collect your child/children.*
- *Breakfast Club starts at 7.45am, please do not arrive before this time. You can book up to 7:30am on the day you need Breakfast club. All payments made via Schoolcomms.*
- *School Meals, please note children cannot change from meals to Packed Lunches daily, the kitchen order in food taken from what the children have signed up to.*

## Term Dates 2025/2026



### TERM DATES 2025/2026

#### AUTUMN TERM

**Inset Day (closed to pupils):** Monday 1st September

**Half Term 1:** Tuesday 2nd September – Wednesday 22nd October

**Inset Days (closed to pupils):** Thursday 23th & Friday 24th October

**Half Term Holiday:** Monday 27th October – Friday 1st November

**Half Term 2:** Monday 3rd November – Friday 19th December

**Christmas Holiday:** Monday 22nd December – Friday 2nd January

## **SPRING TERM**

**Inset Day (closed to pupils):** Monday 5th January

**Half Term 3:** Tuesday 6th January – Friday 13th February

**Half Term Holiday:** Monday 16th February – Friday 20th February

**Half Term 4:** Monday 23rd February – Friday 27th March

**Easter Holiday:** Monday 30th March – Friday 10th April

## **SUMMER TERM**

**Half Term 5:** Monday 13th April – Friday 22nd May

**May Day Bank Holiday (school closed):** Monday 4th May

**Half Term Holiday:** Monday 25th May – Friday 29th May

**Half Term 6:** Monday 1st June – Thursday 16th July

**Inset Day (closed to pupils):** Friday 17th July

## **TERM DATES 2026/2027**

### **AUTUMN TERM**

**Inset Day (closed to pupils):** Tuesday 1st September

**Half Term 1:** Wednesday 2nd September – Wednesday 21st October

**Inset Days (closed to pupils):** Thursday 22nd & Friday 23rd October

**Half Term Holiday:** Monday 26th October – Friday 30th October

**Half Term 2:** Monday 2nd November – Friday 18th December

**Christmas Holiday:** Monday 21st December – Friday 1st January

## **SPRING TERM**

**Inset Day (closed to pupils):** Monday 4th January

**Half Term 3:** Tuesday 5th January – Friday 12th February

**Half Term Holiday:** Monday 15th February – Friday 19th February

**Half Term 4:** Monday 22nd February – Thursday 25th March

**Easter Holiday:** Friday 26th March – Friday 9th April

## **SUMMER TERM**

**Half Term 5:** Monday 12th April – Friday 28th May

**May Day Bank Holiday (school closed):** Monday 3rd May

**Half Term Holiday:** Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June

**Half Term 6:** Monday 7th June – Tuesday 20th July

**Inset Day (closed to pupils):** Wednesday 21st & Thursday 22nd July

[Click here for Term Dates on our Website](#)

## Key dates for your diary



- Thursday 12th February - International Food Taster Evening from 3:30-5pm

## Attendance & Punctuality

### Attendance Rewards

During Achievement Assembly on a Friday mornings, the class with the highest attendance from the previous week is shared. The reward for the class with the highest attendance is to wear non-uniform one day the following week. This week, the winning class is **Portobello 6**. Well done!

### Why is attendance and punctuality important?

**Good attendance and punctuality are vital if children are to do their best and make good progress.**

A child's time in school is very important as it impacts upon the following:

- their learning
- their friendships
- their self-esteem and confidence

It is, therefore, vital that every child attends school every day.

Our attendance target is **95%** for the coming year. We really want to meet this.

If your child has only 90% attendance, it means they miss:

- one half day each week
- nearly four weeks each school year
- ***over one school year in a school career***

Research shows that children are much more likely to meet age-related expectations if they have high levels of attendance at school, and we aim to promote this from the very start of their school career. This encourages children to form positive attitudes from a young age, which will influence their approach to work and life in later years. If children understand how important good attendance and punctuality is, they will achieve more in school and will develop good habits for the future.

