Ben Jonson Primary School
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Headteacher: Norma Marshall

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents/ Carers

As we approach the end of our first half-term, I would like to reflect on what has been a busy, productive and successful start to the academic year at Ben Jonson Primary School.

Firstly, I would like to thank all the parents and carers who attended our recent handwriting and reading workshops. Attendance was fantastic, and it was wonderful to see so many families engaging with their children's learning. Your involvement makes a real difference, and we look forward to providing further opportunities for you to work alongside us throughout the year.

Throughout this half-term, our leadership team has carried out learning walks across the school. It has been a pleasure to see children settled, enthusiastic and actively engaged in their learning. Classrooms are purposeful environments where pupils are developing their knowledge, building confidence and demonstrating positive attitudes towards learning. I am delighted with the strong start our children have made and the commitment of our staff to ensuring that every pupil is supported and challenged to achieve their best.

We have also been working hard to strengthen our enrichment provision. I am pleased to share that we have now developed a yearly overview of after-school clubs, offering children a wide range of opportunities to develop new interests, discover talents and build skills beyond the classroom. Our clubs programme will begin after half-term, in Autumn 2, with activities designed to complement our curriculum and support children's personal development. We look forward to seeing pupils enjoying these new opportunities throughout the year.

Another highlight of this half-term was our special Rights Respecting School assembly, during which we proudly displayed our Rights Respecting banner. This was an opportunity to celebrate our commitment to children's rights and reinforce the values of respect, inclusion and responsibility that are central to our school community.

I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to our Harvest food collection. Your generosity has been greatly appreciated and reflects the kindness and community spirit that make Ben Jonson such a special place.

We are also looking forward to our Bonfire Community Event on Thursday 5th November. This promises to be a wonderful opportunity for families to come together and enjoy an evening as a school community. Tickets are now available, and we hope to see many of you there!

As we reach the half-term break at the end of this week, I would like to thank our pupils for their hard work, our staff for their dedication and our families for their continued support.

I wish you all a safe, restful and enjoyable half-term holiday. I look forward to welcoming everyone back for another exciting half-term of learning, enrichment and achievement.

Best wishes,
Norma Marshall
Headteacher

WHAT'S ON?

KEY DATES:

Events	Dates
First day of Autumn 2 term	Monday 2nd November 2026
Supporting Children's Emotion Regulation	Wednesday 4th November 2026
Bonfire Night	Thursday 5th November 2026
School Photography Individual photos (Sibling Photos 8:30-9AM only on request)	Tuesday 10th November 2026
Reception Open Morning (9:00—10:00AM)	Wednesday 11th November 2026
Nursery Open Morning (9:00—10:00AM)	Thursday 12th November 2026
Dads Coffee Morning at 9am	Tuesday 17th November 2026
Flu Vaccination (Rec-YR 6)	Tuesday 17th November 2026
Nursery Open Morning (9:00—10:00AM)	Thursday 19th November 2026
Parent's Evening (2:00—6:00PM)	Monday 7th December 2026
Parent's Evening (3:45—6:30PM)	Tuesday 8th December 2026
Flu Vaccination (Rec—Year 6)	Tuesday 8th December 2026
Winter Fair (2:00—4:30PM)	Friday 11th December 2026
Last day of term (School closes at 2:00PM)	Friday 18th December 2026
First day of term	Monday 4th January 2027

MATHS WORKSHOPS

Maths Workshop - Year 1 (2.30pm)	Wednesday 11th November 2026
Maths Workshop - Year 2 (2.30pm)	Thursday 12th November 2026
Maths Workshop Year 3 (2.30pm)	Friday 13th November 2026
Maths Workshop Year 4 (9.00am)	Wednesday 18th November 2026
Maths Workshop Year 5 (9.:00am)	Thursday 19th November 2026
Maths Workshop Year 6 (9:00am)	Wednesday 25th November 2026

APPLY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEAL

Children in England qualify for free school meals if their household receives **Universal Credit** (with the previous £7,400 income cap removed from September 2026) or other qualifying benefits like support under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 .

Your child will be able to get free school meals if they're in a government-funded school and in Reception class. Year 1 and Year 2.

For more information, see:

https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals

WHAT'S ON?

Nursery & Reception Open Mornings

Between 9am to 10am

Come and visit our school and see us in action.

