



Have the courage to dream big! That was the theme of our last whole school assembly here in the Prep School. Courage is one of our character values at Bancroft's and it takes courage to pursue a dream. Sometimes you have to be brave even to share your dream with a sceptical world! The children and I looked at the famous Walt Disney quote "All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them." We all agreed (sceptically!) that, much as we liked many of Walt Disney's films, he was probably wrong on this occasion. Not all of our dreams will come true, however hard we try; sometimes we may find that we've been following a dream which is simply wrong for us. The quote we did like was this one, "Dream big and dare to fail", because it recognises that there will be setbacks on life's journey and we all need resilience and grit if we are to achieve anything worth achieving. My final thought to the children was this: if you see yourself as an astronaut, a poet, or even prime minister, dare to try. We believe in you, believe in yourselves and keep on dreaming big!

Joe Layton

CHESS CHAMPS!

On Sunday, 25th January, nine stoic girls and two tired teachers gathered in the early morning darkness by the Tower, ready for departure to Guildford and the semi-finals of the ECF's Girls' National Championships. The journey to St Catherine's School, Bramley, was filled with anticipation as we began our campaign to defend the title we won in 2023. Last year, we were narrowly beaten by Eltham College in the finals, and we were eager to settle the score! We fielded three excellent teams in a fiercely competitive event, where only the top nine teams would qualify for the finals out of sixty-one competing schools. Each of our players demonstrated incredible resilience and skill. I am delighted to report that our A team—Irina, Zoe, and Mary—emerged victorious, clinching first place with remarkable poise. We are thrilled about the finals in April and the opportunity to reclaim our title. Well done to everyone who played!

Lisa Life



YOUNG VOICES



On 5th February, the whole of Prep I, their teachers, the music staff, Mrs Clark, and Miss Fourie went to the O2 for the rehearsal and concert of Young Voices 2025! We arrived, excited, alongside 8,500 other children and were ushered to our seats—right at the top of the O2. Proudly, we hung up the Bancroft's Banner and prepared for the long afternoon rehearsal. After three hours of singing and dancing, alongside the backing singers and house band, we felt ready for the concert. At 7 pm, the lights went down, the drums and cymbals crashed, smoke machines started up, and 8,500 children lit up their Young Voices finger torches—the atmosphere was electric! What followed was an unforgettable concert, filled with songs that the children had worked hard to learn, complete with lyrics and choreography. A highlight of the event was a dance medley featuring "I Wanna Dance with Somebody," "Footloose," and "Let's Groove," as well as a celebration of Bob Marley's music with the "Marley Magic Medley." Special guest artists included: MC Grammar – Multi-award-winning primary school teacher turned rapper and viral social media sensation, Jacob Mitchell, aka MC Grammar, who has over 14 years of teaching experience; Tommy Blaize – Lead singer for *Strictly Come Dancing* on the BBC for 20 years, who has also performed with legends such as Take That, Stevie Wonder, Queen, Diana Ross, and even at Nelson Mandela's 90th birthday celebrations and Souparnika Nair – A *Britain's Got Talent* semi-finalist in 2020 at just 10 years old. Her rendition of "Never Enough" from *The Greatest Showman* has received over 100 million views. All of our Prep I pupils should feel incredibly proud of everything they have learned over the past few months and their fantastic performance on the day!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Kati Kinnair

THE GIFT OF READING

Garrison Keillor once said, “A book is a gift you can open again and again,” and with this in mind, we donated over 250 pre-loved books to the Children’s Book Project this half-term. This initiative ensures that books reach children who have grown up in homes with very few books of their own—sometimes none at all—giving them the chance to immerse themselves in stories and enjoy shared reading experiences. To support this cause, we first held a pre-loved book sale, allowing pupils to sell books to their friends while raising money for the charity. This sustainable initiative raised over £270, which was donated directly to the charity. Alongside three Charity Ambassadors, we delivered the surplus books to the Children’s Project hub at the Feel Good Centre in Waltham Forest, where they were gratefully received. A huge thank you to everyone who donated, bought books, and demonstrated our school’s values of kindness and collaboration.

Sarah Strong



SCIENCE WEEK

During the third week of the Spring Term, we celebrated our annual Science Week. This year’s theme was Space, which coincided beautifully with a spectacular planetary alignment visible in the night sky. Pupils had the chance to observe Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and Venus, as well as Uranus and Neptune with a telescope. A highlight of the week was the visit from a large mobile planetarium, where each class enjoyed a unique show tailored to their year group’s learning focus. Science lessons included fascinating activities such as investigating lunar craters using marbles and trays of flour, exploring the race to the Moon between the USA and the Soviet Union, and using Google Earth to examine Apollo landing sites. Other subjects embraced the theme, too. Alphas created space-themed poetry in English, Prep 1s completed comprehension tasks, and some classes explored gravitational pull in maths by comparing object weights on different planets. Our choirs enjoyed singing *Starman* by David Bowie, while language lessons introduced space vocabulary in German and explored planetary names’ Babylonian origins.

One of the week’s most exciting activities was making edible meteorites for homework. By all accounts, parents enjoyed sampling these just as much as the children did!