### **What are our expectations?**

**It is statutory for children who are age 5 or older to attend school.**

This means that all the children in our Key Stage 1 and 2 classes, and the children in our Reception classes who have already had their fifth birthday, must come to school every day. The Government's minimum standard for a primary school's attendance is 95% and our attendance target is 95% or over. We also work hard to encourage all the 3 and 4 year old children who attend our Nursery and Reception classes to come to school every day.

If your child is ill, please contact the School Office by 8:00am on the day of absence and explain exactly what is wrong with your child. Please make sure you phone school every day your child is absent unless you have been given a sick note and have a date for return. If an absence is not reported by a Parent/Carer, then we are duty bound to investigate, and if no reason is given then it becomes an unauthorised absence.

Holidays in term time are not permitted, and the school complies with the national and RBKC policies relating to unauthorised absences.

### **What are the Department for Education's expectations on parents and schools?**

It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Parents have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child

must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The DfE '*Working together to improve school attendance*' guidance is now statutory. We will be working together as a community to improve our attendance this year and reach our target of 95%. This statutory guidance outlines the expectations for schools and what actions to take when there are concerns over attendance.

Schools are expected to:

- develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and is an integral part of the school's ethos;
- have a clear school attendance policy that all staff, pupils and parents understand. This policy should be easily accessible to leaders, staff, pupils and parents;
- accurately complete admissions and attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow up when absence occurs;
- regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance. Effective strategies then need to be put in place;
- build strong relationships with families, seek to understand the barriers to attendance and work with families to help remove these. Schools should treat all pupils and parents with dignity. This supports the recognition that poor attendance is habitual and prevention and early intervention is critical;
- share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

You can find the document referenced here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working\\_together\\_to\\_improve\\_school\\_attendance\\_-\\_August\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf)

## **Punctuality**

**At Barlby, we have a 'soft start' to the day and all children are expected to be in school between 8:30am - 8:40am. Children need to be in class and ready to learn by 8:40am – this is when the learning starts.**

Any child arriving at school after 8:40am is recorded as late and parents are required to give reasons for lateness. We are working hard to improve our punctuality as a school. If a child is

late frequently, a meeting will be arranged to discuss how we can support the family. If there is no improvement, we will consider a referral to Early Help. Please note that referrals to Early Help for attendance and punctuality concerns do not need parental consent, although we will always discuss this with you first:

### ***“Agreement Details for School Attendance Referrals***

*If you are referring for attendance reasons, although we do not need parental agreement, it is still best practice to seek agreement and if it is not given, inform the parent/guardian that you will need to referral to the Early Help Service. We will then work with you to try and engage the parent/carer and pupil in appropriate support to increase attendance.”*

You can find information about Early Help here:

[https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/kb5/rbkc/fis/advice.page?id=5wFBOZHQR\\_8](https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/kb5/rbkc/fis/advice.page?id=5wFBOZHQR_8)

### **Drop off and collection arrangements reminder**

Drop-off:

- Gates open at 8:30am and **close promptly at 8:40am** – children need to be in class and **ready to learn by 8:40am**. If you arrive after 8:40am, you need to sign your child in late at the office, stating the reason why you are late.
- Only parents of Year 1 are able to bring their children to class – **parents/carers of children in Year 2 to 6 must drop their children at the door and not enter the building unless this has been arranged (for example, a child with an additional need)**.
- Parents/carers of children in the Orchard **only** drop off their children at the main entrance.

Collection:

- The EYFS gate (by the main entrance) will be opened at 3:05pm. Please collect you child/children and make your way to the main gate if you have children in older year groups.
- The main gate will open at 3:10pm. If you are collecting children in Year 1 -3, please follow the one-way system and enter via the door by the main hall and use the stairs by the main entrance. Once you've collected your child/children, please make your way down the stairs at the opposite end of the corridor – **please do not leave via the main entrance**.

- If you have children in Year 4-6, please collect them from the playground and leave via the main entrance.



