



We are delighted with our latest [inspection report](#) and hope you've had the chance to look at the key findings which are featured, along with some wonderful pictures of our children, on the School website. The Prep highlights booklet you'll find there has a striking image of our recent celebrations of the Hindu festival Holi, with the children throwing handfuls of coloured powder high into the air. It's a great picture which exemplifies one of the findings in the Prep report itself. In the inspectors' words, ours is 'a respectful and inclusive environment'. For all of our children to feel respected and included, it is vital that we celebrate all the different heritages that we are proud to have represented under our Prep School roof. When I walk past the beautiful Ramadan display in the Prep Hall lobby or hear our choirs singing Easter songs, I know this is happening and I feel proud to be part of such a special community. As the inspectors witnessed during their visit- and I see every single day- our diversity is one of our great strengths.



Joe Layton

## LUNCHTIME CONCERT

Our Lunchtime Concerts are a delightful chance for pupils to showcase their musical talents. Children performed for their peers and families in a warm, relaxed setting. There was a fantastic variety of instrumentalists and singers—including a beautiful solo harp performance. Snacks and tea added to the atmosphere, and the audience's encouragement helped create a wonderful sense of school spirit. It's always a joy to see pupils sharing their hard work and love of music with those that matter.

Natalia Spaliara



## WORLD BOOK DAY



We all know how much Bancroft's children love reading and dressing up—so World Book Day is the perfect combination of both! This year, as well as dressing up as everyone from Mr Bump to Katniss Everdeen, our book lovers were treated to visits from two celebrated authors. First, Athena Kugblenu—comedian and writer on *Horrible Histories*—amazed the children with some porky pies from her book *History's Most Epic Fibs*. We all thought Napoleon was short, right? Wrong—he was average height for the time! In a world of fake news, it was a fun and valuable reminder to question what we think we know. Next, Jack Meggitt-Phillips introduced us to the delightfully dark world of Ebenezer Tweezer and “the Bethany,” who is lined up as lunch for the beast in his attic. The children were hooked—and soon writing their own twisted tales. While we love the World Book Day costumes, these authors hopefully inspired the children to pick up a book too!

Tim Carson





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## EGGSTRAVAGANZA!

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Thank you for your eggcellent donations for our Easter Eggstravaganza! We delivered over 200 Easter eggs to the Epping Forest Foodbank, so that many children will be able to enjoy something many of us take for granted this Easter. Our Charity Ambassadors visited the Foodbank to see the brilliant work the volunteers do, and of course, the staff there could not help so many families without your generosity. Happy Easter—we hope you have some eggciting things in store this holiday!  
*Sarah Strong*

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## LEADING LADIES

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Across the country, many schools and organisations marked International Women's Day this March. At Bancroft's, we believe the important issue of gender equality deserves deep thought, discussion, and healthy debate. This year, some of our Prep 2s held a debate on the motion that there are not enough female leaders and heroes in books and other stories. The proposition presented compelling facts about the history of publishing and the difficulties female voices have faced. They argued that female protagonists still often play sidekick roles to male heroes. However, the opposition made strong points about how far literature and film have progressed, citing many examples of female characters taking centre stage. When the floor (that's the audience, to you and me!) were asked if they had changed their minds, it was clear the opposition had won them over. So what does this mean for us now? We can celebrate the diverse stories we have, where young women are just as prominent as young men in facing challenges and creating hope. The Prep 2s also raised a crucial point: while stories now feature many female leaders, real life still has some catching up to do. But our young debaters are sure to have inspired future leaders - of all genders.

*Bino Rathod*

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## COMIC RELIEF

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On Friday 21st March, we showed our support for Comic Relief by wearing red noses, smiles, and non-uniform. We raised over £350 for the charity, helping communities affected by poverty at home and abroad. Despite the serious cause, there was plenty of laughter in assembly as pupils shared jokes with Mr Layburn—who had a few up his sleeve too!

