

Prep Headlines

Autumn | 2025

Bancroft's
Prep

We're thrilled to relaunch our school magazine and share with you a fresh window into life at Bancroft's Prep. This edition captures the energy, joy and sheer variety of what our children experience every day - from classroom adventures to playground discoveries. It's always a pleasure to welcome visitors to the Prep School. Seeing us through fresh eyes brings new perspectives, and this week we've had the joy of hosting trainee teachers from Morocco and a lively group of parents on a 7+ tour. What struck them most? The buzz of the place, the warmth and professionalism of our staff, and our fantastic facilities - especially the newly revamped playgrounds. But above all, they were wowed by the children. Whether they were Alphas just starting their journey or Prep 2s already looking ahead, our pupils shone. I never have to worry about our children being anything less than brilliant ambassadors for Bancroft's. They speak openly and honestly about their experiences, and what always stands out is how happy they are - and how proud they are to be Bancroftians. This edition of Prep Headlines offers just a glimpse into their world. We hope it brings a smile to your face and reminds you why this school is such a special place.

Joe Lyth

A Credit to Us!

This half-term, our Green Credit winners were treated to something a little bit different - a magic show! After a hot chocolate and pain au chocolat in the Warner Room, where certificates and badges were presented, winners enjoyed an hour of top-class magic from London magician Tim Barnes. He entertained us with an array of masterful tricks and illusions, as well as plenty of funny jokes - he even pulled a rabbit out of his hat! Well, a metaphorical hat - as it was actually from his collection of rainbow scarves, which he'd produced from his "empty" paint pot. It was an excellent way to celebrate the children's hard work, and we look forward to inviting Tim back to school again. Abracadabra!

Lisa Life



Beta Adventures at PGL

One of the ways we make your child's time at Bancroft's one to remember is through the many opportunities they have to get off-site and explore the great outdoors. The Beta year provides that opportunity to build resilience, develop friendships, take risks, and improve organisation and communication skills. What better way to do this than by spending time in the beautiful Surrey countryside at a PGL adventure camp for three days! There are so many benefits that spending time in nature has for children, and all the activities at PGL—from the giant swing to Eco Explorers, raft building to the sensory trail—take place across 45 acres of land at Marchant's Hill. The children return with healthier mental wellbeing, having had reduced time on devices. They have found out more about themselves and more about each other! The trip addresses so many of our school values: courage to take a leap of faith, kindness to support each other through challenges, collaboration when working on problem-solving activities, and initiative when packing for their return home! Most importantly, the children make memories that they will talk about for years to come. It was a pleasure to take our Betas away this autumn; they were excellent ambassadors for our school—curious adventurers and resilient explorers!

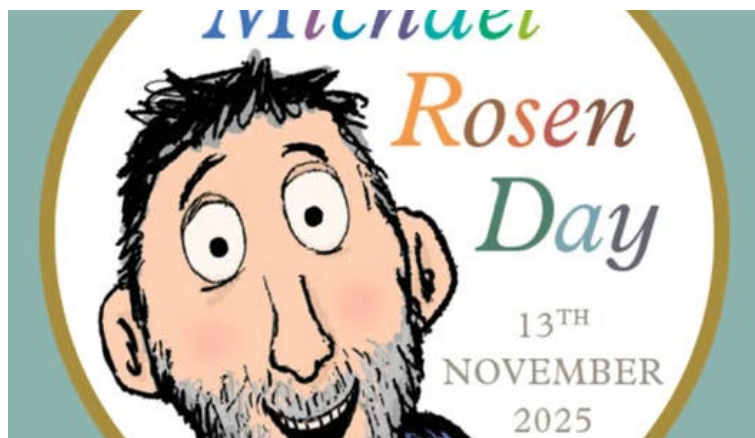
Sarah Strong



Colossal Words

Next half-term, we will be shining a spotlight on Colette Hiller's CLIPPA award-winning book *Colossal Words* for Kids. Each week, pupils will hear a different poem from the collection, introducing them to an intriguing and ambitious word in a memorable and meaningful way. This is just one of the many initiatives we will be launching over the course of the year to highlight the joy and playfulness of language, and to celebrate the power of a well-chosen word. On 13th November, we will be celebrating Michael Rosen Day — yet another opportunity to recognise the joy and value of storytelling and playing with words. As we all know, the single most effective way to boost vocabulary is by reading widely and regularly. We hope that over the half-term break, you can take some time as a family to discuss books, read together, and listen to stories.