## Attendance at Barlby



At Barlby Primary School, regular attendance remains a key priority because it has a direct impact on children's learning, progress and wellbeing. We have recently updated our Attendance and Punctuality Policy in line with the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve Attendance* guidance, to ensure our approach is clear, consistent and supportive. One important change parents/carers should be aware of is that where a pupil meets the threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period (the equivalent of five school days), this may result in further action, including a formal attendance meeting and, where necessary, issuing a 'Notice to Improve' or a penalty notice. Our aim is

always to work in partnership with families, offering early support where needed, and we thank you for your continued commitment to ensuring your child attends school every day, on time.

We aim to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

***Autumn term attendance = 92.1%***

***Current attendance = 92.3%***

***Our school target is 95%***

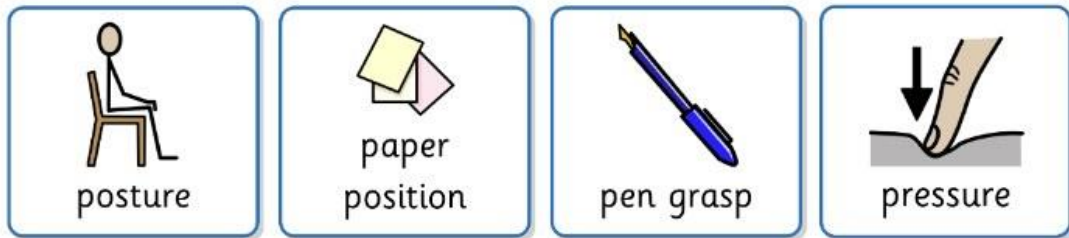
## Road Safety



Thank you for your support and encouragement regarding the challenging parking and traffic situation. We know that closing the estate gate has been unpopular with some drivers but we are celebrating the fact that our children have been safer and we have not experienced any near misses or accidents.

## Handwriting

### 4Ps



"pinch, pinch, flip"

### 'Ready to write' rhyme

Let's sit up straight, feet nice and flat,  
Tilt your paper – just like that!  
Pinch your pencil, give it a flip,  
Check your hold and then your grip.  
Now we can begin to write,  
But not too hard and not too light.



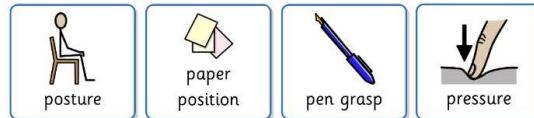
Handwriting is fast becoming one of our favourite parts of the day! Taught every day, we are focused on developing children's foundational skills including control, fine motor strength and coordination. Children are getting used to our new pattern provided by our Reading scheme, Little Wandle. We are encouraging children join in with hand warm up exercises before writing and to think about the 4Ps: posture, paper position, pen grasp and pressure to ensure we are "Ready to write."

Children from Reception to Year 2 are currently using the Little Wandle letter formation families and phrases and children in Year 3 and above are following the "Teach Handwriting" scheme as they transition to cursive, learning and practicing the letter joins.

Please support us with our Handwriting journey by practising regularly at home and using the patter and 4Ps to ensure consistency. See below for a range of hand exercises that you can do at home, and of course, dough disco is always a favourite!

All the Little Wandle letter formation phrases can be found in the Parent section of their website: [Little Wandle Link For Parents](#)

#### 4Ps



"pinch, pinch, flip"

#### 'Ready to write' rhyme

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#### 1. Rub hands together

Rub hands together until they feel warm. Move them up and down, or in circular motions to stimulate blood flow.

#### 2. Push palms together

Push the palms firmly together and hold for five seconds. Repeat a few times.

#### 3. Finger stretches

Open hands wide, stretching fingers as far apart as you can. Then make a tight fist, hiding fingers away inside the palm.

#### 4. Drumming fingers

Drum fingers on the table, one finger at a time. This can be extended to tapping a rhythm.

#### 5. Squeeze forearms and hands

Use the left hand to squeeze the right forearm and hand firmly, applying gentle pressure to stimulate the muscles and increase awareness. Swap hands.