*Sarah Strong*



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## HOLI

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Prep pupils got covered in colourful paint, wore huge smiles, and made fantastic memories as they celebrated Holi. Holi is a Hindu festival that celebrates spring, love, and new life. For many, it's a time for joy and fun—with dancing, singing, and, of course, throwing vibrant powder! Our pupils certainly embraced the spirit of the day.  
*Chris Hall*



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## CREDIT WINNERS!

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This half-term's 'Credit Winners' enjoyed a well-deserved reward with a visit to the Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge in Chingford. Although the lodge is just a mile down the road, the children travelled 500 years back in time for an unforgettable Tudor workshop! The children were fascinated by the history on their doorstep and asked thoughtful questions throughout the morning. Congratulations to all our Credit Winners – your excellent attitude and effort this half-term earned you a brilliant morning out! Keep up the great work... who knows where we'll travel next time!



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## DRAPERS HALL

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The annual Drapers' Concert is a prestigious event showcasing the incredible musical talent of Senior School pupils. This year, Prep pupils were also invited to watch their siblings perform and witness the diverse range of talent on display. The concert included performances by the choirs, ensembles, orchestra, and several soloists—all demonstrating remarkable skill and passion. Highlights included vocal duets, instrumental pieces, and a finale that brought the audience to their feet. Held at the historic Drapers' Hall in Throgmorton Street, London, the event offered pupils a meaningful connection to the school's heritage. Drapers' Hall, the livery hall of the Worshipful Company of Drapers, dates back to the 16th century and has long been associated with education and philanthropy. Its grand architecture and rich history created a truly inspiring setting for the evening. Surrounded by oil portraits, gilded ceilings, and opulent chandeliers, pupils performed with poise and pride. It was a memorable celebration of music, tradition, and community.

*Natalia Spaliara*



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## QUIZ CLUB

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On 6th March, I was part of a team in the Quiz Club General Knowledge Championship. First, we had to pass a selection round in our classes, answering 20 timed questions with different point values. Two teams were chosen to represent Bancroft's Prep—each with one Alpha, one Beta, one Prep 1, and one Prep 2 student. In the first round, both teams did really well, despite tricky questions like:

What fibrous tissue connects bones?  
How many months have 31 days?  
Which country borders Russia, Sweden, and Norway?  
Plus rounds on flags, instruments, and composers.

Out of 69 teams, we placed 6th and 33rd. Only the top 20 moved on to the semi-finals. I was part of the team that qualified, and we're hoping to make it to the national finals!

*Tiago, BCB*

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## SPRING FAYRE

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The BPA Spring Fayre made a fantastic return on 22nd March, filling the Prep Hall with joy and community spirit. Families enjoyed wonderful activities, entertainment, and stalls. Prep 2 pupils showed their entrepreneurial flair, raising over £650 for the BPA. This year, stalls were run by Houses, with Knighton House emerging victorious! There were musical performances, tap dancing, a chocolate tombola, and a new preloved toy tombola promoting sustainability. Children enjoyed food, glitter tattoos, arts and crafts, and racing Scalextric cars. Mr Layburn announced the winner of "Head for the Day"—congratulations to Konrad (Prep 1), who can't wait to take on the role! Thank you to the Prep staff, volunteers, and everyone who made this event a success. If you'd like to get involved, email us at [bancroftspa@gmail.com](mailto:bancroftspa@gmail.com)—we'd love to hear from you!  
*Renata Klepacka and Parul Jha*

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## ELHAP FUNDRAISER

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On Tuesday 25th March, the Senior and Prep Schools joined forces to raise money for ELHAP, a charity that provides an adventure playground for young children with additional needs. The Senior School Craft Club made felt hearts and scrunchies, which were quickly snapped up by Prep pupils—raising an impressive £114 in just ten minutes! Charity Ambassadors also offered a gift-wrapping service, perfect for Mother's Day. Well done to all involved!

