

# Bower Grove News



Issue 149

[www.bower-grove.kent.sch.uk](http://www.bower-grove.kent.sch.uk)

February 2025

Dear Readers,

Happy half term everyone and we wish you all a fantastic break. We hope you enjoy the February homework project with different activities to enjoy over the holiday.

This term has been extremely busy and it is lovely to read about all the activities that our pupils have been involved in this newsletter.

This term we invited some people from Challenge Partners into school for three days to assess our pupils learning and our progress. They completed lots of observations around the school in and out of lessons as well as speaking to our pupils and staff. I am delighted to report that we were graded as 'Leading' which is the highest category alongside some lovely comments from their observations

*'Pupils love their school and, often, coming to Bower Grove is a lifeline. As one pupil explained, 'In my last school they didn't have the proper staff to care for special needs kids, I used to hate it there. [At Bower Grove] I always get help when I need it, teachers are really nice...super friendly!'*

On Friday 14th February we awarded our termly golden tickets to pupils who have achieved excellent attendance over the term. Well done! Any pupil who received a golden ticket is able to take a seat at our Golden Table which really is a treat. It was wonderful to see some different faces at the table.

We are really excited to look forward to lots of activities in term four including World Book Day on 6th March and encourage all our pupils and staff to dress up using the theme 'Exploring People's life stories' either famous or every day. The date for Parents evening is 5th March and look forward to catching up with you all.

I would like to wish everyone a wonderful half term and look forward to welcoming pupils back into school on Tuesday 25th February.

Mrs Cleave  
Headteacher



## News from the Governors

I do not know about anyone else, but I feel that this term has flown by.

Governors have held Finance and Strategy Team meetings this term. I have had regular meetings with Mrs Cleave - we call these our COG meetings which stands for Chair of Governors. These are an opportunity for us to talk less formally about what is happening in school and to ensure I am up to date with everything that happens in between our more formal Governor meetings. Sometimes it is also an opportunity to support the school with meetings with visitors or the wider community.

Other Governors have also been into school for formal committee meetings, Safeguarding, Finance and Health and Safety visits and I would like to thank the Governors for all of their hard work and dedication to Bower Grove School and its wider community.

On behalf of the Governors, I would like to thank all members of staff and pupils for their hard work and dedication during this term. I would like to wish everyone a safe break and I look forward to seeing staff and pupils back in school after the break.

Mr M Kirby ~ Chair of Governors



# CELEBRATING CREATIVITY AT BOWER GROVE

## MUSIC

This term at BGS, the choir has been working diligently on a selection of new songs that they have chosen in collaboration with staff across the school. These songs were selected based on both the members' preferences and suggestions from the teaching staff. The Music Club has also been particularly active and with strong attendance from the younger year groups, it is clear that music is going to continue growing in popularity as time goes on. In Year 6, we've been exploring Australian culture and music. As part of our learning, everyone has had the opportunity to study the technique of circular breathing, which is essential for playing the didgeridoo, and we've gained a deeper understanding of how it is used in traditional Indigenous music.



## ENGLISH

Pupils in 7H have been studying *Ice Trap*, the true story of Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic adventure. Below are some excerpts from a creative writing task, in which pupils were asked to imagine they were Percy Blackborrow, a stowaway on Shackleton's *Endurance* ship, describing his first experience of the Antarctic.

Toby - My first time out from under the dark moist tarp and I looked up to the cyan blue sky and the corn yellow sun. The boat was gliding through the pack ice and the ocean was lapis blue. One of the most beautiful things I had ever peered on in my life.

Austin - A pearl white layer of pure snow scattered everywhere. I spotted flying fish splashing up and down frosted waters. The sky was like diamonds drifting through the air. Ernest Shackleton shouted at me like was a huge shark claiming its territory.

Archie - It was minus 26 outside. The wind was chomping in my face, my ears and nose were throbbing. There were no birds in the sky at all. It was eerily quiet. The only sounds were the boat dragging through the frosted water.

Tommy - Ice was everywhere like a different planet. It was like a maze with no escape. It was very cloudy and frozen. The sun was orange yellow, blinding me. It was like a never ending blizzard.

## DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Within DT this term Yr 7 & Yr 9 Pupils have been generating and developing prototypes for utility holders. They have also gained knowledge of Timber Joining Techniques and how to apply a range of decorative effects to their final products.



