

*'Courage to Care' Listening, Welcoming, Nurturing, Celebrating*

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**Headteacher:** Mike Riches



30<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Important staffing updates**

Mrs Adams

It is with great joy that I can share with you that Mrs Adams is expecting her second baby this June. This is very exciting news for Mrs Adams and her family – we wish them well as they make preparations for the forthcoming arrival. Over the next few months the school will seek to ensure all staffing arrangements are up together and in place ahead of Mrs Adams's departure.

Mrs Hales

Earlier this term I shared the news that Mrs Hales was beginning her return to work following a bereavement in her family. I am sad to now let you know that Mrs Hales made the difficult decision to resign from her position as administrator. Interviews for a new administrator will take place during February.

Barn Owls

It's been an unusually busy year for staffing changes so far. There are several new faces in Barn Owls Class who will be supporting the school over the coming weeks and months. We are pleased that Mrs Watkins has now settled well into her new role but we have now said goodbye to Miss Bunce. Interviews for a new TA are due to take place over the coming weeks.

**Attendance matters**

Thank you all for your support in ensuring your child is in school and on time every day. This is the best way to help them to succeed in school. Please be reminded that, for this reason, term time absence requests will only ever be agreed in exceptional circumstances. If you would like to request a term time absence please speak to the Headteacher in the first instance.

Our whole school target for this year is 96%. Our current attendance now stands at 95.2%. Attendance for each class currently stands as follows:

Barn Owls: 92.3%

Falcons: 96.3%

Buzzards: 95.7%

Golden Eagles: 94.8%

Please be reminded that the NHS has advice and support to help families determine whether or not their child can attend school: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

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### **Church school inspection**

Thank you to you all for your support with our recent inspection. A report will be prepared over the coming days and shared with all families when it is ready. The inspector put us through our paces and we are extremely pleased with the outcome of the inspection and the strengths that were recognised at Iron Acton.

### **Safeguarding updates**

All staff at Iron Acton are trained in dealing with safeguarding matters. If you ever have any concerns about the safety of a child, please speak to a member of staff. Ms Bagnall is our designated safeguarding lead, and she has additional safeguarding responsibilities. Mr Riches and Mrs Wilson are our deputy safeguarding leads.

#### Parent webinars on county lines and criminal exploitation

The Ivison Trust (formerly Pace) is a national charity working to keep children safe from exploitation by supporting parents, disrupting exploiters, and working in partnership with police and family services. Their work is grounded in a trauma-informed, family-centred approach.

During March 2026, the Ivison Trust is delivering a series of live webinars for parents and carers focused on county lines and criminal exploitation. The sessions help parents understand how exploitation happens, how children are groomed, what warning signs to look out for, and where to access advice and support. Each webinar includes local context, time for questions, and input from a parent with lived experience.

More information and booking details are available at:

<https://ivisontrust.org.uk/webinars/>

#### NSPCC resources

The NSPCC has a range of resources available to support parents and carers. This includes matters such as online safety and healthy relationships. Please take a look at their website for further information: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/>

### **Children's mental health week**

Children's Mental Health Week highlights the importance of caring for mental wellbeing as well as physical health. During the week, children will be encouraged to talk about their feelings, learn ways to manage worries, and understand that it's okay to ask for help, while also exploring a sense of belonging and their place in the world.

Children will take part in an art activity to create a "belonging map," showing the people, places, and things that are important to them. Parents are invited into school to view the children's work, on Friday 13th February at 2.30pm, before our final celebration assembly.

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### **LGBT history month**

An important piece of the work we do at Iron Acton is to promote and celebrate diversity in all its forms and this was recognised as a huge strength during our recent church school inspection. We are committed to ensuring that all members of our school community and beyond are shown care and compassion. This is why we are recognising and celebrating LGBT history month this year.

Each class will spend time learning about the achievements of people from the LGBT community who have made a difference to the world around them.

**Barn Owls** will share stories that explore different families, such as 'Julian is a Mermaid' and 'Love Makes a Family'. We will spend time sharing what makes a family special and what special things we like to do together. We will use the pride rainbow symbol as an inspiration for our arts and crafts and will make rainbow collages and paper chains. We will also learn about Sally Ride, the first female American astronaut and physicist to fly in a rocket to space and we will become scientists ourselves creating our own rainbow inspired science experiments.

**Falcons** will look at Barbara Burford, a British medical researcher, writer, and lifelong equality and diversity activist who helped transform health services and champion diversity in the UK. Our activity will be to create a "Diversity Tree" on a large piece of paper. Each child will add a leaf that represents something that makes them unique (e.g. their family, a favourite hobby, or a colour they like). The tree will help children understand and celebrate diversity, reflect the work of Barbara Burford, and show that our world is richer and stronger because everyone is different.

**Buzzards Class** will be exploring the inspiring work of Jemma Redmond as part of LGBT+ History Month. We will learn about her role as a biotechnologist who developed 3D bioprinters to help create human tissues and organs, and how her innovations are changing the future of medicine. The children will discover how science, creativity, and diversity can come together to make a real difference in the world.

In **Golden Eagles** we will be learning about Elke Mackenzie, a botanist who researched lichens in Antarctica. We will be understanding her work and create some botanical artwork of our own.

### **Friends update**

The next Friends meeting will take place on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February at 7pm on Teams.

<https://teams.live.com/join/9314404948201?p=FL34uk68Zow4YZxSoR> All members of the school community are invited to attend.

Fundraising for additional learning space on the field is picking up pace thanks to several committed members of Friends. This is very much needed and will make a huge difference to the school. Approximately half of the £30k total has now been raised which is amazing news! The next fundraising event will be a sponsored outdoor swim which is due to take place on 21<sup>st</sup> March. If anyone would like to get involved in the swim please let Rose Dubock or Mr Riches know.

Advance notice of May Day in Iron Acton – the event will take place on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May. Please save the date.

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### **Celebrating this week**

*I apologise that the following information has not been shared recently. It completed slipped off my radar! Mr Riches*

The following children were celebrated during our Friday celebration service for showing the 'courage to care':

Barn Owls – Ammar for joining in for collective worship

Falcons – George S for positive attitude and enthusiasm

Buzzards – Theo for celebrating others

Golden Eagles – Mya for amazing effort in writing

Well done to each of you for your efforts.

### **Term 3 calendar**

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date and time</b>	<b>Information</b>
LGBT history month begins	01.02.26	
Children's mental health week	02.02.26	
Golden Eagles visit to the synagogue	04.02.26	See separate letter
Y5 visit to Brimsham Green for drama production	05.02.26	See separate letter
Outdoor learning day	09.02.26	We aim to spend the day learning whilst outside.
Safer internet day	10.02.26	
Golden Eagles visit to Aust for fossil hunting	13.02.26	See separate letter.
Celebration service with families	13.02.26, 2.45pm	Join us in the school hall.
Final day of Term 3	13.02.26, 3.15pm	
First day of Term 4	23.02.26, 8.45am	

Please note: term dates for this year and the next academic year can be found on the school website.