*Sarah Strong*



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## SPORTS NEWS

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At Bancroft's Prep this term, we've had an exciting and action-packed time. We began the term with Netball and Hockey. It was wonderful to round off the netball season with a series of fixtures that highlighted the girls' progress over the past eight weeks. A particular highlight was the determination the girls showed in their match against St Aubyn's. The boys took to the hockey field with enthusiasm, demonstrating excellent skills, especially in their fixtures against Forest. Both the netball and hockey seasons have given us a clear understanding of areas for development in future terms. In the last few weeks, girls' games have shifted focus to Tag Rugby. This new addition has allowed the girls to showcase different skills, such as decision-making—whether to pass or make a run for the try line. Their resilience across all year groups has been remarkable. Despite being new to most, the girls have embraced the sport and are enjoying getting muddy in the process! The boys have also enjoyed a thrilling football season during games lessons. They've been challenged to improve fitness and develop their skills, applying their learning in high-energy matches. They're now looking forward to an exciting week of fixtures against Brentwood.

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## MIXED NETBALL

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To mark International Women's Day, we hosted a Prep I Mixed Netball Tournament. Girls and boys from Bancroft's Prep, as well as teams from St Aubyn's and Woodford Green Prep, participated across five courts with ten mixed teams in total. Leading up to the tournament, the girls created a PowerPoint presentation and a worksheet on the rules of the game, which they shared with the boys. These resources proved incredibly helpful and were a testament to their initiative. On the day, the girls took the lead, helping to organise teams and support their peers. It was heartwarming to see the entire year group engaged and enjoying the event.



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## SWIMMING GALA

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Well done to our 25 Alpha and Beta squad swimmers who took part in the swimming gala against Forest School at our pool on Monday 10th March. The teams were very evenly matched, with lots of exciting and close races. Forest finished just three points ahead!

**Bancroft's: 137 points**

**Forest: 140 points**

A special mention to Aanaya, who finished in first place in her butterfly race. She swam with great rhythm and, while other swimmers looked exhausted after their race, Aanaya looked fresh—as if she could swim another length!

The most exciting race of the evening was the Squadron Relay, with eight swimmers from each school. Forest were ahead after their fourth swimmer, but Bancroft's edged closer and closer, with Lillian pulling ahead on the final leg. Annabelle also had a great front crawl race, holding a strong head position, which helped her swim fast and achieve a new personal best.

*Patricia Brennan*

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## GIRLS' FOOTBALL

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Miss Kelly and Miss Dack had the pleasure of taking the U11 Girls to a tournament at St Edmund's School. After a slow start, the girls gained momentum, particularly following Isavella's incredible penalty goal. They progressed to the semi-finals of the plate and claimed a convincing 3–0 victory in the final against Bishop's Stortford College. Their determination, skill, and growth impressed everyone involved.

*"It was a really fun experience. It was really good to see lots of girls taking part. We tried our best to put more oomph in every game we played. We won the plate and were really proud" – Otilie (Prep 1)*

## #LETGIRLSPLAY 2025

To celebrate International Women's Day, we joined the FA's "Let Girls Play" initiative, aiming to create the largest girls' football session on Friday, 7th March. Over 100 girls participated, with 80 from the Prep School, proudly wearing their favourite football shirts and playing with passion alongside Miss Kelly and her team.



## FOOTBALL FESTIVAL

The Alpha and Beta girls attended the London Youth Games Football Festival. The morning featured coaching sessions where the girls learned new techniques. They then applied these in afternoon matches, enjoying a rewarding and fun-filled day.