## Honey Bees Class

We are palaeontologist and have been hunting for dinosaurs' bones.

We have been learning about dinosaurs' skeletons and how dinosaurs roamed the earth.



## PE ACTIVITIES

In PE this term pupils have been enjoying lessons on problem solving and teamwork (OAA) and our Key Stage four pupils have completed two more practical sports towards achieving their Entry Level Qualification. Our competitive sports opportunities have included our under 16's football team winning two of their three matches in the South London league. Frogs and Honeybees classes also got the chance to practise their gymnastics on our airtrax inflatables.

As a department we have set a school wide physical/sports challenge to our pupils and staff alike. Between now and the summer term we would like to see who has the most impressive physical skill or trick. There will be prizes for primary, secondary and staff winners and we look forward to entries from across our cohort. If our pupils would like to enter, they need to perform the skill and send a video or photographic evidence of this being completed to [atheath@bower-grove.kent.sch.uk](mailto:atheath@bower-grove.kent.sch.uk) and the PE team will be judging the winners as we get later in the year. Get practising everyone!!

### PE Department Challenge

Our department would like to start a competition to find the pupils and staff members who can perform the most impressive physical skill or trick.

#### Rules:

- You have until the next PE assembly in the summer term to enter the competition.. So, get practising.
- The trick/skill has to be evidenced via a video or still picture and emailed to the department to enter.
- The trick can involve others such as family members.
- The trick must be done in a safe and controlled environment.
- There will be prizes for the top 2 skills/tricks for pupils and staff.



# VENTURE AFTERNOON

**Secondary** Venture afternoon took place on Tuesday 11th February. Pupils had a range of activities to choose from either inside or outside of school. Many activities were on offer including; Football, Bowling, Climbing, Swimming, Computing, Cooking, DT and many more. 17 activities were available for pupils to choose from.

The afternoon was a huge success and pupils had an opportunity to mix with different peers and staff whilst taking part in an activity of their choosing. The next Senior venture afternoon takes place in term 4. Pupils will get more activities to choose from based on their work ethic and behaviour around school.



# VENTURE

# AFTERNOON

Primary pupils had a lovely venture afternoon. All pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activities they had chosen. Activities included bead making, sports, venture walks and cinema.





# Bower Grove Cafe

Pupils in Enrichment Pathway have experienced running a café during their life skills lessons. They have created the menu by deciding the price of Ingredients and visiting a local café as well as creating invitations. On 13/2/25 they ran their café getting 5\* reviews from the staff who visited.



# Science

*This term Foxes have been learning about living things in Science. These are some pictures during Forest School where we were searching for living things and learning about their habitats.*



*Eagles have been learning about changes in our body as we grow, how animals reproduce and plant germination. Here are some pictures of pupils in Eagles class doing an eye test from up to 7m away.*



# Science

*Honey Bees Class have been learning about dinosaurs: carnivore, omnivore herbivores.; we went on a dinosaur hunt to find different dinosaurs and describe their features. We have discussed dinosaur skeletons and how they have become fossils. We have discussed how dinosaurs became extinct.*



*Hedgehogs Class have been studying Rocks this term.*

*We have been grouping rocks into metamorphic, sedimentary and igneous, describing rocks and also looking at how fossils are formed.*



# Year 11



A group of our Year 11 pupils are feeling more prepared and ready for their life after Bower Grove School, following their visit into Maidstone Town Centre. Pupils independently travelled on the bus to and from the town, completing tasks such as buying their bus ticket; food shopping; visiting the bank and accessing the chemist. They were responsible and respectful and enjoyed a McDonalds treat at the end for demonstrating outstanding independence.



# YEAR 10

# Aspire

*This term our Year 10 Aspire lessons have been looking at different Post 16 Provisions.*

*A representative from Catch 22 College explained who Catch 22 were, what courses are available to the pupils, where they are based, how to apply for the courses and what to expect if the pupils were interested in this provision.*

*Some of the courses Catch 22 offer:*

*Construction/Multi trades Entry 3 Certificate, Level 1*

*IT Skills Level 1-3*

*Hospitality & Catering EL3, Level 1 Certificate, Level 1 Diploma*

*Hair & Beauty EL3, Level 1*

The logo for Catch 22, featuring the word 'catch' in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font above the number '22' in a larger, bold, lowercase sans-serif font.