#### 6. Pulling fingers (like taking off a glove)

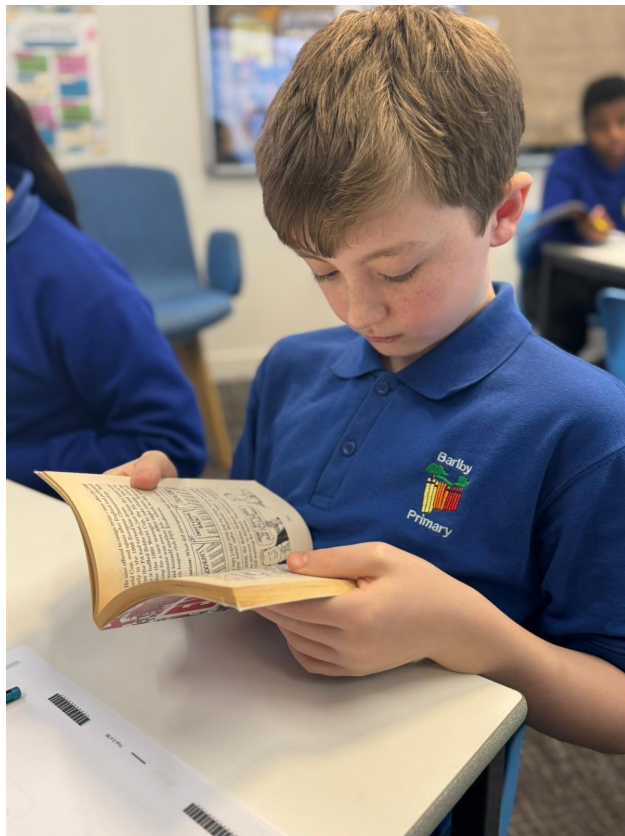
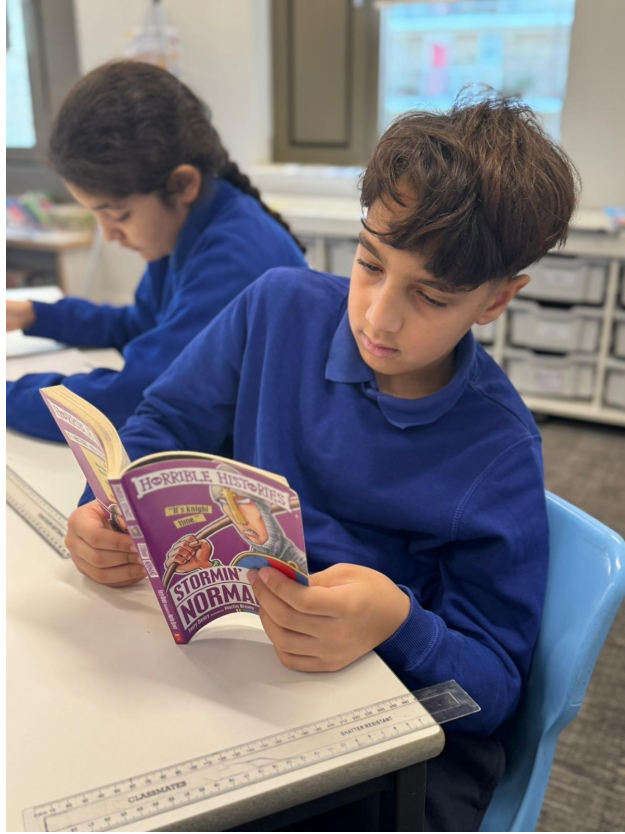
With one hand, grasp each finger of the other hand in turn and gently pull downward, as if taking off a glove. Repeat for the other hand.

