

Broxbourne CE Primary School Newsletter

Autumn Term Issue 7

16th October 2026



HEADTEACHER UPDATE

It has been another busy and enjoyable week at Broxbourne, with opportunities for reflection, sporting competition, musical celebration and learning both in and beyond the classroom. As we look ahead to our final week of this half term, there is plenty to celebrate and much to anticipate.

Celebrating Black History Month

Thank you to Mrs Cooper for delivering today's assembly to mark Black History Month. The assembly provided an opportunity for children to learn about and reflect upon the significant contributions made by Black individuals to our society, history and everyday lives in Britain.

As a follow-up, we have set a whole-school homework activity inviting children to research a Black historical figure who has made a meaningful contribution to society. Each child has been assigned a value to explore, considering how their chosen individual demonstrated that value through their actions, decisions and responses to adversity. We look forward to seeing the children's research and hearing about the people who have inspired them.

At Broxbourne, we are committed to providing a culturally rich and diverse curriculum throughout each child's journey, from their earliest days with us through to Year 6. We want the books, historical figures, stories and other individuals children encounter in their everyday learning to reflect a broad range of ethnicities, backgrounds and experiences. Representation and diversity are not simply matters for a particular month; they are important considerations in the education we provide every day.

Black History Month nevertheless offers a valuable opportunity to shine a particular light on these contributions, deepen understanding and encourage thoughtful discussion about equality, justice and the experiences of others. As a Church of England school, we are guided by the belief that every person is made in the image of God and deserves dignity, respect and love. As Genesis 1:27 reminds us, "*So God created mankind in his own image.*" This is an important message for us all: every child and every adult is valued, and we each have a responsibility to treat others with kindness, fairness and respect.

Thank You for Supporting Macmillan

Thank you to everyone who supported our Macmillan Coffee Morning today. We are very grateful to all those who donated cakes, joined us for refreshments and contributed to this worthwhile cause.

Dream, Believe and Achieve with God

Broxbourne CE Primary School, Mill Lane, Broxbourne, EN10 7AY
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Fax: 01992 462419 email: office@broxbourne-pri.herts.sch.uk



It was enjoyable spending some informal time together after drop-off, particularly discussing the positive start our younger children have made to school life. These opportunities as a community are important, and we appreciate the generosity and support shown by our families. Thank you to our PTA and everyone who helped make the morning a success.

House Football: A Dramatic Finale!

What a thrilling conclusion to our House Football Competition on Monday! With just 30 seconds remaining, the Blue Badgers scored the decisive goal against the Red Squirrels, securing victory in the overall house competition. Yellow Foxes and Green Hedgehogs also provided a dramatic finish, with a last-minute equaliser adding to the excitement.

The final overall house results are:

Overall House Tournament Results

Pos.	House	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Total Pts
1	Blue Badgers	12	8	2	2	22	10	+12	30
2	Red Squirrels	12	7	1	4	28	14	+14	27
3	Yellow Foxes	12	3	3	6	9	16	−7	21
4	Green Hedgehogs	12	2	2	8	8	27	−19	18

Congratulations to all our children in Years 3 to 6, boys and girls alike, who participated and represented their houses so enthusiastically. The competition has been a wonderful opportunity for children to demonstrate teamwork, determination, sportsmanship and house spirit. Thank you to everyone involved in organising and supporting this event.

Harvest Celebration at St Albans Cathedral

On Tuesday, Mr Turner and I were delighted to accompany our school choir to St Albans Cathedral for the Diocesan Harvest Service.

The cathedral is an inspiring place, and it was a privilege to join other schools from across our Diocese in celebrating Harvest through collective worship and song. These occasions remind us of the strength of our wider Church of England school family and the importance of gratitude, generosity and fellowship.

Our choir were in fine voice throughout the afternoon and represented Broxbourne well and well done to all the children who took part. Our next stop for choir is even bigger – the O2 to sing as part of Young Voices 2027!

