



Headteacher Update – 7th September 2026

Parents, Carers, Students, and Friends of Baines School,

Welcome back to the new academic year!

It has been a lovely week, welcoming all our new Year 7 students and new students in other year groups as well as our returning students. The students have had an incredibly positive start and have certainly embodied the 3Ps: 'Positivity, Professionalism, Perseverance' which we encourage in all the students.

The children are fully involved in their lessons and learning again, and there is a lovely atmosphere in school. The academic side of school is so important, and it is wonderful to see students eager to learn. Following the success of the Year 10 students who sat their GCSE Literature, we are delighted that they are in a position where so many of the year group already have at least a grade 4 in English as they start their Year 11 studies. The Period 6 compulsory Boosters will be starting this week where selected students will be expected to attend, to boost their score in a particular subject for a short period. Parents and carers will be informed via synergy.

Uniform is looking better than ever. We have supported a large number of families with uniform this past week, and will continue to do so, as it is important that no-one should have to choose between uniform and food. If you are struggling with uniform, please let us know. If you email Mrs Streetly (kst@baines.lancs.sch.uk) we will be able to help. If a student would like to swap a smaller blazer, skirt etc. for a larger size (if we have them in our new to you range) they should pop to the pastoral office either before the school day starts or at the end of the day.

Following the success of our Pop-Up Shop we did during the summer break, we will have our own fully stocked on-site uniform shop set up shortly.

There are two formal brown uniforms – the skirt with tights or trousers with socks, however on practical PE days students should wear their tracksuits.

The gold and black PE shorts and tops are no longer compulsory uniform items, although I am aware that the majority of students are still wearing them. Instead of these, students can wear a plain black t shirt and plain black shorts which end towards the knee. Branded / designer clothes are not to be worn, nor shorts which are not long enough.

The mobile phone pouches will be being distributed this week and fully in use by Monday 14th September. Any students who do not have a phone pouch should not have a phone in school.

We also welcome new members of staff to the Baines Family, including:

Mr Sweeting – Teacher of maths
Miss Lobley – Teacher of science
Mrs Heaton – Receptionist

Miss Fretwell – Cover Supervisor
Miss Blunt – Finance team
Mrs Sarjeant – Learning Support Assistant

We also have some staff who have changed their role in school, including:

Miss Hallam – Teacher of maths and Lead Practitioner
Mr Flynn – Teacher of PE and Pupil Premium Progress Leader
Mrs Porter – Progress Leader for Year 8
Miss Allen – Learning Support Assistant and Community Liaison

Belle Widdop



We had some very sad news over summer when we learned about the passing of Belle, Class of 2025. Belle was a beautiful girl, both inside and out, who had to face too much in her young life. Belle faced all her challenges head on, and they never stopped her from doing everything she could in the time she had.

Our thoughts go to Belle's twin sister Jasmine, her mum Samantha and their family at this sad time.

[Tribute to Isabelle Skye Ferguson-Hamilton-Nicholson, 2009 - 2026](#)

PiXL School

As a PiXL school we are a member of The PiXL Club, a large UK partnership network that helps educators improve student grades, staff leadership, and school performance.

PiXL stands for **Partners in Excellence** and by being part of this network, we gain access to shared strategies, professional training, and data tools designed to boost student achievement and personal growth.

We are absolutely delighted to announce that our very own Mr Mycock has been asked to present at the national conference in London later this year. Mr Mycock is an expert in vocational courses and as such has been asked to present to other teachers from across the UK.

Congratulations Mr Mycock!

Nut Free School

Mrs C J Doherty

Due to airborne allergies, we are now a completely nut free school. Whole nuts or nut bars are not to be brought into school or consumed in school please. As a reminder we also do not allow spray deodorants in school due to students with brittle asthma. Anyone needing a deodorant to freshen up, is asked to bring a roll-on.



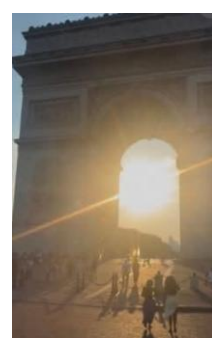
French Visit

As we finished school in July, we still had a group of students in France on an educational visit. Thank you to Mr Corbley for organising and leading the visit with support from Mrs Spencer, Miss Stanley, Miss Braithwait and Mrs Kenyon.

The students had the most incredible time. It was truly action-packed! From exploring the sights and sounds of Paris in the glorious sunshine, to climbing the stairs of the Sacre Coeur and exploring Montmartre, to tasting the infamous Escargot in a traditional French restaurant, and enjoying a boat trip down the Seine, they managed to see and do so much and were beautifully behaved throughout.

A full day at Disneyland Paris was definitely the highlight!

They were fully immersed in the culture and the language with the support of our expert Mr Corbley as their guide.



As educational visits are planned, students will bring letters home and notices will go on Synergy. It is important to note that students who show they cannot always behave will not be allowed to go on an

Mrs C J Donohy

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educational visit. We also have the right to remove a student from a trip if their behaviour falls below the standard we expect from them, and the money paid will not be refunded. We always explain this in our correspondence at the time.

After the War



On the 13th July Mrs Simmons took the Year 8 reading group to Windermere to visit the setting of their book *After the War* by Tom Palmer. Visiting Windermere library to find out about how the Jewish children were kept safe in the Lake District during WW2 really brought the book to life.

Thanks to Mrs Simmons for organising it and keeping our year 8 group engaged with their reading.