*[www.catch-22.org.uk](http://www.catch-22.org.uk)*

*Bemix has also visited the school to explain about the provision and what can be offered to our pupils Post 16.*

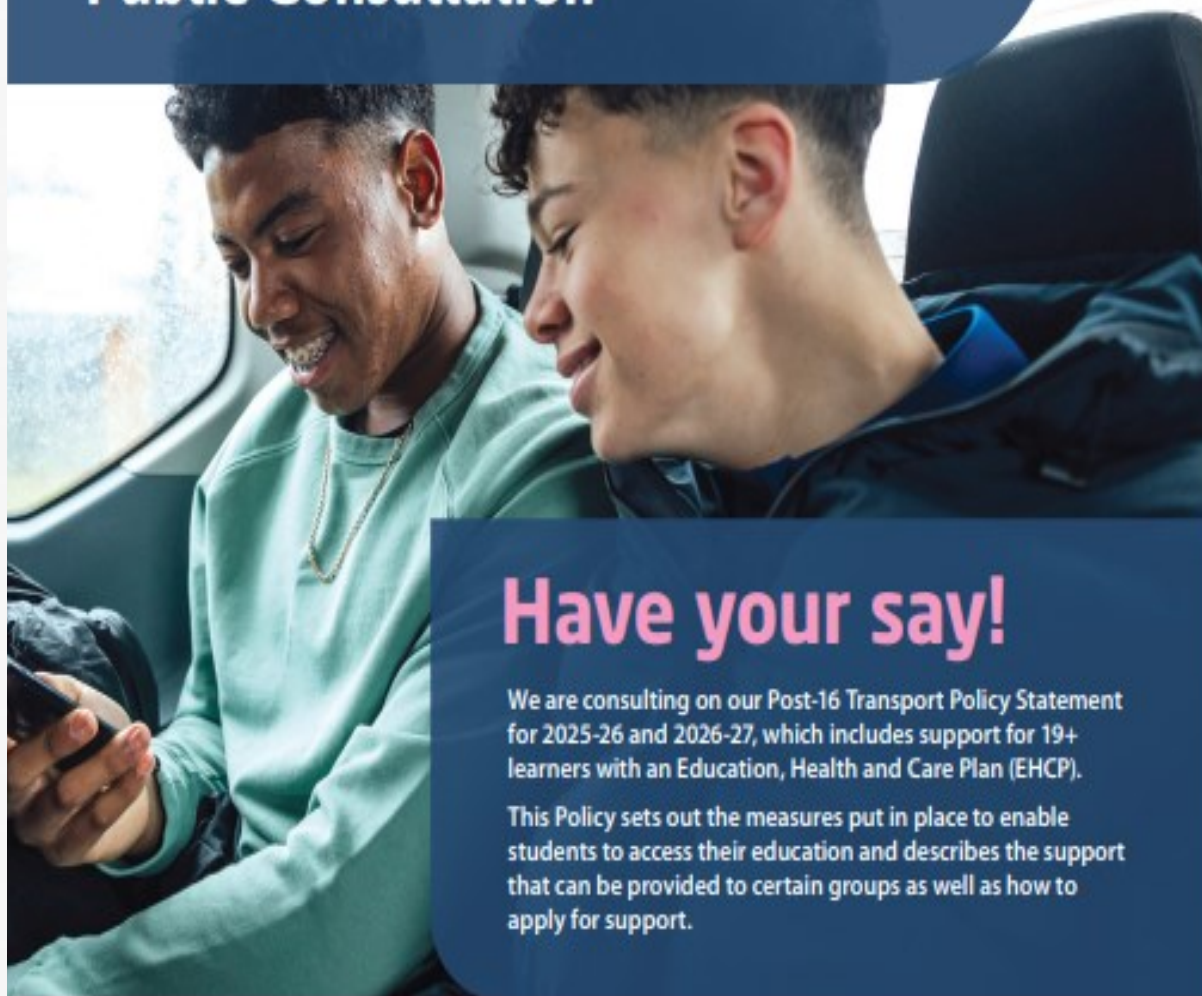
*Bemix was registered as a Specialist Post-16 Institution (SPI) in August 2017. They provide support for people with learning difficulties and/or autism aged between 16 -25 year olds.*

