Freshford Church School

Newsletter • Week 4

Friday September 25, 2026

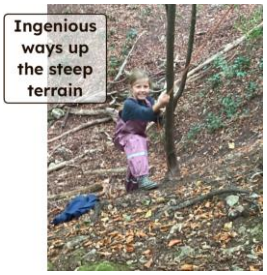
Let's Explore!

I had the absolute pleasure of spending a wonderful day with Ashe Class for their **"Let's Explore"** experience in Rainbow Woods. It was one of those days that reminds you just how powerful learning can be when curiosity, creativity and the outdoors come together.

The children were challenged to journey back through time, exploring the progression from the Stone Age, through the Bronze Age and into the Iron Age. Working in teams, each group secretly selected a historical period and set about creating a detailed community that reflected life in that era. The level of thought that went into their settlements was remarkable. Every shelter, tool, resource and social structure was carefully considered and linked to the period they had chosen.

Just when the children thought the challenge was complete, the activity was turned on its head. The groups rotated around the woodland and became archaeologists, investigating each community to determine which period of history it represented. They searched for clues, analysed evidence, discussed possibilities and justified their conclusions using their historical knowledge.

Gosh, it was brilliant.



What struck me most was the quality of language being used and the impressive levels of recall and retrieval. The children spoke with confidence and enthusiasm about the differences between the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, explaining how communities evolved over time and how developments in farming, settlement and technology shaped later societies. They were knowledgeable, articulate and genuinely fascinated by the history they had been studying.

The higher-level questioning from the teaching team was excellent. Staff skilfully stretched the children's thinking, encouraging them to explain, justify and make connections between different periods of history. It was a joy to watch such rich discussions unfold in the woodland setting.

A huge thank you must also go to our wonderful parent volunteers. Not only did they help make the day possible, but they also built and tended a beautiful fire and cooked the most delicious food for everyone to enjoy. Their support added such a special sense of community to the day.

For me personally, it was an absolute privilege to spend time with the children in a different setting. Seeing them beyond the classroom, working together, solving problems, encouraging one another and showing such kindness and consideration was truly special. They were thoughtful, respectful and supportive throughout the day, and I came away feeling incredibly proud of each and every one of them.

Days like these remind us that learning is about so much more than knowledge alone. It is about curiosity, collaboration, communication and community. Ashe Class demonstrated all of these qualities in abundance, and it was a genuine privilege to be part of their adventure.

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Safeguarding

A heartfelt thank you to all of the parents and volunteers who attended our safeguarding training session this week.

As you know, safeguarding is, and always will be, our number one priority. Every decision we make as a school begins with the question: *"How do we keep our children safe, happy and able to thrive?"* Creating a strong culture of safeguarding is something that belongs to all of us, and we are incredibly grateful to those who took the time to learn more about the important role they play in helping to protect and support our children.

The session provided an opportunity to explore how safeguarding works in school, the signs and indicators that may give cause for concern, and the procedures we follow to ensure that every child feels safe, valued and listened to. It was wonderful to see such a positive response and genuine commitment from our school community.

If you were unable to attend, please don't worry. We completely understand that family and work commitments can make it difficult to join sessions at certain times. To make the training more accessible, we will be holding an additional safeguarding session next week at drop-off time. We hope this will provide another opportunity for parents and volunteers to take part and gain a greater understanding of the systems and approaches that help keep our children safe.

SEND Parent Survey

Over the coming weeks, we will be sharing a parent survey focused on our SEND provision, and I would be incredibly grateful if you could take a few moments to complete it.

At Freshford, we are committed to ensuring that every child feels valued, supported and able to flourish. We know that parents and carers have a unique perspective on their children's experiences, and your feedback plays a vital role in helping us understand what is working well and where we can continue to improve.

We are proud of the support we provide for children with additional needs, but we also recognise that there is always more to learn and ways in which we can grow. Your views will help shape our future priorities and ensure that we continue to develop an inclusive environment where every child can succeed.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to share your thoughts. By working together and listening carefully to one another, we can continue striving to be the very best we can be for all of our children and families.

Vacancies

If you would like to become part of our wonderful team, we currently have vacancies in our After-School Club (after Christmas) and MDSA Lunchtime supervision. If you are interested, please contact the school office for further information.

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Helping Hand

If there are after school clubs that we offer that you would like your child to attend but the cost is too much for your family at the moment, please use the form below as we have a fund that can help. This also applies to our school trips. All enquiries will be dealt with sensitively and in confidence. https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/5xsGaU9Ctn

Attendance and Punctuality

As we welcome the children back in 2026, the Department for Education has asked schools to place a renewed focus on attendance. This is a national priority, and you may have seen recent coverage about this in the media.