Open Evening September 2026

Our Open Evening this year will be on Tuesday 22nd September. We are absolutely thrilled with the number of families who have already participated in a tour. If you would like to come on a tour as a prospective parent, please contact info@baines.lancs.sch.uk

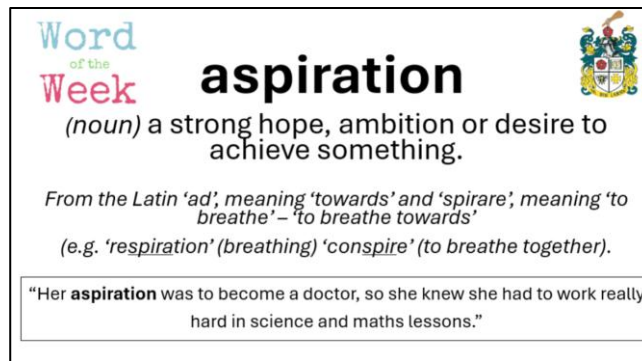
Car Park

The car park at the front of school is only to be used for dropping off and collecting students with a disability or a need that requires them to be escorted. It does not have a pedestrian walkway, and students should be using the main entrance and exit by the ILC, except for the reasons given above. A member of staff will close the main entrance gate but open it for cars authorised to collect students. Please do not come through the exit to collect a child. A member of staff will open it for you.

Please also be mindful of the zigzags and our neighbours when you consider where you park.

All of this is to ensure that our students are kept safe.

Word of the Week



Safeguarding and Wellbeing

Just a reminder that if you or your son / daughter has any safeguarding concerns, please contact a member of the safeguarding team:

Mr Moseley (DSL)

Mrs Doherty (Headteacher)

Mrs Streetly (Assistant Headteacher Wellbeing and Mental Health)

Mrs Fell (School Counsellor)

If you have any ideas how you feel we could improve our safeguarding of students, please feel free to email

Mrs Macfarlane (jma@baines.lancs.sch.uk)

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact the school's safeguarding lead on

jma@baines.lancs.sch.uk

If you are worried about the mental health of your child or need some food from our food hub (tins, pasta, cereal etc), sending home, please contact the wellbeing team on wellbeing@baines.lancs.sch.uk. We will be extremely discrete.

Did you know?

Research shows that reading for pleasure has the most impact on the frequency at which young people read, their educational achievement and their personal development.



Renaissance Learning's report for 2018 showed that in primary school, children are generally reading books that are of a level exceeding their age and ability. Unfortunately, this changes at secondary school; children in Year 7 generally read books which are levelled at a year below their age and this gap either plateaus or continues to widen throughout the remainder of their time at secondary school.

Research has shown that as they grow older, children find reading less enjoyable and they also read less frequently. We also know from research that, in general, boys enjoy reading less than girls.

What can you do?

3 things to do if your child is at Key Stage 3:

Encourage your child to find texts they enjoy; choice and interest in reading is key. Spend some time at the library or a local book store and ask someone who works there to give suggestions based on your child's interests, films or books they've enjoyed or any new and popular books other children have enjoyed. Some research has shown that children who have books of their own enjoy reading more, but it is often worth ensuring that they're confident they'll enjoy the authors/texts they are choosing before investing!

Encourage your child to read for 15-30 minutes every day. This doesn't have to be novels - it could be short stories or even non-fiction. If your child is willing, sit with them and read together so that you can discuss and tease out some of the issues that crop up.

If your child has shown an interest in a recent issue in the news, or a particular topic at school, look into non-fiction articles or books related to it and help them see how they can follow their own interests and develop their knowledge of different areas they find engaging.

3 things to do if your child is at Key Stage 4:

By this age, young people can sometimes be harder to

having a discussion about what your child dislikes, or finds difficult, about reading; be open-minded about their views and try to discuss ways around these together. It's fine to have dislikes, but what might they enjoy reading? Where could they make a start?

Encourage your child to find texts they enjoy; choice and interest in reading is key. This doesn't have to be fiction, it could be non-fiction extracts or whole texts too. You may find text ideas together, from your child's own selection or seek advice from their teachers at school. Due to the nature of GCSE English Language, you may find that your child's school library or English department have banks of fiction and non-fiction extracts for them to explore. This can help them, and you, to get a feel for what may interest them before widening your search to whole texts.

Consider, with your child, what subjects or topics they are particularly enjoying and seek out fiction and/or non-fiction linked to those. For example, some young people who like science enjoy biographies of well-known scientists from across the ages, those interested in history have a whole wealth of fiction and non-fiction available to them in their chosen areas of interest and those who enjoy maths may find books about topics like Alan Turing's Enigma machine of interest.



Stars of the Week:



Dates for your diary:

Date	Event
Monday 7 th September 2026	Assemblies - Being Inclusive Introduction & SG Introduction
Monday 14 th September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week Assemblies - Enrichment & Student Leadership launch (+ MacMillan Coffee Morning)

Mrs C J Doherty

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Tuesday 15 th September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week
Wednesday 16 th September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week New Parents Information Session - Systems at Baines (Synergy/Sparx) 5-5.30pm
Thursday 17 th September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week
Friday 18 th September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week Myerscough College Year 11 Assembly
Monday 21 st September 2026	Musical Auditions 3pm school hall Year 7 CAT Tests all week Yr7 Effort Report – Issued to families Assemblies: European Day of Languages
Tuesday 22 nd September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week Prospective Year 7 Open Evening 4.00pm-7.30pm (early finish 1pm) School Photographs Years 7 & 10 individuals
Wednesday 23 rd September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week
Thursday 24 th September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week
Friday 25 th September 2026	Year 7 CAT Tests all week Blackpool Sixth Form Year 11 Assembly MacMillian Coffee Morning 9.30 - 11am

Best wishes,

Clare Doherty
Headteacher

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