



**Bankside  
School**

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## Newsletter: 12<sup>th</sup> September 2025

### Visible Consistency, Visible Kindness

We have had a good first full week back at school and it has been great seeing the pupils get to grips with their new timetables and take the changes in their stride.

The new system using the Vertical Tutoring approach linked into Teaching Groups has not caused any significant issues and pupils have adapted well.

This year's timetable is more robust and pupils are responding well and we are seeing some positive hard work and engagement already.

Pupil Recognition this term is focused on the following areas:

- ❖ **Star Learners:** for outstanding effort and focus in lessons
- ❖ **Kindness Champions:** for showing compassion, helping others, and lifting the mood of those around them
- ❖ **Progress Heroes:** for making visible strides in learning, behaviour or confidence.

Please see below those that achieved such recognition for this week.

After a positive week, we hope everyone has a good weekend. Time to relax and recover after a busy week back at school!

### Word of the Week

As a school we continue to follow our 'Word Aware' focus. Each week we pick a word and explore it's meaning to extend vocabulary and to develop understanding of more complex words.

Next week, our Word of the week will be "Transformation"

Just as a reminder we are a **NO NUT** School, we have a number of pupils who have allergies, this includes for some pupils, coconut allergy, please be mindful of pupils using sprays or body lotions as they can be sensitive to this.

## Important Dates

### Autumn Term

**Autumn Term:** 3rd September 2025 – 19th December 2025

**Half Term:** 27th October 2025 – 31st October 2025

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October:** Parents Evening

Please note that our TED day is the **21<sup>st</sup> of November**

## Anti-Bullying at Bankside

At Bankside, we are committed to promoting a safe, respectful, and inclusive school environment for every member of our community. Recent concerns have reminded us of the importance of addressing the serious issue of bullying—particularly when it is rooted in discriminatory attitudes or behaviours.

Bullying in any form is unacceptable, and when it targets individuals based on their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected characteristics, it crosses a critical threshold into discrimination. In the UK, these actions are not only harmful—they may also be unlawful under the **Equality Act 2010**. This legislation protects individuals from harassment and unfair treatment related to protected characteristics and applies within educational settings.

In addition, severe instances of bullying may be subject to further legal scrutiny under other legislation such as the **Protection from Harassment Act 1997**, which can involve police investigation and serious consequences beyond the school gates.

As a school, we take these matters extremely seriously. Pupils found to be engaging in bullying behaviour may face a range of natural consequences, including:

- Immediate consequences such as; community service and restorative justice
- Involvement of external agencies, including the police or safeguarding teams
- Potential long-term impacts on educational and future employment opportunities.

We ask parents to support us in reinforcing the message that kindness, empathy, and respect for others are non-negotiable values.

Please speak with your young person about the importance of treating others fairly and encourage them to report any concerns they may have.

To support us in our endeavours to be a safe and inclusive space, we will be working with the pupils to create a contract that allows them to take ownership of their actions and supports with the clear and unwavering boundaries that we have in place.

## Options Autism Podcast – Autism Unpacked

There are now 9 episodes available to watch/listen to discussing different topics around Autism. Please follow the link and you can see what each episode covers.

[Autism Unpacked Podcast - Options Autism](#)



## AQA Unit Award Scheme



New for this academic year is the AQA Unit Award Scheme.

This Award Scheme (UAS) supports all pupils to engage with their learning and have their progress and achievements recognised.

Across our curriculum, both at Key Stage 3 and 4, we have identified Units that specifically underpin the planned themes and topic areas covered in our subject areas.

Pupils will be rewarded with a certificate each time they successfully complete a unit of learning. They will build up a portfolio of certificates to evidence their skills, knowledge and experience.

The AQA Unit Award scheme boosts confidence, increases engagement and improves motivation, helping learners to make progress on their lifelong learning journey.