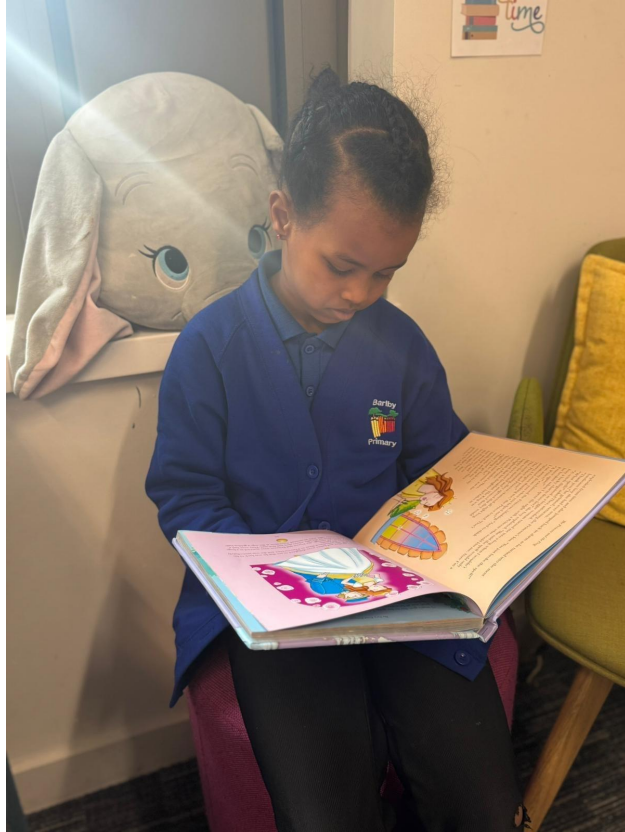
#### 7. Oppose thumb to each fingertip

Touch the thumb to each fingertip of the same hand in turn. For more challenge, this can be done with both hands at the same time, or with your eyes closed.

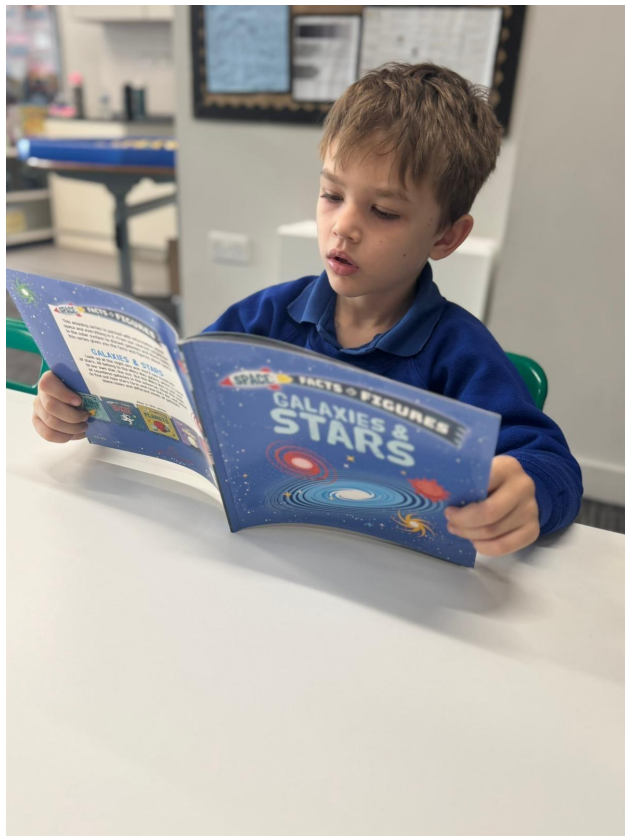
#### 8. Finger circle tug

Form a circle with the thumb and index finger. Then form another circle with the other hand, within that circle, and try to pull them apart.

