020 7790 4110

Ben Jonson Primary School

Nursery dates:

Thursday 8th October 2026

Thursday 15th October 2026

Thursday 12th November 2026

Thursday 19th November 2026

Reception dates:

Wednesday 7th October 2026

Wednesday 14th October 2026

Wednesday 11th November 2026

Brave Kind Curious

WHAT'S ON?

Ben Jonson Primary School

ENRICHMENT & CLUBS PROGRAMME 2026–2027

Wellbeing • Physical • Educational • Practical Skills

Programme at a glance

A separate, age-appropriate offer for Key Stage 1 (Years 1–2) and Key Stage 2 (Years 3–6), organised in half-termly blocks. Each key stage is offered one club in each of four enrichment categories every half-term. The price is £5 per child per session. Booking can be made on the school website and payment will be taken through Arbor.

Half-termly programme

AUTUMN 2 | November – December 2026

Half-term focus: Emotional awareness, self-expression, resilience and developing new skills

Key Stage 1 | Years 1–2

Category	Club offered	Days it will run on
Wellbeing	Art for Wellbeing	Monday
Physical	Gymnastics and Balance	Wednesday
Educational	Story Makers and Creative Writing	Thursday
Practical Skills	Baking and Decorating	Wednesday

Key Stage 2 | Years 3–6

Category	Club offered	Days it will run on
Wellbeing	Emotional Regulation and Resilience	Monday
Physical	Cricket	Thursday
Educational	Chess	Thursday
Practical Skills	Christmas Craft and Card Making	Wednesday

Dates are indicative and must be checked against the school calendar, including INSET days, Eid arrangements and school closures.

WHAT'S ON?

More information will follow...

WHAT'S ON?

Ben Jonson Primary School
TOWER HAMLETS
Dads Coffee Morning
Coffee & Chat
Tuesday 17th November 2026 at 9am
Ben Jonson Primary School
• Coffee, Conversation & Support
• Celebrating Dads and Male Carers
• Dads, Grandads, Stepdads and Male Carers Welcome
Special guest speakers and local professionals will provide practical advice and information on topics that matter to families, including mental health and wellbeing, employment etc.
Our Special Guest Speakers
Khadija Khatun
Bridge Point - Senior Recovery Practitioner/Family Lead - The Culturally Sensitive Service that support families affected by drugs and alcohol with respect to faith, family and culture.
Abdullah Tawhid
Family Hub Manager
Oversees the operational function of South West Children's Centres
Malachi Howe
Public Health
Community Navigator
All dads and male carers welcome

WHAT'S ON?

TOWER HAMLETS
EDUCATION WELLBEING
Supporting Children's Emotion Regulation
A workshop on understanding emotional regulation, why it's important and how parents/carers can support children's emotional regulation
A FREE WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS AND CARERS AT BEN JONSON PRIMARY SCHOOL DELIVERED BY THEWS
Date: Wednesday 4th November
Time: 9:00am - 10:00am
Location: Ben Jonson Primary School

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

LATENESS

Please ensure your child arrives to school on time every day. Prompt arrival in school is important for every year group from Nursery to Year 6.

Lateness disrupts the teaching in the classroom and results in your child missing out on their learning time.

Please note the following to ensure your child starts school on time everyday:

- **8.45am to 8.55am Drop off**—school gates open and children can go straight to class
- Parents are not allowed through the gates after 8.55am

EVERY DAY COUNTS!

Regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success — both in school and in life. When you make school attendance a priority, you help your child improve attainment at school and develop healthy life habits.

Every week attendance is celebrated in school during a special assembly. The classes in KS1 and KS2 which have the highest attendance receive a certificate and trophy. Please make sure your child attends school every day they can and help your child's class receive the trophy!

ABSENCES ADD+UP!

MISSING JUST 2 DAYS A MONTH MEANS YOU MISS 10% OF THE SCHOOL YEAR!

TOWER HAMLETS

PENALTY NOTICES

New National Framework for Penalty Notices for poor school attendance and unauthorised leave in term time effective from 19 August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notices will still be issued to each parent for each absent child.

For example – 2 siblings being absent for unauthorised leave in term time, will result in each parent receiving two separate fines.

Penalty Notices will be issued for:

- Term Time Leave: 5 consecutive days or more
- 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and/or lateness in a 10 week period

First Offence

The first time a penalty notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days.