## Nominations

- Kay E - Outstanding effort in PSHE lessons, showing focus and maturity. Excellent attendance in maths lessons – being a great role model for the rest of the group.
- Joe B - Engaged well with learning in Art – showing perseverance. Following instructions, and being able to evaluate his own work.
- Ewan - For effort and engagement in PE.
- Betty - Progress Hero – working hard on ratio skills, building her confidence to be able to share her methods with the rest of the group, helping them learn too.
- Jess I - Star learner – Computing, great engagement and showed good knowledge of big data and online reputation. She also showed good critical thinking skills when you did some data analysis.
- Stanley - Showing commitment to improving lesson attendance and progress.
- Jayden - Creating and delivering a fantastic piece of work with your peers.
- Ollie V - Supporting friends in lessons to understand key maths skills.
- Jake L - For awesome attendance in lessons and engaging well.

## Special Mention

Challenge – make someone smile:

**Caleb** - For helping a peer with some work and making him smile. Your kindness makes your friends feel happy!

## TIP – Trauma Informed Practice

### A guide to cultivating respectful and trauma-sensitive language and culture

Behaviour is just the tip of the iceberg. As a team, we think beyond the tip of the iceberg or the behaviour of our young people so that we can meet the underlying need. As part of our Trauma Informed Therapeutic Environment we use positive, respectful language and encourage reflection from our young people to support them.

#### Top Tips for Language Use

**Use person-first language**  
Place the individual before their trauma, for example, "a person who has experienced trauma" rather than "a trauma survivor". An individual's experience of trauma is only one part of their identity and does not define them.

**Avoid blaming language**  
This can be triggering – we need to focus on empathy and support. For example, instead of asking "What's wrong with you?" you could say "How can I help you?" This approach validates the individual's feelings and experiences while emphasizing your willingness to support them.

**Separate the problem from the individual**  
It is important that the problem is not located within individuals, and that we use language that externalises it. For example, rather than "I'm bad" using descriptors such as 'the bad feeling'. This helps to reduce shame and encourages reflection and new perspectives to be explored, e.g. "When do you notice the bad feeling?" "Tell me more about the bad feeling".

**Hear young people discuss the use of words here**  
Scan the QR code to learn more.

**Provide choice**  
Trauma experiences can feel very unpredictable and out of control – providing choice can be empowering and promote a sense of agency. For example, when encouraging young people, you could offer a couple of options and allow them to choose what feels most comfortable for them. You can create a choice out of anything!

**Non-Verbal Communication**  
Research suggests that as much as 70-93% of the impact of our communication can be attributed to non-verbal cues and those that have experienced trauma can be even more astute to possible signs of danger. It's crucial to be attuned to non-verbal cues such as body language, facial expressions and gesture. Maintain an open and non-threatening body posture being aware of physical distance and boundaries and having a kind facial expression all help to create a sense of safety. The use of PACE and individuals feeling heard is key.

**The 3 Cs of Trauma Informed Practice**  
Connect  
Co-Reflect  
Co-regulate  
Dr. Leanne Johnson, 2021

#### Behaviour is just the tip of the iceberg

The way children have learned to manage their early trauma and therefore survive is something to be celebrated! Taking the time to understand how children have learned to manage and survive will give us clues to the underlying need, enabling the best support. Asking the question 'why' about a behaviour can enable us to delve deeper and see beyond the tip of the iceberg. It is important to remember this also relates to us and our teams too – we don't always know what is going on beneath the tip of any iceberg!

**What you see**

**What they are really saying**

- Ⓞ Am I safe?
- Ⓞ Am I loved?
- Ⓞ Do I matter?
- Ⓞ I feel sad.
- Ⓞ I feel scared.
- Ⓞ I feel hungry or tired.
- Ⓞ I am feeling overwhelmed.
- Ⓞ I can't communicate any other way.
- Ⓞ I feel overstimulated.
- Ⓞ I need understanding or help!

## Clinical Team News

With lots of new students, families and caregivers at Bankside, we thought it was time to re-introduce ourselves! The Clinical Team consists of:



Ollie – Therapies Assistant



Sophie – Therapies Assistant



Olivia - Speech and Language  
Therapist



Emma - Psychologist



Zoe - Specialist Occupational Therapist and Clinical Lead

We are looking forward to work together with you all this academic year!