*They work with pupils to prepare for the world of work through enterprise activities, work experience, employer visits, functional skills and more.*

*They work with young people through personal development to identify the best course to study. For example, building confidence, work related skills, and identifying career paths to focus on. This is a pre-internship year and is suitable if you need more support to prepare for the working environment before going onto the supported internship year.*



# Post 16 School Transport for Mainstream and SEND Students Public Consultation



## Have your say!

We are consulting on our Post-16 Transport Policy Statement for 2025-26 and 2026-27, which includes support for 19+ learners with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

This Policy sets out the measures put in place to enable students to access their education and describes the support that can be provided to certain groups as well as how to apply for support.

### Consultation closes 23 March 2025

Find out about our proposals and tell us your views.

Visit: [www.kent.gov.uk/post16consultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/post16consultation)

For queries or to request hard copies of the consultation material contact us at [schooltransportconsultation@kent.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransportconsultation@kent.gov.uk) or call 03000 418796. For alternative formats or languages, please email [alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk) or call 03000 421553 (text relay service 18001 03000 421553). Both phone numbers go to answer machines, which are monitored during office hours.



# OPEN DAY

We encourage Parents and Carers and our pupils to explore Post-16 Education options as early as Year 9 and Year 10. This early investigation ensures our pupils have the necessary information to make informed decisions about Year 12 and transitioning from Bower Grove School. Attending local college and Post-16 provider Open Events can greatly assist in this decision-making process..

The following events are taking place: -

<i>Ashford College</i>	<i>Check out email for next Open Evening.</i>
<i>Broadstairs College</i>	<i>Wednesday 17th April 2025 4pm – 7pm</i>
<i>Canterbury College</i>	<i>Thursday 24th April 2025 4pm – 7pm</i>
<i>Dover College</i>	<i>Tuesday 22nd April 2025 4pm – 7pm.</i>
<i>Folkstone College</i>	<i>Tuesday 6th May 2025 4pm – 7.30pm.</i>
<i>Heath Farm school Maidstone</i>	<i>Tuesday 25th February 2025</i>
<i>Hadlow College</i>	<i>Wednesday 4th June 2025 3pm – 7pm</i>
<i>Kite College</i>	<i>Tuesday 18th March 2025 – see website for times</i>
<i>Mid Kent College Maidstone</i>	<i>Wednesday 5th March 2025, 3.30pm to 7pm</i>
<i>Mid Kent College Chatham</i>	<i>Wednesday 12th March 2025, 3.30pm to 7pm</i>
<i>Sheppey College</i>	<i>Check out email for next Open Evening.</i>
<i>Supa Jam Music Colleges</i>	<i>See website for details</i>

*See websites to register and book a place.*

# One-Pot Chicken & Rice

## Ingredients (Serves 1)

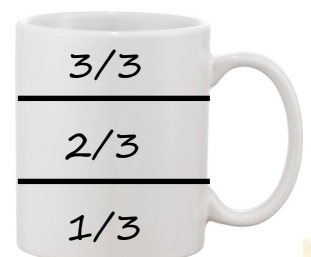
- 1 Large or 2 Small Boneless, Skinless Chicken Thighs
- 1 Small Onion
- 1 tsp Sunflower Oil
- 2 tsp Curry Paste (Choose Your Favourite)
- One Third Mug of Basmati Rice
- Two Thirds Mug Chicken Stock
- One Mug Frozen Mixed Vegetables
- Half Mug Frozen Leaf Spinach



1. Chop the onion into small pieces and the Chicken into bite sized pieces
2. Heat the oil in a frying pan, then fry the onion for 5-6 mins until softened
3. Add the chicken pieces and fry for a further couple of mins just to colour the outside
4. Stir in the curry paste and rice then cook for one more min
5. Pour in the chicken stock and throw in any larger bits of frozen vegetables
6. Bring to the boil, lower the heat and cover the pan with a lid
7. Cook for 10 mins more then stir in the smaller vegetables along with the spinach
8. Cook for a further 10 mins more until all the stock is absorbed and the rice is tender
9. Give everything a good stir, season to taste