Looking Ahead to Science Week

We are excited about next week's Science Week. The programme promises a stimulating range of opportunities for children to explore, investigate, question and discover more about the world around them.



We are particularly grateful to Robert Barclay Academy for facilitating virtual reality workshops for our Year 5 and Year 6 children. These sessions will provide an exciting opportunity to experience technology in action and extend learning beyond our usual classroom environment.

Our final day of this half-term on Thursday promises to be especially memorable, as Wonderdome visits the school and transforms our hall into an immersive, interplanetary learning experience. We look forward to seeing the children's curiosity and enthusiasm as they explore the wonders of space! Thank you also to all parents who have offered a science talk or workshop with our children.

Parents' Evenings and the Half-Term Ahead

We look forward to welcoming families to next week's parents' evenings. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity for teachers to discuss the start your child has made to the school year, celebrate progress and share any priorities for the months ahead. We hope you find the conversations helpful as we continue to work in partnership to support every child.

As we approach the end of the half term, I would like to thank our staff, children, parents and carers for the continued encouragement and support that make Broxbourne such a positive and caring community.

Tonight's PTA Disco

Finally, we hope that everyone attending tonight's PTA disco has a fantastic time! Thank you to all our PTA members for the time and effort they have given to prepare for, run and tidy up after the event. We are also grateful to all our families for supporting the disco by attending.

A special thank you goes to our staff members, Miss Smith, Mrs Conway, Miss Clifford and Mrs Forrester, who are giving their time this evening to support the children and help make the disco such an enjoyable occasion. We hope everyone has a wonderful time!

I wish you all a joyful and relaxing weekend and look forward to seeing everyone next week for our final week of the half term.

Best wishes
Paul Miller

SECONDARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS – IMPORTANT REMINDER

A reminder that the deadline for submitting secondary school applications is **Saturday, 31st October 2026.**

Please note that this deadline falls during the half-term holiday, BEFORE children return to school. Applications must be submitted to your relevant Local Authority by this date (Herts or Essex County Council). We strongly encourage parents and carers to complete their applications as soon as possible to avoid missing this important deadline.



SCIENCE WEEK FUN!

Year 5 and Year 6 will be visiting the Robert Barclay Academy on the afternoon of Wednesday, 21st October for a VR workshop.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH WORKSHOP

On Thursday, Year Six participated in a workshop called 'Creative Live'. The workshop was about how some children in South Africa protested about their right to education. It was in a town called Soweto and black children were being treated differently to white children. This did not show equality. They decided to have an uprising which means they stood up against something bad.

In the workshop, we danced, chanted and chatted. We discussed why children have a voice and are allowed to have an opinion. Each time we were asked a question, Miss Clifford would send our opinions into the live chat.

An interesting fact that we learnt was that Nelson Mandela was the first Black president in South Africa.

The important thing we learnt was that people should be treated fairly and that children have a voice and should be able to share what they care about.

Adults shouldn't underestimate children and how much they can make a difference.





We care about....

The world around us
Animals
Our families
Looking after the planet
Healthy living
People's feelings
society
Our friends
our community
Education
Clean water

0

Add comment

YEAR 6

As Year 6 explained above, the children took part in a workshop and shared their ideas with the other schools. Here is some of what they said...

Broxbourne CE Primary

Hear every colour;
Hear every age;
Don't let anyone stop you;
Be proud and brave!

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Add comment

Children should be heard because...

Even though they're small, they still have big ideas.