Aimée Kanolik



Black History Month

This week, fourteen of our Prep 1 and 2 students performed monologues inspired by important figures in Black History to celebrate Black History Month. First up was Isabelle as Katherine Johnson — you might know her from the film *Hidden Figures*. If you haven't seen it, it's a must-watch! Isabelle used her American accent, glasses, and clipboard, and got us off to a great start! Emily and Mary gave a lovely presentation as Raven Wilkinson, ballerina; Ayla chose to be Florence Joyner, sprinter, complete with sports kit and medals! Rhea and Zelal were excellent as Nichelle Nichols, who famously played Lieutenant Uhura in *Star Trek* — great moves, girls! Veera was word-perfect as Ella Fitzgerald — well done, Veera! Clara and Anika chose performer Josephine Baker; Amaya, Aliya, and Vaishnavi were all in matching black glasses for Julie Dash, filmmaker; and finally, Anami and Rebecca introduced us to Mary Seacole, nurse from the Crimean War. The girls performed in both the Upper and Lower Phase assemblies and did themselves proud. For me, the highlight was Max in Betas asking whether boys could perform too — and announcing that he'd like to be Lewis Hamilton next year! Looking forward to it, Max! Happy Black History Month, one and all!

Gill Entwistle

Going Green for Macmillan

What do you associate the colour green with? Many feel it is the colour of well-being and restoration; others see it as a symbol of optimism, hope for a better future, and harmony. Maybe this is why Macmillan Cancer Research chose it as the symbolic colour for their charity. We raised awareness at the Prep last Friday by dressing in green for Macmillan. Our collaborative donation of £489.95 will help raise vital funds to support the 3.5 million people in the UK living with cancer — from the moment they are diagnosed, throughout treatment, and beyond. As always, we thank you for your support.

Sarah Strong



Charity Ambassadors



Here are our Charity Ambassadors for 25-26. Twelve bright young things who have lots of wonderful ideas to bring happiness to others and help support our local community.

Sarah Strong

Musical News

The first of many lunchtime concerts took place in early October and included performances from several of our younger pupils for the very first time. The Saxonette and Fife group performed brilliantly — some of them had only been playing their new instruments for four weeks! Other performers included Sophia and Sara from the Alphas; Sophia, Hana, Audrey, Myana, Eliza, and Isabelle from the Betas; Leonidas and Aliyah from Prep 1; and Eesa from Prep 2. We enjoyed a wonderful variety of styles, from Baroque pieces on the trumpet through to pop songs on the piano. Congratulations to all who took part! Look out for three more lunchtime concerts after half-term.

Kati Kinnair

We Will Rock You

In October, forty lucky pupils from Prep 1 and Prep 2 took part in two exciting workshops hosted by visiting musical theatre company Blake Studios: Performing Arts Company. Gracie Blake, their founder, brought the music and dance of the Broadway smash hit *We Will Rock You* to life. She taught the children a groovy dance, which they performed together in the large Prep Hall. Some pupils were also lucky enough to take part in an acting workshop, where they developed their skills under Gracie's professional guidance. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves! Blake Studios are looking for new students to join their Performing Arts School and work together in lessons to perform the full musical *We Will Rock You* towards the end of this academic year. More details can be found at www.blakesstudios.co.uk.



Royal Courts Trip

On Monday 6th October, Prep 2 visited the Royal Courts of Justice to participate in a mock trial. These are very important courts in central London. Some of the famous cases held in our courtroom included the Jaffa Cake trial, the Ed Sheeran copyright case — and even Prince Harry has been there! We were investigating a harassment case and were both prosecution barristers, which meant we were trying to prove the defendant guilty. At the end, we found out that our trial was actually based on a real case — and the defendant had been found guilty! After we finished the

mock trial, we went to a local park for lunch before heading back to school. We really enjoyed the trip and are very grateful to the teachers who made it happen. It was a fantastic experience and we all found it great fun!