## Alternatives:

1. Leave out the chicken and use extra vegetables and vegetable stock
2. Add Chorizo instead of chicken and leave out curry paste
3. To make a bigger pot for a family use a larger saucepan or casserole pan with lid and multiply the recipe by how many people you want to cook for. Once everything is boiling put in the oven at 180°/Gas Mark 4 for 10mins then add vegetables and cook in the oven for a further 10 mins until stock is absorbed



# Term Dates 2024-25

<b><u>Term 4</u></b> <b><u>2025</u></b>	<i>Staff Training Day</i> Term Begins for all classes Term Ends	Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
<b><u>Term 5</u></b> <b><u>2025</u></b>	Term Begins for all classes Term Ends	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2025 Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2025
<b><u>Term 6</u></b> <b><u>2025</u></b>	Term Begins for all classes Term Ends <i>Staff Training Day</i> <i>Staff Training Day</i>	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2025 Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2025 Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2025 Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Remember that school finishes at 1.15pm every Friday afternoon

(All other days school finishes at 3.15pm)

*2025—2026 Term Dates are available on our  
website*

[https://www.bower-grove.kent.sch.uk/attachments/  
download.asp?file=695&type=pdf](https://www.bower-grove.kent.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=695&type=pdf)

## School Dinners

School dinners are getting more and more popular and we are now providing over 650 meals per week to our pupils. With our fantastic new menu we are hoping to encourage more of our pupils to eat a hot lunch every day. Here are some of the pupils favourite meals. We also provide a salad cart with lots of healthy choices that pupils can add to their meal.



*Lasagne, Garlic Bread,  
Sweetcorn & New  
Potatoes*



*Chicken or Veggie  
Fajitas & Potato  
Wedges,*



*Chicken or Veggie  
Sausages/Quorn Sausages,  
Roast Potatoes,  
Yorkshire Pudding,  
Carrots Cabbage &  
Cauliflower Cheese,  
Stuffing & Gravy*



*Apple Crumble &  
Cream*



*Chocolate Cake &  
Custard*



*Shortbread*



## ATTENDANCE MATTERS



81 pupils have 100% attendance for Term 3!

119 pupils have over 95% attendance for Term 3!

147 pupils have over 90% attendance for Term 3!

**Can you improve your attendance?**

**Neptune** had the highest house attendance for  
Term 3 with **87.78%**.

*Well done Neptune!*

## Parent and Carer Support Group; 'Connections' – Together We Can

### Coffee Mornings

It was lovely to see everyone for our third Parent and Carer coffee morning last month. For our next session on Monday 10th March we meet with tea and cake for our termly catch up.

The following dates will be the coffee morning meeting times coming up:

Term 5 – Monday 12th May

Term 6 – Monday 23rd June

Looking forward to seeing you there!

### Guided talks

It was brilliant to see so many people attend our 'What is anxiety' training with Sasha and Rebekah from NEFLT. It was extremely informative with lots of strategies to take away in how to best support people with anxiety. Our next Guided talk will be on Friday 20th March about 'Understanding Emotional Wellbeing' with myself.

Please book any of these sessions via our email address [psg@bower-grove.kent.sch.uk](mailto:psg@bower-grove.kent.sch.uk) or phone us on 01622 726773

Mrs R Dowling

PCSG Lead



## Parent, Friends, Teachers Association (PFTA)

The PFTA are continuing their efforts to raise money for our Secondary Playground. There are many ways that you can help us with our efforts! Firstly, did you know that you can raise funds from your armchair every time you shop online? There is no cost to yourselves, all you need to do is sign up to Easyfundraising. If you have not already signed up, it only takes a few minutes, then you can begin using the Easyfundraising website or app straightaway – simply shop online as normal.

Visit our Easyfundraising page to get started:

[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/bowergrove/?utm\\_campaign=raise-more&utm\\_content=s-e2](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/bowergrove/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_content=s-e2)

### Staff Leavers:

We wish the following staff good luck in their new ventures:

Mrs L Cutts	Family Liaison Officer
Miss E Hadaway	LSA
Miss Y Garcia	LSA

### Welcome New Staff:

Mrs L Washford	LSA
Mrs N Sinani	LSA

Please do not forget to follow our  
Bower Grove Facebook Page