6

Broxbourne CE Primary
15 minutes ago
children sometimes get underestimated

Broxbourne CE Primary
15 minutes ago
children deserve to share their ideas and plans- we're the new generation

Broxbourne CE Primary
14 minutes ago
Children's brains are fresh. They have new ideas

Broxbourne CE Primary
14 minutes ago
There are problems that affect children as well as adults

Broxbourne CE Primary
13 minutes ago
Children deserve to be free; to have a voice and to express themselves

Pinned

Broxbourne CE Primary

Save our animals
Save our seas
Protect our animals
It's what we need

0

Add comment



CHOIR SINGS AT ST ALBANS CATHEDRAL

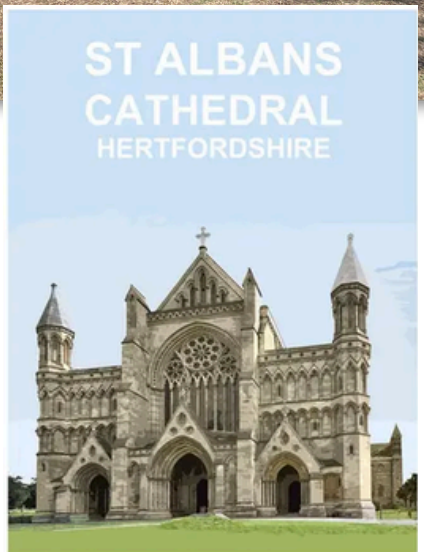
Earlier this week, our wonderful school choir had the fantastic opportunity to visit the beautiful St Albans Cathedral to sing as part of the Harvest Celebration. It was a truly special occasion, bringing together voices in celebration and thanksgiving for the harvest. Our children represented the school beautifully, and we are incredibly proud of their enthusiasm and commitment. A memorable experience for everyone involved – well done to all our talented singers!















MATCH REPORT – HARRY - YEAR 6

On Monday, it was the final match of the year 5 and 6 boys' house football! Blue Badgers vs Red Squirrels! Tensions were high as this match would decide who were crowned the overall champions of the boys' house football 2026!

The game started full of energy and enthusiasm, with both teams having a number of efforts but neither team managing to get past the strong defence and safe hands of the goalkeepers. Half time arrived before we knew it, and it was 0-0. It was all to play for! Both teams composed themselves ready to give it their all to break the deadlock! With some great passages of play and skill from many players, it didn't look like either side was going to break the solid defence of their opposition! However, just as we thought the game was ending, Aiden received the ball and played Louie into the box, and with a great strike full of power, the ball howled in! 1-0 to the Blue Badgers!!!! The final whistle blew seconds later and Blue Badgers were crowned champions for 2026!

POPPY SALE

We are pleased to let you know that poppies are now available to purchase from the school office in support of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.
We have a lovely selection available, including traditional poppies, snap bands and reflector poppies, with prices ranging from 50p to £2.00.
Please note that poppies can be purchased before and after school only.
Thank you for supporting this important cause and helping us remember those who have served and sacrificed for our country.





PTA DISCO - TONIGHT!





At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI COMPANIONS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Powered by generative AI models like ChatGPT and Google Gemini, AI companion apps and virtual chatbots such as Character.ai, Snapchat My AI, Replika and Talkie, allow users to create, customise, and chat to synthetic avatars around the clock. While many young people use them for harmless entertainment, creative writing or homework help, these tools are designed to simulate genuine human empathy, emotional bonding and deep friendship.

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

AI companions are programmed to be endlessly agreeable, attentive, and available 24/7. Unlike human friendships, an AI companion never disagrees, sets personal boundaries, or gets tired. Young people (especially those experiencing loneliness, social anxiety, or low self-esteem) can quickly develop an unhealthy emotional attachment, viewing synthetic software as their 'best friend' or a surrogate romantic partner.

DISTORTED SOCIAL SKILLS

Navigating real-world friendships can be messy, involving dealing with conflict, compromise, boredom, and awkwardness. If a teenager spends hours interacting with an AI that is tailored specifically to validate and flatter them, they may become impatient with real-world relationships. Over time, this can lead to social withdrawal, heightened anxiety in peer groups, and isolation: a vicious circle of growing online dependency coupled with a heightened sense that relationships in the 'real world' are too challenging to maintain.