## The Orchard

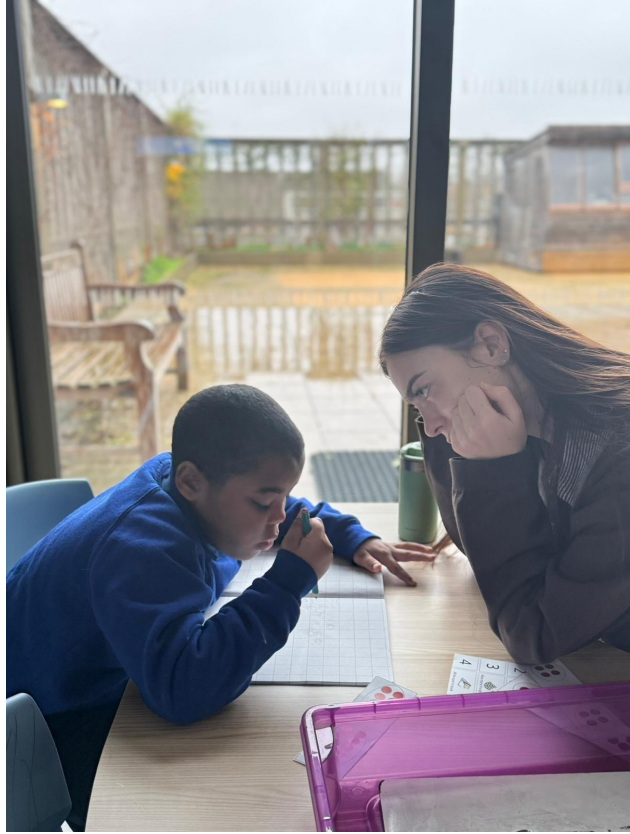


The Orchard has settled well into its new area of the school, with children enjoying the classroom spaces and clearly defined learning and play areas that support focus, independence and routine. We are looking at developing the terrace area further to promote play and their fine and gross motor development. The purpose-built sensory room has been a particularly positive addition, providing a calm, safe space to support emotional regulation and wellbeing when children need time to reset. We have recently reviewed and adapted our curriculum to ensure it remains broad and balanced, while being carefully matched to each child's stage of development and individual needs. Pupils have also been delighted to re-engage in local walks and swimming sessions, which support confidence, physical development and real-life skills beyond the classroom. Looking ahead, we will continue to explore ways to further expand the Orchard provision and strengthen the range of experiences and opportunities available to our children, working closely with families to support positive outcomes for all.









## Year 6

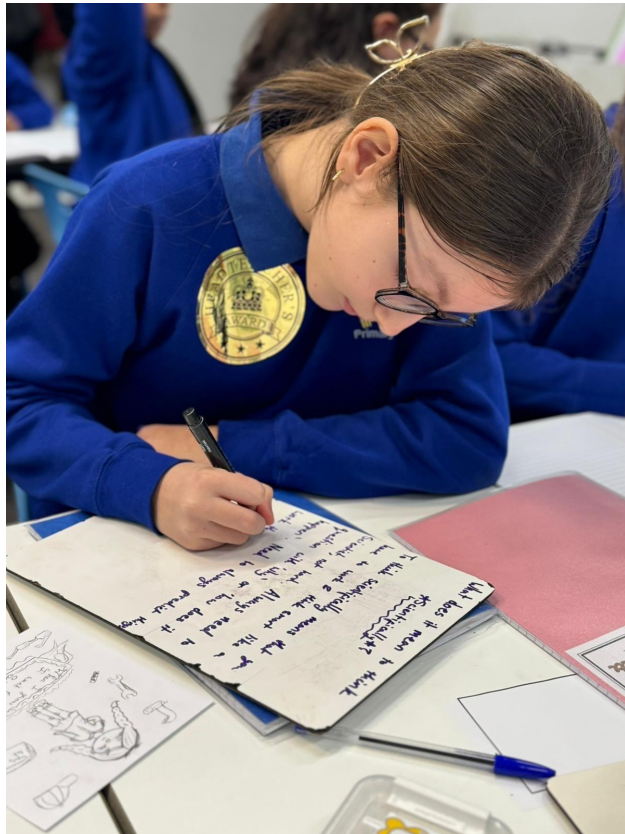


This half term marks an important milestone for our Year 6 pupils and their families, with secondary school offer day approaching (Monday 2nd March 2026). We understand that this can be an emotional time, filled with excitement, anticipation and sometimes a few worries too. Please be assured that we are here to support you and your child through every step of this process. If you have any questions about offers, appeals or next steps, our team is always happy to help.