Charlotte and Rebecca, 2BR



Back to the Stone Age

On Monday 13th October, the Alphas travelled back in time — all the way to the Stone Age! They were lucky enough to visit Celtic Harmony Camp in Hertfordshire, where they watched a demonstration of how Stone Age people would have lit a fire, saw flint being knapped to make tools, and experienced what it would have been like to hunt and gather their own food. They also learnt how to create clay pots to store the flour they had ground — and even had the chance to hunt an enormous 'mammoth'! Luckily, we had our school packed lunches with us. It was a wonderful day, finished off with some storytelling in the Chieftain's roundhouse. The weather stayed dry, and a great deal of fun was had by all.

The Alpha Team

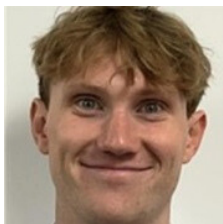


Harvest Donations

A key aspect of Epping Forest Foodbank's mission is to supply three days' worth of emergency food, along with essential toiletries and household items, to individuals and families facing food crises. They ensure that no one in the Epping Forest area goes hungry, while also working to address the underlying causes of food insecurity and promote a more just society. They achieve this not only by distributing nutritionally balanced food parcels to people referred by frontline professionals but also by signposting individuals to additional community support services. Our Charity Ambassadors had a bountiful donation to deliver to Epping Forest Foodbank after our Harvest Festival on Friday, 10th October. Last year, 8,472 food parcels were delivered to those in need in our area — a number that will likely have increased this year. Through our collection, the children have directly experienced the impact of collaboration, kindness, and integrity. Thank you for all your support and generosity.

Sarah Strong

New Faces



Hello, I'm Joe Denyer, and I'm delighted to have joined Bancroft's as the new Prep Graduate Assistant, supporting both Music and Sport. My passion for music began at a young age when I became a chorister at St Paul's Cathedral. I was

incredibly fortunate to perform in some remarkable concerts and to spend my formative years immersed in the beauty and tradition of such an iconic setting. More recently, I graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music, where I studied singing for four years. I'm deeply passionate about performing and believe that everyone should have the opportunity to experience the joy of music. Creating an environment where young people feel encouraged and supported to explore their musical interests is something I care about deeply, and I hope to foster that atmosphere during my time here. It's a privilege to be part of a community filled with such kind and welcoming people, and I'm really looking forward to the exciting year ahead.

Hello, I'm Michael Goldsworthy, and I'm delighted to have joined Bancroft's Prep as a PE and Sports Teacher, covering Sasha Kelly's maternity leave. Sport has always been central to my life. While I enjoy all sports, I'm particularly passionate about rugby, cricket, and ski racing, all of which I've played and coached. Rugby was my main sport (you'll see why when we meet!), and I played at academy level until injuries led me to stop at university to save my shoulder! I'm also an avid Newcastle United fan and am happy to find others in the Bancroft's community who share this "blessing"! I firmly believe in celebrating success while



recognising that success is unique to each child. I also strongly value introducing children to a diverse range of sports from a young age, helping them to avoid being pigeonholed. It's been great to see that the PE department shares this value — I've already enjoyed helping to run the House Golf and Archery competitions this term. I look forward to instilling my passion for sport in the pupils this year and to meeting as many of you as possible at future fixtures and events. Outside school, I love the mountains — whether skiing down them in winter or hiking up them in summer. I also make a point of doing a weekly litter pick in my local area. Since I live close to Bancroft's, please do say hello if you see me out and about!

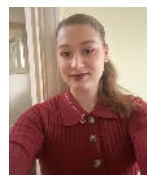


Hello! I'm Abby McKinlay, this year's Graduate Sports Assistant, and I'm so pleased to be returning to Bancroft's Prep School. Having been a student here myself — from the Prep School all the way through to the Sixth Form —

I know first-hand how important sport is to both the school's curriculum and pupils' personal development. I believe this focus helps to create well-rounded individuals, and I'm excited to pass on these values to other students.