Regular attendance plays an important part in children's learning, wellbeing and future opportunities. Being in school consistently supports academic progress, social development, confidence and emotional wellbeing. The table below shows the impact that missed days can have across a year.

Risk Rating	Percentage Attendance	Days Missed	Weeks Missed*	Lessons Missed**
Low	100%	0	0	0
Low	97%	6*	1	24
Medium	95%	9.5	2	38
High	90%	19	4	76
High	85%	28.5	6	114
High	80%	38	8	152

** Some figures have been rounded.*

*** The number of lessons missed is calculated on the assumption that four lessons are taught per day.*

We understand that children do sometimes become unwell, and when they are poorly their health must always come first. However, when children are well enough to attend, even occasional absences can disrupt learning and routines.

The importance of being on time

Arriving at school on time is an important part of a successful day. Please remember that the school gate closes at 8:50am. If a child arrives late, we will contact you so that we can work together to support punctuality.

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TLC

I would like to introduce myself as Chair of the Trust Local Committee (TLC) for Freshford Church School. The TLC is the committee that oversees governance in each school within the Trust, and it is a huge privilege to be able to contribute to our school community in this way. We are lucky to have a dedicated team of TLC members, who freely give their time and diverse talents to contribute to the continued improvement of our school. Further details of who our TLC members are and the work that we do can be found on the school website here. We are looking forward to an exciting year ahead and extend a warm welcome to all the children and families who have joined our school.

Caroline Ford

PTA NEWS

Fireworks night- sponsors needed!!

We are holding our hugely popular annual fireworks event on Friday 6th November at Brown's Field. This is one of the biggest fundraisers of the school year, and the proceeds go directly to enriching and supporting all the wonderful opportunities the children have at Freshford, throughout the year.

To maximise the amount we can raise, we ask local businesses to support us by sponsoring the event, to cover the cost of the fireworks and the band. If you run a business, or know someone who does, and are in a position to sponsor us please get in touch with Emily (Hal's mum) on 07876347456 or emilypennantrea@gmail.com. Your support is vital and hugely appreciated!

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Dates for your diary *Further details (including any booking details) for these events will follow nearer the time.*				
28 September	Lunch Menu week 3		26-30 October	Half term
28 + 29 September	Let's Explore JOYCE Class		6 November	Fireworks
30 September	Tempest Photos		Joyce Class Parent Teacher Consultations **	Mon Nov 9th 1:30-5:30 Wed Nov 11th 3:30-5:30
1 October 7:30 – 9:00 pm	PTA AGM at school		Mill Class Parent Teacher Consultations **	Nov 10th 1:20-5:30 Nov 12th 3:30-5:30
5 + 6 October	Let's Explore GEORGE Class		Ashe Class Parent Consultations **	Nov 10th 3:30-5:30 Nov 11th 1:30-5:30
7 + 8 October	Let's Explore BTS Class		BTS Class Parent Consultations **	Nov 11th 1:20-5:30 Nov 12th 3:30-5:30
14 + 15 October	Let's Explore MILL Class		George Class Parent Consultations **	Nov 11th 1:30-5:30 Nov 12th 3:40-5:30
13 October 9:15—10:15	Open Morning		11 December 2 pm Village Hall	Nativity
21 October 4.30-5.30 KS1 5.30-6.30 KS2	School Disco		21 December – 1 January 4 January	Christmas Holidays Children back to school
			21 – 25 June Year 5 and 6 only	Skern Lodge Residential

** Parent Consultations going live on Arbor to book on Tuesday 20th October at 20:00

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Ever wondered what support is out there for your family?

The Family Support and Inclusion Day is a free event for families across Bath and North East Somerset, bringing together local services, charities and community organisations all under one roof.

Every family has questions from time to time. Whether you are looking for friendly advice, wondering if your child might need a little extra help or simply want to know more about what support is out there, you'll find a warm welcome and plenty of people happy to help.

There will also be free workshops running throughout the day, covering a range of topics to help everyone feel informed, supported and connected.

- Wednesday 14 October 2026
- 9.30am–7.00pm (drop in at any time)
- Apex City of Bath Hotel, James Street West, Bath, BA1 2DA

The event is free to attend, and you can either pre-book or simply drop in on the day (booking will open at the beginning of Sept).

You don't need a diagnosis or a referral to come along.