Laura Ellery



BANCROFTS RUNNERS

Every Thursday morning at 7:30 am, a group of keen and talented runners meet on the school field. The aim of this club is to prepare for upcoming competitions—and, of course, to have fun! Initially, I was hesitant about starting a morning running club in winter, given the cold and dark conditions. However, the determination and enthusiasm of the Bancroft’s Runners have been truly inspiring. They turn up every week, ready to run and support each other, demonstrating the resilience that defines Bancroftians. I couldn’t be prouder of their dedication.

In their own words:

“Bancroft’s Runners is really fun because it’s social and has helped me improve my running a lot.” – Lucas (2LW)

“I like it because I’m learning to be faster—I’m much faster than before.” – Harry (BNB)

“Bancroft’s Runners is improving my fitness. I keep moving, so it’s not even that cold! I love all the exercises we do, and I am improving.” – Barnaby (ALD)

“Bancroft’s Runners is so fun! Because it is so fun, you don’t even realise you’re exercising. I love Bancroft’s Runners!” – Summer (1TB)

Tara Bird

LUNCHTIME CONCERT

We were thrilled to host our recent Lunchtime Concert, where pupils showcased their musical talents in front of family and friends. The event was a wonderful celebration of the hard work and dedication our young musicians have put in, and it was heartwarming to see the pride on the faces of both performers and their families. Alongside the performances, we enjoyed tea and biscuits, adding a relaxed and social touch to the occasion. It was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate our pupils' achievements and foster a sense of community. Thank you to everyone who joined us—we look forward to our next concert on Wednesday, 26th March.

Natalia Spaliara

SPORTS NEWS

Boys' hockey and girls' netball are BACK! Over the past few weeks, the entire school has been getting their game faces on in weekly lessons, sharpening their netball and hockey skills. Our Alphas have started their new sports in an extremely positive way, showcasing resilience and excellence. Their progress over the weeks has been fantastic to see, and Team PE is excited about the sporting future of this year group!

Meanwhile, our Betas, Prep 1s, and Prep 2s have been building on the skills they developed last year. They have demonstrated teamwork and resilience throughout the term, competing in fixtures against St. Cedd's and New Hall, with upcoming matches against St. Aubyn's to look forward to. All pupils have shown real passion for their sports, both on and off the court and field this term. It has been wonderful to see them apply their skills and shine under pressure against other schools. We are looking forward to starting Tag Rugby and Football next month!

HOUSE KARAOKE

Excitement was in the air as pupils from all four houses gathered for the much-anticipated House Karaoke Competition—a morning of music, creativity, and unforgettable performances! From powerful solos to high-energy group numbers, dazzling costumes, and expertly choreographed dance routines, every house brought their A-game in a bid to claim the top spot. Each house chose a song that reflected their spirit, and the performances were nothing short of spectacular: Knighton delivered a moving rendition of *This Is Me* from *The Greatest Showman*; Hereford sang *I'll Be There for You*, the iconic *Friends* theme song; Monkams rocked the stage with a fierce performance of *Eye of the Tiger* and Manor mesmerised the audience with their soulful version of *Viva La Vida* by Coldplay. Their performance was both heartfelt and inspiring. The competition was incredibly close, with every house demonstrating impressive creativity, teamwork, and passion. House captains led the charge, ensuring their teams shone on stage through choreographed dance routines, powerful duets, and even live musical performances. The atmosphere was

electric, with the entire audience clapping, cheering, and singing along. In the end, after much deliberation, Monkams were crowned winners, thanks to their dynamic performance, strong vocals, and undeniable stage presence. A huge congratulations to all the houses for their hard work and dedication—it was an assembly to remember! Same time next year? We can't wait!

Current House scores:

Sasha Kelly

Hereford	200
Knighton	190
Manor	196
Monkams	166

IAPS U11 NETBALL

Miss Kelly and Miss Fourie had the pleasure of taking our U11 Girls' Netball team to the IAPS tournament this year, hosted by Brentwood School. The event provided an excellent challenge for the girls, offering valuable learning experiences. With each game, they gained essential skills, recognising the importance of teamwork and strategic planning. Despite facing both victories and setbacks, the team is now well-prepared to apply their learning in future matches.

"At first, I was quite nervous, but when I started playing, I suddenly felt we could take on anything. It was hard in parts, but when we worked together as a team, it became a lot easier. I learned that through teamwork, you can go further. I love netball!"

Skye Samaroo



SWIMMING SUCCESS

On Thursday, 6th February, 44 of our squad swimmers competed against Chigwell School in a friendly swimming gala. Bancroft's emerged victorious, with just a single point separating the two schools—a perfect example of how every swim counts. Well done to all of our swimmers, particularly our Alpha swimmers, most of whom were competing in their first-ever swim gala. Alayna and Katrina demonstrated excellent technique in their breaststroke races. Alex raced well in his two-length front crawl event. Casey showed that you can have a great swim even if you're not feeling 100%! The Chigwell coaches were impressed with our younger swimmers for executing the butterfly and medley relay races correctly, while their team had to modify these events.

Patricia Brennan