DANGEROUS MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

AI chatbots possess no genuine empathy, professional clinical knowledge, or moral reasoning. While developers state these tools are not therapists, vulnerable teenagers often turn to them in crisis. Chatbots have previously hallucinated unsafe medical guidance, validated depressive spirals, and failed to safely escalate disclosures of self-harm or suicidal ideation to real-world protective services.

INAPPROPRIATE OR EXPLICIT CONTENT

CENSORED

While most mainstream platforms feature safety filters and guardrails, young people frequently discover 'jailbreak' prompts to bypass them. Some companion platforms subtly nudge users towards mature themes, romantic roleplay, or sexually suggestive conversations. In worse cases, third-party apps with weak safety checks have been found to generate sexually explicit text or intimate images.

DATA HARVESTING & OVERSHARING

Because conversational bots simulate warmth and understanding, children often lower their guard and treat the chatbot as a trusted friend. They may disclose sensitive personal information, including full names, school details, private family problems, or secrets, unaware that their conversations are being logged, may be analysed by third parties (including advertisers), or used to train future AI models.

"FREEMIUM" UPSELLS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many companion platforms operate on a freemium model. While basic chat is free, features like voice calls, uncensored responses, custom avatars, or 'deeper bonding' tiers are locked behind expensive monthly recurring subscriptions or in-app token purchases. This can lead to significant hidden costs and pressure on young people to spend money to maintain the 'friendship'.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK OPENLY ABOUT FAKE RELATIONSHIPS

Demystify how these tools work. Explain to young people that an AI companion has no feelings, memories, or consciousness; it is simply calculating the next most mathematically probable word based on its training data. It is helpful to explain to them the mechanics of large language models so that they understand how they are trained and how they are designed to always flatter and be helpful.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTION

Ensure technology habits do not replace face-to-face peer socialisation, sports, hobbies, and family time. Create healthy boundaries at home (such as keeping phones and tablets out of bedrooms overnight) to prevent late-night, unmonitored attachment loops with conversational chatbots when young people are at their most vulnerable.

AUDIT PRIVACY SETTINGS & AGE LIMITS

18 CENSORED

Check which companion apps are installed on your child's phone or tablet. Many dedicated companion apps carry an App Store rating of 17+, while platforms like Character.ai set a minimum age of 13+ (or 16+ in the UK/EU). Review the privacy settings together: turn off data-sharing toggles, disable model training where possible, and ensure location permissions are blocked.

REINFORCE WHERE TO GET REAL HELP

Make sure young people know that a machine can never replace professional pastoral or mental health care. Remind them of the trusted adults they can turn to at school - such as their Form Tutor, Head of Year, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - as well as dedicated youth support services like Childline (0800 1111) or Shout (text 85258).

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is the Founder and Executive Director of Kompass Education, a consultancy specialising in supporting educators, students and parents in making wise choices with AI. His book Ethical AI and Education, co-authored with Clara Hawking, will be released later in 2026 by Taylor and Francis.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

See full reference list on our website

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Aj's KIDS CLUB

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Fun. Safe. Inspiring. A trusted holiday camp where children learn, play, make friends, and grow in confidence.



REMINDER:
Parents' Evening - Tuesday, 20th October 4.30-7.30pm and Thursday, 22nd October 4.30-7.30pm. If you need a reminder of your booking, please ask the school office.

REMINDER: PTA NON UNIFORM DAY

Thursday, 22nd October

£1 donation if your child wishes to participate

REMINDER: INSET DAY

Friday, 23rd October

The school will be closed!



BIRTHDAY BOOK THANK YOU



Stefanos - EY2 - There's a Snake in my School!

REMINDER: Birthday books should be new and age appropriate for the year your child is currently in.

We hope you had a lovely day!

If you wish to donate a birthday book, please send in via your child and we will put in the library for everyone to enjoy. Thank you.