As we move into the final six months of primary school, our focus is on ensuring every child feels confident, prepared and proud of how far they have come. Transition to secondary school is about much more than academic readiness; it is also about developing independence, resilience and self-belief. Throughout the coming months, pupils will take part in dedicated transition activities, discussions and lessons designed to help them feel positive and ready for the next chapter.

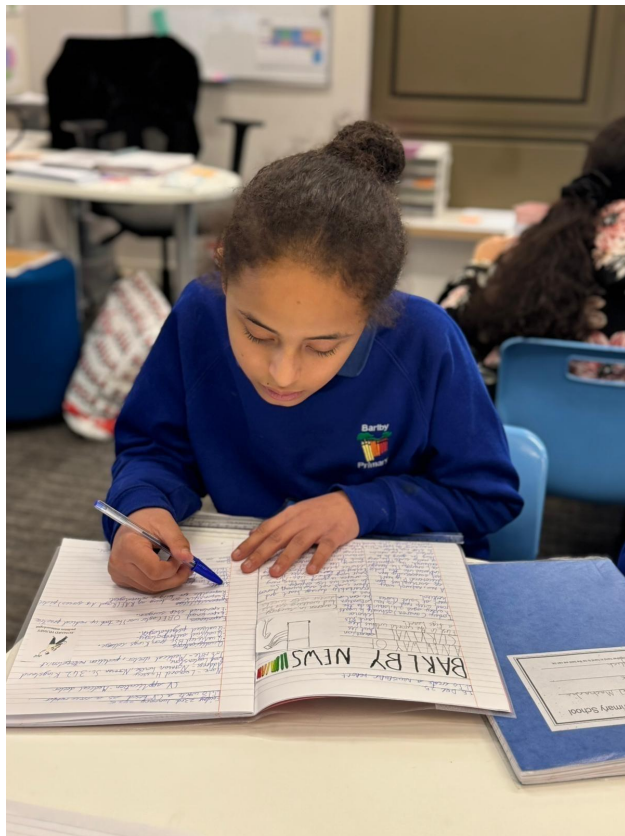
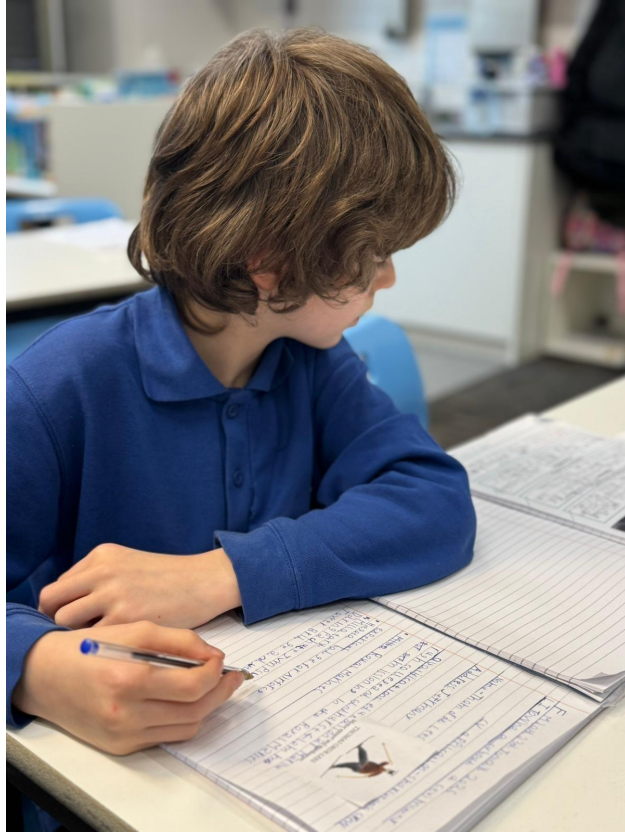
The SATs will take place the week commencing the 11th May 2026. We work hard to make sure children feel calm and supported, with an emphasis on doing their best rather than feeling pressured. Following the SATs week, Year 6 have exciting experiences to look forward to, including PGL residential, which is always a highlight of the year. The residential offers wonderful opportunities for teamwork, challenge, confidence-building and creating lasting memories with friends.