(Reduced to £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days.)

Second Offence

The second time a penalty notice is issued, the amount will be £160 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days.

(There is no reduction for any early payment.)

Third Offence

The third time a penalty notice is issued, the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court.

Fines of up to £2500 per parent, per child, can be issued by the courts.

BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE SUPPORT SERVICE
London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ

Email: LBTHAttendance&.WelfareServiceAdmin@towerhamlets.gov.uk Telephone: 020 7364 3450

The best of London in one borough

OUR ACHEIVEMENT

CELEBRATING OUR RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS SILVER STATUS

Our Rights Respecting Schools Ambassadors were proud to hang up our special banner to celebrate achieving Rights Respecting Schools Silver Status. We had staff from the steering group, a staff governor and a parent who have all supported the children and school throughout the year to achieve silver status. This is a fantastic achievement and recognises our school's commitment to promote children's rights, respect, equality and kindness. Our ambassadors have played an important role in helping to make our school a place where every child feels valued, listened to and respected. We are incredibly proud of this milestone and look forward to continuing our journey towards gold and making children's rights part of everything that we do.

Quotes from the school Ambassadors

Why are children's rights important?

"I think children's rights are important as if children didn't have rights no one in this world would be here. People would disrespect others and the world would end up as a mess."

"They are important because everyone needs rights. If someone does something then the rights will protect them."

How do you feel about us achieving silver status as a school?

"I feel really happy because it means that we are one of the schools that respects these rights and it's not nice to be in a school that doesn't respect the rights."

"I feel proud of us and I feel happy for my school."

unicef UNITED KINGDOM

SILVER – RIGHTS AWARE

OUR ACHEIVEMENT

YEAR 4 MULTI-SPORTS

Year 4 had a fantastic day at the Multisport Festival held at Mile End Leisure Centre! The children took part in a variety of exciting activities, including netball, martial arts, boxing, dance, boccia, archery and tag rugby, where they had the opportunity to learn new skills and try sports they may not have experienced before.

A few weeks before the event, the festival team visited our school to help prepare the children by organising them into groups and encouraging them to create their own group chants. This helped build excitement, confidence and a strong sense of team spirit ahead of the big day.

Throughout the festival, the children threw themselves into the activities, encouraged one another and, most importantly, had lots of fun! The main focus was to develop teamwork, build confidence, support their teammates and celebrate one another's efforts. Year 4 represented our school brilliantly, showing enthusiasm, determination and great team spirit! Arctic class proved their team spirit was above the rest by bringing home a trophy.

PRIMARY GEOGRAPHY QUALITY MARK

We have achieved the Primary Geography Quality Mark (PGQM) Gold Award, recognising the strength of our geography curriculum and the rich learning experiences provided for pupils across the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

LEARNING WALK

Reception had a great time (and sunny weather) for their local area walk. This is linked to their topic 'All About Me' and they visited some places that they will visit properly later in the year, like the church and the farm. They saw lots of interesting buildings and local landmarks and also lots of nature (the Autumn trees and the canal). The children did well keeping themselves safe when walking by the road. Thank you to all the parents who came and helped support on the trip.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Year 6 Flores have been patchworking African wax print fabrics to make… a chair!
We were inspired by Yinka Ilori, an artist and fellower Londoner, to upcycle a chair. Yinka Ilori has upcycled many chairs before, using African wax print fabrics to show the link between African and European cultures.

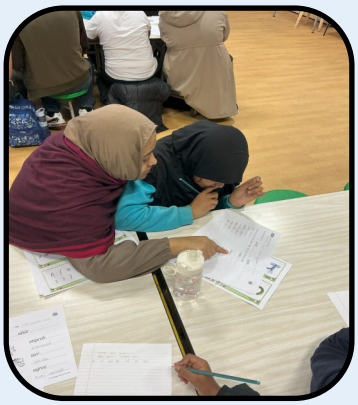
We were given lots of off-cuts of fabric by Yinka Shonibare (our Black History Month artist from 2025), so we have put the fabric to good use. We can't wait to show you the final chair when it is finished.