Find out more at banespcf.co.uk/event/family-support-inclusion-day.

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Bath Philharmonic Tickets

Fancy introducing the family to the incredible sound of a live orchestra? Bath Philharmonic Orchestra has launched two new ticket offers designed to make its concerts more accessible.

Bath Phil Discover – a FREE ticket for anyone experiencing a live orchestra for the first time.
Bath Phil Explore – £6 tickets (£7.50 including per order processing fee) for selected concerts for those ready to come back and discover more.

The 2026/27 season includes five concerts at The Forum in Bath, with the first one on 13 October 2026 featuring virtuoso pianist Mariam Batsashvili. Mariam joins Bath Philharmonic Orchestra for an evening inspired by landscape, light and legend. Experience the breathtaking brilliance of Franz Liszt's First Piano Concerto alongside atmospheric music by Jay Capperauld, Aileen Sweeney and Judith Weir, before Jean Sibelius's magnificent Seventh Symphony brings the concert to a thrilling close.

Find out more about these new ticket offers and how to claim them here:
https://www.bathphil.co.uk/discover

Then head here to book your tickets for 13 October:
https://www.bathphil.co.uk/events/mariambatsashvili

Picky Eating

The School Aged Health Service are pleased to offer a FREE webinar on Picky Eating to support parents and carers of primary aged children. The session will take place on the 30th September 10:00-11:00.

If you would like to attend, please use the link below to sign up. We encourage you to join us for this valuable session!

School Aged Health Service: Picky Eating webinar | Join meeting in Teams | Microsoft Teams

Kind regards,

Katherine George

Early Help Support Worker

B&NES Child and Family Health, School Aged Health

HCRG Care Group

NIHR | Mental Health Research Group

UNIVERSITY OF BATH

The Pathways Study is looking at **how children with behavioural and attentional difficulties navigate mental health support in the South West**

You are invited to take part if **your child is aged between 9 and 12**, and meets any of the following criteria:

- Has difficulty following school rules and expectations, which affects their learning
- Frequently experiences school responses to behaviour, such as time out of class, being on a behaviour support plan, or suspension or exclusion
- Often feels frustrated or dysregulated at school

We will be asking children and their families about their experiences of seeking mental health support, and how this affects them. We want to know what support is available for children, where the gaps are, what works well, and what needs improving.

Taking part will help us find ways to make mental health support easier to access & more helpful for children and young people.

If you take part, a researcher will speak to you for 90 minutes. We would also like to speak to your child for 30 minutes. This is a long-term study, so if you agree we would like to meet up with you every year for 3 years to ask how it's going. The meeting could happen in person, at a neutral location, or online at a time that works for you.

Every family's voice matters so we would love to hear from you.

As a thank you, you will receive £30 by bank transfer or voucher, and your child will get £10, each time we meet up. You will also get a summary of the study findings.

If you are interested in taking part or would like to know more please:

- Sign up for more information here, or scan the QR code and we will get in touch.
- Email the Pathways Study team: pathways-study@bath.ac.uk
- Or call or text Kieran or Rawan: **07980 962364**

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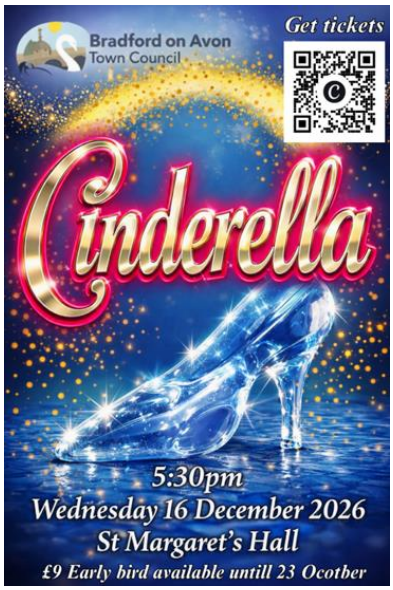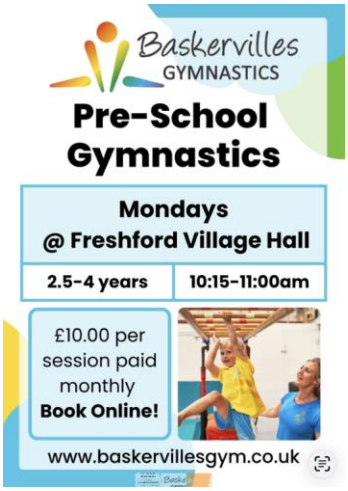
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