We are incredibly proud of our Year 6 cohort and look forward to celebrating their achievements, growth and contributions to school life over the coming months. Let's make their final term at Barlby a positive, memorable and joyful one.



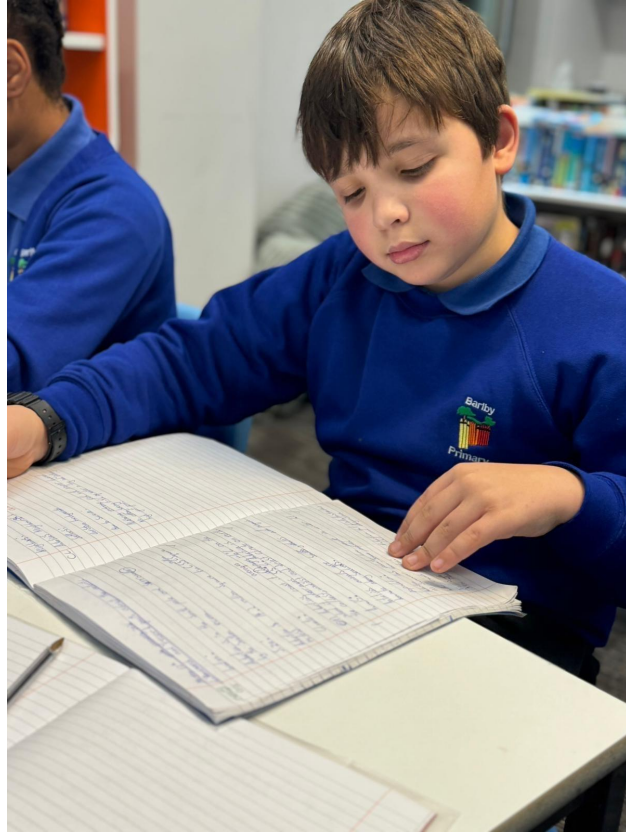


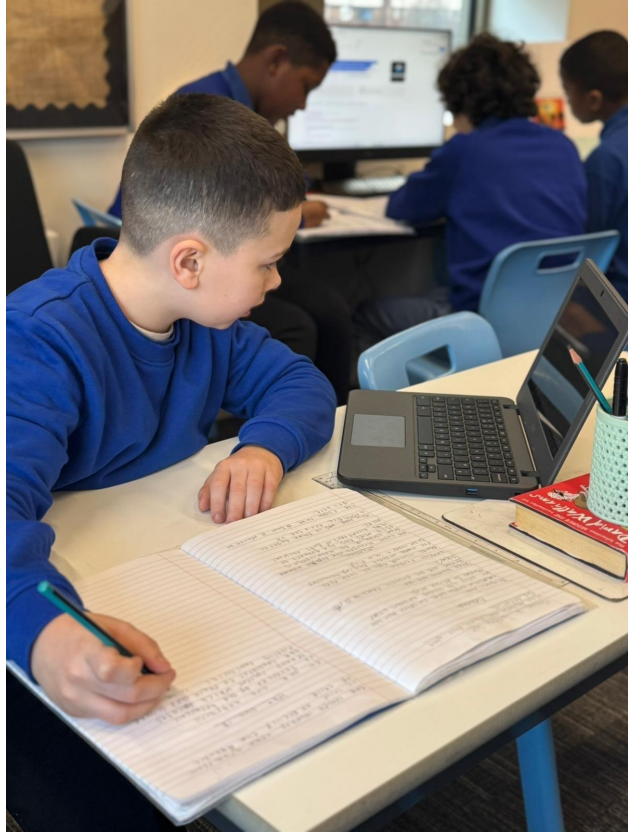












A Story in Photos...