I love playing and watching all kinds of sports, but tennis and netball are definitely my main ones. I've played tennis for Redbridge, my local club, and for the Women's 1st Team at Swansea University, but I'm also really passionate about team sports. Having represented the school in several sports, I believe team sports are a fantastic way to develop skills such as leadership and teamwork — qualities that go far beyond the classroom and are useful in all areas of life. I'm a huge football fan and have been going to West Ham games since I was a child, which has definitely taught me how to handle a tough loss! As well as football, I'm completely obsessed with American sports. Being a fan of the San Francisco 49ers and the Los Angeles Angels sparked my interest in American sport, which led me to study American Studies at university. My dissertation ended up focusing on baseball, so it's fair to say I'm pretty passionate about it! Outside sport, I have a real love for drama and musical theatre. I enjoy acting and singing, as well as watching live performances. I know how impressive the Bancroft's productions are, and I'm very much looking forward to seeing them this year. Whether at a sports fixture or attending one of the school's many performances, I look forward to meeting many of you soon!

Hello, my name is Sacha Levene, and I'm the new Library Assistant working in both the Prep and Senior School Libraries. I'm really looking forward to getting to know all the children and finding out what kinds of books they enjoy



reading. Before this, I was working in a nursery, and I've been enjoying the new environment and the enthusiasm of the pupils who have already made me feel really welcome. In my free time, I enjoy baking sweet treats, going to the theatre, and walking my dog. I'm excited to get to know your children and to be part of the Bancroft's team.



Hello, I'm Zara Roussel, and I'm thrilled to have joined Bancroft's as a new Prep 1 teacher this year. It's been a fantastic start, and I'm delighted to be part of the team. I've always had a passion for learning and thoroughly enjoyed my own school experience. This inspired me to study psychology at university, where I developed a particular interest in cognitive psychology. Eager to combine my interests, I began working as a teaching assistant, applying my understanding of cognition and learning to support children in their academic journeys. I enjoyed it so much that I decided to pursue teacher training and become a full-time teacher. After teaching in Tower Hamlets, I was excited to join Bancroft's, seeking new challenges and opportunities to develop. It's been an excellent experience so far, and I'm really looking forward to a wonderful year ahead with my pupils.

Sports News

The Autumn Term has commenced with the familiar excitement that always surrounds sport at the Prep School. Both the girls and boys began their hockey and rugby seasons with great enthusiasm, showing impressive teamwork and leadership skills, as well as real energy in their Games and PE lessons and fixtures. Participation in our sports clubs has also been outstanding, with pupils building on what they learn in PE and Games through football, rugby, and hockey clubs, as well as improving their fitness during the Daily Mile morning run sessions. Looking ahead to next half-term, there is much to look forward to as we move into football in our Games lessons, with many fixtures and competitions on the horizon — including more House events. It has been a brilliant start to the year, and we are excited to see our teams continue to develop and build on their sporting endeavours over the coming weeks.

Tee-riffic Teamwork

With one of the most exciting Ryder Cups in recent history providing the backdrop, Bancroft's Prep pupils had the opportunity to take part in their own House Ryder Cup competition. For some pupils, golf was a familiar sport, but for many it was their first time holding a club — and it was fantastic to see the enthusiasm demonstrated by all. First up were the Alphas, where Manor were triumphant. Then it was the turn of the Prep 2s, where Hereford came out on top. The Prep 1s continued in the same vein, with Hereford winning yet again. Last, but by no means least, were the Betas, where Knighton were victorious. The final standings were as follows: 1st place: Manor (showing the benefit of consistency with three 2nd places as well as the Alpha 1st place) 2nd place: Hereford, 3rd place: Knighton, 4th place: Monkham. It was wonderful to see pupils improving their swing with every round. A fantastic effort by all involved — you should all be proud of your contributions!

A Runaway Success!