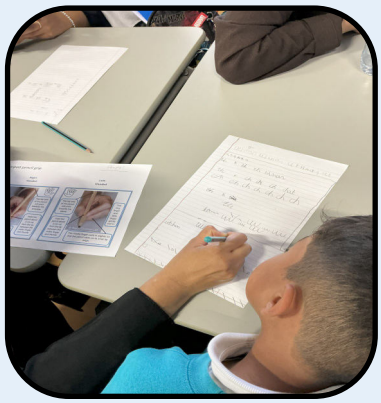
QUALITY OF EDUCATION

YEAR 1 ASSEMBLY

Year 1 enjoyed learning about the Harvest Festival and all the work that farmers do to gather in the fruit and vegetables once they have grown. We thought about the journey they make to get to the shops and the market stalls where we can go to buy them and the different ways we celebrate this time of year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION





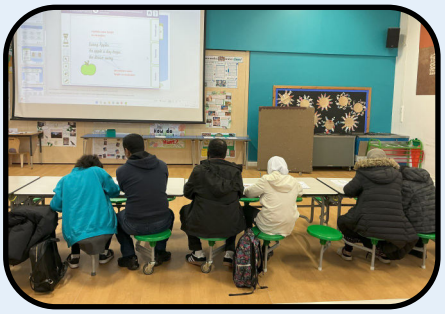
HANDWRITING AND READING PARENT WORKSHOP

A big thank you to all the parents and carers who attended our recent handwriting and reading workshops. It was wonderful to see so many families joining us and showing such an interest in their children's learning.

During the workshops, we shared how handwriting and reading are taught at Ben Jonson, the expectations for each year group and practical ways parents can support their children at home. Parents also had the opportunity to take part in activities and explore strategies to help build their children's confidence and skills.

We hope everyone found the sessions useful and enjoyable. We encourage all families to put the ideas shared into practice at home, whether it's enjoying a book together, talking about what you've read or making time for regular handwriting practice. Small, everyday activities can make a big difference to children's confidence and progress.

Thank you for your continued support. Let's keep working together to help every child become a confident, enthusiastic reader and writer!



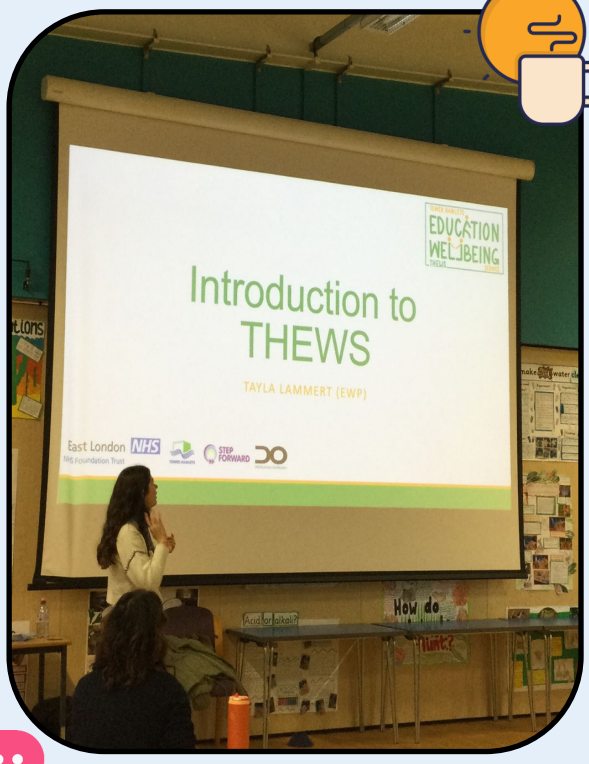
NEWS

COFFEE MORNING WITH THEWS

Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service (THEWS) were delighted to hold a coffee morning for our parents, providing a valuable opportunity to introduce their service and share how they support children and families within primary schools. Parents had the opportunity to interact with the THEWS team, learn more about the support available, and ask questions about the services and interventions they offer. The session provided an overview of the service, explaining how THEWS works in Ben Jonson Primary School to support children's emotional wellbeing, development and wider needs.

Following their valuable work in our school last year, we are pleased to continue our partnership with THEWS throughout this academic year. They will be working closely with our school to provide targeted interventions for children and deliver parent workshops, offering guidance and practical strategies to support families.

Further parent coffee mornings and workshops will be taking place throughout the year, providing additional opportunities for parents to access information, ask questions and learn more about the support available for their children.