## IN2 HOCKEY

Mr Hall led the Prep 1 Boys to an In2Hockey tournament where they finished an impressive 2nd place in London. Their journey included a 2-0 win against Forest, a 1-1 draw with Highgate, a 2-1 win, and another 1-1 draw. The boys displayed excellent teamwork, skill, and resilience throughout. Next up were the Prep 2 teams. Both boys and girls played fiercely, with one team reaching finals day. While the boys narrowly missed advancing, the girls triumphed in their final game and secured their place in the finals. "We had so much fun, shot lots of goals, and made some brilliant saves. We didn't lose a game. Thanks to Mr Hall and Mr Harrison for taking us! We are ready for the final!" – Ellie (2LW), Imogen (2CP), and Anya (2CP)

## IN2 HOCKEY FINALS

The girls represented Bancroft's at Blagdon Sports Ground in the finals. Here's their own account of the day:

"Today was a lot of fun. We all had a part to play and gave it our all. We were strong, fast, and determined to win. Streatham and Clapham were a good team, but we beat them after taking on Mr Harrison's advice. The goalie made lots of great saves, and we are now the 3rd best school in London for hockey. We didn't give up, and it paid off!" – Prep 1 and 2 Girls – U11 In2Hockey



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# CROSS COUNTRY

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Earlier this term, our dedicated runners competed in a cross-country event at Woodford Green Prep. The very muddy 1600m course tested their stamina and commitment, but their training paid off.

Bancroft's placed 2nd in the Under 9 Boys, Under 9 Girls, and Under 11 Girls categories, with the Under 11 Boys finishing 3rd. Special congratulations to Barnaby Pett for placing 2nd in the U9 Boys, and to medal winners Harry and Veera. Next stop: The prestigious London Mini Marathon!



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# FOOTBALL V AVON HOUSE

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This term, boys had the opportunity to play matches against Avon House during football club. These friendly fixtures allowed them to apply their developing skills in a competitive setting, showing great teamwork, sportsmanship, and resilience.

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# HOUSE NEWS

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This term's House assembly was flipped on its head with a fun-filled pancake challenge that had everyone laughing. Pupils and staff went head-to-head in a series of flipping contests, showing off their pancake prowess. The undisputed highlight? Miss Ellery's incredible flip and twist, which drew gasps and cheers from the crowd – a moment that will go down in House history! With plenty of fun and a sprinkle of chaos, it was a deliciously delightful way to celebrate Pancake Day. Next up was an unforgettable House event that had pupils on the edge of their seats – our very own Masked Singer: Teacher Edition! The atmosphere was electric as the children watched a series of hilarious performances, trying to guess which teachers were hidden behind the clever disguises. What made this event extra special was the effort and secrecy behind the scenes. Every performance was pre-recorded in secret,

with teachers using breaktimes and lunchtimes to film their musical numbers – all while managing to sneak around in elaborate costumes without the pupils noticing. (Yes, four sharks really did manage to get past without detection!)

From the moment the first performance began, the hall was filled with laughter and the crowd went wild as each act took to the screen.

'Bones' stunned the audience with an incredible vocal performance – later revealed to be Miss Ware, whose secret talent as a singer wowed everyone. 'Ski Dude', who danced his way "all the way to Amarillo," was none other than Mr Carson, much to the crowd's delight. Mrs Kanolik had everyone puzzled in her adorable axolotl costume, keeping her identity a complete mystery until the big reveal. The Shark Family brought smiles all round – Miss Bird, Miss Kelly, Mrs Bhangal, and Miss Dack performed as Baby Shark, Mummy Shark, Daddy Shark, and Grandma Shark, with fins flapping and tails swishing. A magnificent Lion King trio was formed by Mr Strong, Mr Bleasdale, and Miss Ellery, whose harmonies and wild costumes brought a bit of the savannah to Bancroft's! And finally, 'Angel' floated onto our screens with grace and sparkle – a heavenly performance by Miss Spaliara.

As each performer was revealed, the room erupted in cheers and applause. The event was a hit and we can't wait to see what our fabulous staff come up with next!



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# HOUSE SCORES

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<b>Hereford</b>	274
<b>Knighton</b>	272
<b>Manor</b>	268
<b>Monkhams</b>	232