



# Newnham News

Friday 9 February 2024

Headteacher: Mr Edward Ferguson

Website links:

[Topic overviews](#)

[Home learning ideas](#)

Dear parents/carers,

The office inbox is regularly pinged with messages from scholars and students outlining research they would like to undertake looking at what makes for a successful learner/school/organisation/educator. A few deal in the positively abstract and philosophical, whilst most try to pinpoint particular criteria to assess, from which to form some hard data.

In schools, we are similarly encouraged to quantify, wherever possible. Targets in lessons, interventions and support groups should all be SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound. All very sensible and an approach that is embedded in all we do. It means that we try to accurately reflect on interventions, for example, and ensure that ones that are not working for a particular child are not endlessly repeated with the same outcome.

However, the fly in the ointment, and it is one not often acknowledged in a lot of the well meaning diktats that come from think tanks or government departments, is that children are not quantifiable. The multi-faceted, myriad variety of a child's nature, as well as the ever-changing experience of their nurture and environment, can make one day's objective data, the next day's meaningless pulp.

This is not to say that we, as a school, should not aspire to assess the impact of our support - it is a vital indicator of where we can improve and develop; but thank goodness it isn't the concrete evidence base that some would like it to be. It means we are working with the wonder of children rather than the predictability of machines.

If you are a Year 5 parent, click [here](#) for a link to a study that aims to investigate factors that can influence the reading comprehension skills of bilingual and monolingual children. It has already been completed by one of our Year 5 children, who speaks very highly of it, so we wanted to give others the opportunity as well.

Have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards  
Edward Ferguson

## Diary Dates

Parent consultations	12 - 14 Feb
Year 5 swimming	14 Feb
Year 2 trip to Woburn	15 Feb
Forest school - Year 4	16 Feb, morning

Forest school - Year 1/2	16 Feb, afternoon
Last day of this half term	16 Feb

Please check the school calendar on our website, which is updated regularly.

## Our language of the month is Hindi.

### Parent consultations

Booking for parent consultations will close on Sunday night - if you haven't done so, please [log into eSchools](#) via the school website or eSchools app and select a suitable time to meet with your child's teacher. Please note, children on the SEN register should make a separate appointment.

### Children's Mental Health Week

Monday marked the start of Children's Mental Health Week, with the theme this year being 'Our Voice Matters'. In an assembly the children learnt about the UN Convention of the Rights of a Child, and how Article 12 relates to all children having the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously. We thought about how having a voice to start change can be amazing and used Greta Thunberg as an example of someone who has spoken out about issues that are important.

It was a good chance to remind the children about how they can express themselves at school by talking to others, writing down ideas or sharing ideas through the School Council or Eco Committee. We also reminded the children about how school can support their well-being if they're feeling wobbly. We have a 'worry box' in the corridor which children are able to write their concerns in, they can speak to adults they trust in school and we have a 'Drop In' session each Friday at 12:45pm. We also looked again at the Zones of Regulation, which are displayed around school and can be a good way for children to help express how they may be feeling. The zones have been attached in the newsletter for your information.

### Staff changes

We look forward to welcoming Ms Genochio into Year 1 after the half term holidays, where she will replace Miss Wakelen while she is on sabbatical until the end of the academic year. We are also delighted to have Mrs Cullen in Year 4 full time until the end of the academic year too.

## Classroom news

### Reception

The Lunar New Year or Spring Festival is nearly upon us and this week, Reception found out what it is all about. Together with one of our trainee teachers, Mrs Whitelaw, the children

found out about how people around the world celebrate the festival and the customs associated with it. The class then joined in with preparing for the festival by cleaning our role play house for a fresh start to the new year, made good luck messages in lucky red envelopes and made red lanterns to decorate the classroom. Noodles were also made and enjoyed by everyone.

### KS1



A busy week again in KS1. In DT, we have been cutting out the features for our finger puppets. In geography, we looked at the human and physical features of Shanghai.

In Year 1 maths, we have been adding and subtracting using fact families and adding multiples of 10s. Year 2 has been subtracting 2 digit numbers, using a number line by counting on to find the difference. In English, the children have been researching animals and making their very own Top Trump fact cards. Year 1/2 enjoyed their rainy trip to Woburn and Year 1 and Year 2 enjoyed damp Forest school sessions.

### Year 3

Year 3 has had another busy week. On Monday, the children enjoyed listening to the experiences of Paul and Chris from the British Antarctic Survey and enjoyed seeing and wearing some of the clothing worn by them. In our maths sessions, the children worked on finding fractions of quantities. In our English sessions, the children learnt the meaning of some of the more adventurous verbs found in *The Wolf's Secret* by Myriam Dahman and Nicolas Digard and learnt how to write in the past and present tenses. In geography this week, the children looked at recognising the points on an eight-point compass and started to learn how to plan a route that used some of these. In art this week, the children enjoyed assembling their patterns inspired by the work of Rachel Parker.



### Year 4

We have been very lucky to have lots of visitors in Year 4 this week. We started with researchers from the British Antarctic Survey who showed us amazing videos, photographs and clothes from their trips to Antarctica. We have also started a new project with our visitors from ARM. We now need to plan how we would like to programme our MicroBit pet. In maths

we have been looking at different ways to identify equivalent fractions. In English, we have considered why the authors chose particular language in our class text *The Wolf's Secret*. In science, we have planned an experiment to see which liquids will freeze and we're looking forward to testing this out next week. The attached spellings include some words that will be useful for our topic as well as words with the prefix sub. Coming home tonight in bags is the *Wind In The Willows* script and a letter with your child's part. Please note - a copy of all the songs to practise at home has already been sent electronically.

### Year 5

In maths, we have been learning how to find equivalent fractions and also equivalent decimals and fractions. We learned how to calculate fractions of amounts and used word problems to practise applying this to real-world problems. In English, we planned, and began writing, short stories inspired by *Shaun Tan's Tale from Outer Suburbia*. We also practised using speech marks and dialogue punctuation correctly. In science, we explored how friction helps bikes, and their parts, to move.

### Year 6

Y6 have been very busy this week; we've had a few different tests, and finished our computing project!

We had our usual Monday, but on Tuesday we had a maths test! On Wednesday we had Mr Orton in the morning where instead of dance we did benchball because Mr Orton forgot his dance costume. We had a strange Thursday; music was moved to the morning and in its afternoon place, we discussed the film festival and watched previous Y6 movies. On Friday we had a breakfast cafe (a very successful one) and the usual awards assembly. To top the end of the week off, we had some Golden Time.

*By Rupert & Benedict*

### School Meals

The three weekly menu rota is attached. Next week's menu will be Week 3. The cost of a school meal is £2.50.

To mark Pancake Day on Tuesday 13th February, Mrs Noble will be serving pancakes for dessert for school meals.

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, a copy of which can be found on our school website:

[www.newnhamcroft.cambs.sch.uk](http://www.newnhamcroft.cambs.sch.uk).

### PTA NEWS

#### PTA Disco

Get ready to boogie on Thursday 15th February when we will have a PTA disco in the school hall.

KS1 - 6.40 - 7.15pm      KS2 - 7.30 - 8.15pm

Tickets are available on [Classlist](#) and a limited number will be available at the door.

#### Treat Stall

Our next Treat Stall will be on Friday 16th February, 3.15pm and this time it will be run by Year 4. Bring a coin and go home with a sweet treat.