ENRICHMENT

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

Year 5 embarked on an inspiring journey to St. Paul's Cathedral to bring their Religious Education studies to life. Standing beneath the cathedral's iconic dome, pupils explored the rich history, sacred architecture, and deep spiritual significance of this historic Christian landmark. Through our self-guided tour, the children investigated how faith is expressed through art and design and marvelled at the breath-taking mosaics. It was a memorable day of discovery that deepened their understanding of community, worship, and living history.

DID YOU KNOW?

St. Paul's Cathedral in London is the fifth church built on its site, featuring a massive dome that weighs as much as seven Eiffel Towers and a famous "Whispering Gallery" where a whisper travels across the room.

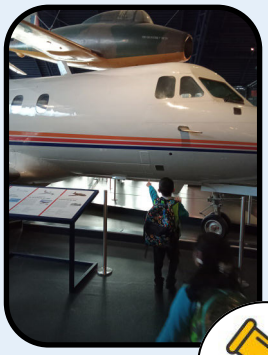
ENRICHMENT

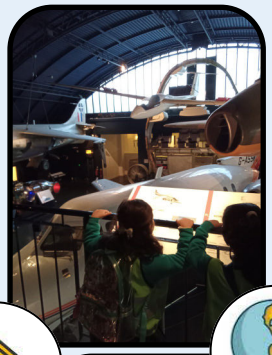
YEAR 2 SCIENCE MUESUM

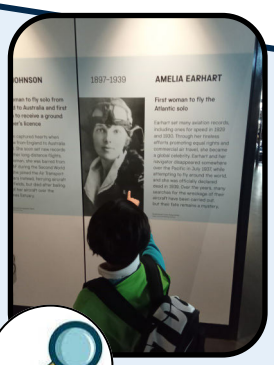
Year 2 took off on an exciting adventure to the Science Museum to bring our History topic on Flight to life! The children explored gliders and plane models, tracing the history of aviation. They learned about key figures like the Wright brothers and Amelia Earhart, before journeying into the Space gallery to find out how astronauts like Tim Peake travel beyond Earth. It was a fantastic opportunity to bring their history learning to life and spark

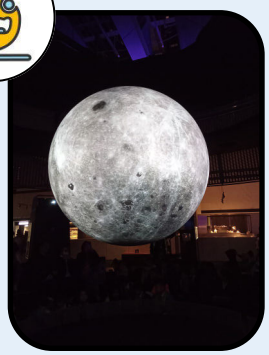
DID YOU KNOW?

The London Science Museum holds over 300,000 objects, including the Apollo 10 command module—the actual spaceship that orbited the Moon 31 times in 1969 with three astronauts inside!





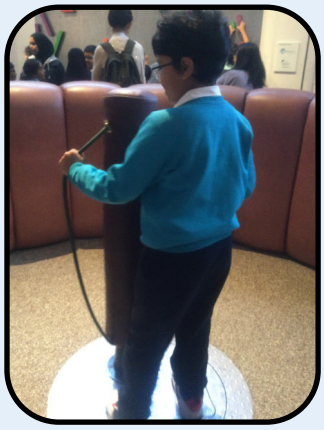




ENRICHMENT

YEAR 4 SCIENCE MUESUM

This week, Year 4 visited the Science Museum to enhance their classroom learning about sound. They explored the Wonderlab gallery, where they took part in exciting, hands-on activities to investigate how sound is produced, travels and changes. It was a fantastic opportunity to bring their science learning to life!



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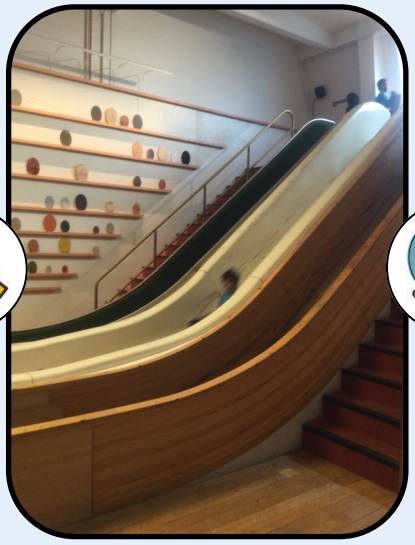

HALF TERM EVENTS

HALF TERM EVENTS