On Wednesday 15th October, a team of enthusiastic Bancroft's runners took part in a major running event at Fairlop Waters. Each child tackled the one-mile loop around the lake with determination, and as a school, we enjoyed tremendous success. With over 150 runners in each race, every Bancroft's athlete finished in the top half of their category, contributing valuable points to the team totals. The hard work during morning training sessions and the runners' dedication truly paid off, with several standout performances. Our Under-11 girls' team achieved an impressive 2nd place overall. Individually, Summer claimed 1st place in the Year 6 girls' race, Barnaby came 2nd in the Year 4 boys', Lillian finished 5th in the Year 5 girls', and Ezra placed 6th in the Year 6 boys' race. We are proud to announce that Summer, Lillian, and Ezra have all been selected to represent Redbridge at the London Youth Games. We wish them the very best of luck!

Tara Bird



Hockey News

The girls have been working hard at Ashton, refining their hockey skills in preparation for upcoming fixtures. Those attending the Monday evening club had the opportunity to test their progress in a friendly match against St Aubyn's. Despite an initial loss, they displayed impressive determination, adapting well to different team combinations and securing strong wins in later matches. Early in the term, Mr Harrison and Miss Dack were concerned about the girls' spacing on the pitch across all year groups, but all teams were eager to prove them wrong. The Prep 1s' and Betas' performances against St Cedd's highlighted their growing confidence as they demonstrated risk-taking, critical thinking, and sharp decision-making under pressure. The girls tackled with determination and sprinted up the wings with purpose, resulting in some excellent goals and exciting matches. Across all year groups — Betas, Prep 1s, and Prep 2s — the standard of hockey has been outstanding. With fixtures against Chigwell, New Hall, and Brentwood coming up next month, we look forward to seeing the teams' continued improvement and success on the pitch.

Rugby News

The Prep 1 boys strode up to the top of the Senior School to board the coach for their fixture against St Cedd's, with a look of resolve in their eyes. This was their opportunity to showcase all the different skills they had learnt so far this term in rugby — the ultimate proving ground: competitive matches. All the boys performed commendably! There was some fantastic running rugby on display, and plenty of tries were scored. In the contact games, players stepped up and made big tackles to support their teams in defence, while in the tag games, some last-gasp tags prevented certain tries from being scored. It was fantastic to see the boys exemplifying rugby's core values of teamwork, respect, enjoyment, discipline, and sportsmanship throughout. They should all be very proud of their efforts.



House Archery

Robin Hood, William Tell — and now Bancroft's Prep School! As part of a House competition, all pupils had the chance to have a go at archery. Although they were shooting at targets rather than apples or sheriffs, a great time was had by all! In the Alphas, it was Hereford who were on target and took first place. For the Betas, Knighton's aim was truest, gaining first place. In the Prep 1s, Manor took aim and secured first place, and in the Prep 2s, Monkham's did not quiver and took first place. As you can see... each House won one competition. However, Manor's consistency in finishing second in the other three events meant they flew into first place overall, with Monkham's and Knighton finishing joint second and Hereford third. Well done to everyone who took part — we hope you enjoyed trying something new and different! The current House scores are:

HEREFORD	76
KNIGHTON	78
MANOR	90
MONKHAMS	68

Essex County Cup

First up in the Essex Cup were the girls, facing Chigwell at home. In a thrilling cup clash filled with intensity and determination, they secured a hard-earned 1–0 win over a very strong Chigwell side. Although the final score was close, the team created numerous chances throughout the match and showed great attacking intent from the first whistle. The girls gave everything on the pitch, displaying outstanding teamwork, grit, and resilience. On the sidelines, Miss Kelly and Miss Dack kept the team motivated and focused. With this being Miss Kelly's final match before beginning her maternity leave, it was a memorable send-off! Chigwell tested us throughout, but our composure, skill, and unity proved decisive — a brilliant team effort and a great result. On to the next round! Next up, the boys will face Chigwell on the last day of term — we wish them all the best for their cup match!



Diwali Daily Mile

This week, our pupils took part in a special Diwali Daily Mile to mark the Festival of Lights. The children ran and walked around the field carrying glowing tea lights (safely battery-operated, of course!), creating a sparkling trail of light to celebrate the joy and brightness of Diwali. It was a lovely way to reflect on the festival's themes of hope, togetherness and the triumph of light over darkness. Many of our families will be celebrating Diwali over half-term, and this shared event gave everyone the chance to experience a little of its warmth and celebration together.

