



Newnham News

Friday 24 January 2025

Headteacher: Mr Edward Ferguson

Website links:

[Topic overviews](#)

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[NET donation link](#)

Dear parents/carers,

Whilst distributing the PTA-donated bark around The Island on Thursday lunchtime, helped and hindered by numerous willing volunteers, I was struck by the complexities of teaching.

Watching some of the children as they tried to shovel the bark, with a whole range of techniques of varying effectiveness, a host of pedagogical approaches presented themselves.

I could have explained good technique - knees bent, using their core to drive the spade along the flat tarmac etc.. Or I could have **demonstrated** how to shovel effectively, so they had a working model to copy. Or possibly a combination of the two.

However, often underestimated is another method - simply allowing them to work out the best technique for themselves, through repetition. A process of subconscious osmosis, where we intuitively grasp that one method is more effective than another, slowly whittling away the extraneous to be left with the purest, most effective technique. Practice making progress.

As always, there is no one answer and an approach that combines lots of variety is usually the most effective. But remembering that repeating something, whether that is shovelling, writing, speaking or any of the other numerous things we learn about, and allowing our vast subconscious mind to absorb, adapt and apply, is vital to really honing our skills.

In other news, thank you to those of you who have sponsored me in the Cambridge half-marathon. If you would like to sponsor me, I am running in support of CPSL Mind. Please click [here](#).

Have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards
Edward Ferguson

Diary Dates

Eat lunch with your Y2 child	12pm	Mon 27 Jan
Y2 Botanic Garden trip		Tues 28 Jan
Y5 swimming (and every Tues this term)		Tues 28 Jan
Eat lunch with your Y2 child	12pm	Wed 29 Jan

Y4 Grafham Water deposit due Fri 31 Jan

Open afternoon 3.15 - 4.00 Mon 3 Feb

Please check the school calendar on our [website](#), which is updated regularly.

Whole school news

RSPB Birdwatch

This weekend marks the Big Garden Watch, organised by the RSPB. They hope to find if different species of birds are thriving or struggling and compare trends over the years. They're hoping as many people as possible can contribute to the data by spending an hour birdwatching between the 24th-26th January. More information can be found on their website. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch>

In school, classes have taken part in the Big Schools' Birdwatch over the past two weeks. They've been looking carefully to identify different species and count how many we see in our school grounds.

Mindfulness

This week, the children had an assembly about mindfulness and learnt about the power it can have to help regulate emotions and contribute positively to our well-being. This afternoon, children spent time in different parts of the school practising their chosen mindful activity. This included yoga, painting, colouring and meditating. The children showed a mature and positive attitude towards the activities; we hope they become more able to use these mindful exercises as part of their daily life.

Eco Update

The Eco Committee met for the first time this term. There was lots of enthusiasm amongst the members and many ideas were thought of as action points for this term. The committee are keen to tackle litter and have come up with ideas to motivate the rest of the school.

School Meals

The weekly menu is attached. The menu next week will be Week 1. The cost of a school meal is £2.65.

Classroom news

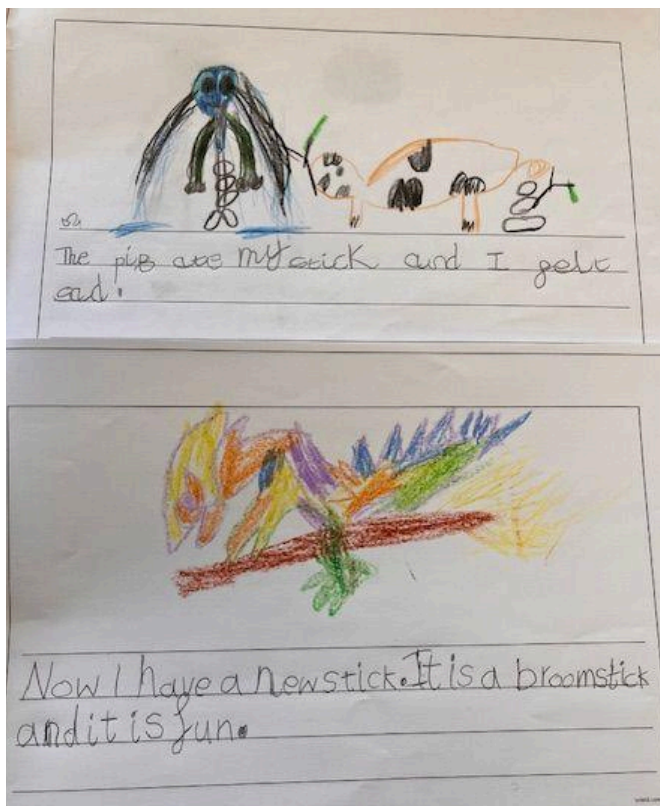
Reception

We've had another very busy week in Reception, thinking more about our topic of *Journeys*. All children thought about the

different places that the little red bus from our class book, *Naughty Bus*, could go. They had a go at writing down the different places that the bus visits, by using knowledge of their phonemes to help them. In Phonics, we explored the sounds: 'ur,' 'ow,' 'oi' and 'ear.' We also looked at the Phase 3 tricky words: "my," "by" and "all." In maths, Reception has been looking at addition number sentences using multilink and they have also been looking at the number bonds to 5 and 10 using Numicon. In preparation for our visit to the GP Motors garage next week in Newnham, Reception explored the map showing them the route we will be walking from our school to Eltisley Avenue. Thank you to all our wonderful parents for providing their child with slippers. Well done for a hardworking week Reception!

Year 1

Following on from the English work the class carried out last week of writing the book *Stanley's Stick* in their own words, this



week the class wrote their own versions based on the original format. The class were asked to design a cover for their books as well as write and illustrate the entire story. Great ideas for how a stick can be used in imaginative play were shared from using it as a whistle to riding on it as if it were a dragon.

Year 2

Year 2 this week has been busy discussing story settings and problems in preparation to write their own story next week. In maths we have been using number facts, place value and counting on to help us solve multiple number additions. In science we have set up a simple test to see what seeds need to grow. In history, we have been looking at why the Wright brothers are significant figures in history.

Year 3

Year 3 has worked really hard this week. In geography, the children learnt about how indigenous people live in the Amazon rainforest and the pressures that are being placed upon them. In maths, the children learnt how to order and compare fractions and how to find fractions of quantities using their knowledge of the times tables. In English, we have started a new unit on non-chronological reports. The children learnt how to recognise the different features that are found in them and how to gather information on an unidentified animal they discover living in the rainforest.

Year 4

This week in science we looked at convex and concave mirrors and how our reflection changes in each one. In our project, we have learned about the people who live in the rainforest. The children have also started planning their own mini project, thinking about the creatures in the rainforest, and how to present this learning. In maths we have been multiplying and dividing by 10 and learning to recognise tenths. In English we practiced using correct speech punctuation and we have been planning some dialogue between two characters. We also enjoyed trying out some mindfulness activities with other classes. Spelling words this week end in -ous.

Year 5

In maths, we explored the properties of both 2D and 3D shapes and organised them in different ways. We also plotted polygons on a grid using coordinates. In English, we finished reading *Tales from Outer Suburbia* and then began planning and writing our own illustrated short stories set in the suburbs, inspired by Shaun Tan's style. In science, we looked at how day and night are created by the Earth's rotation and why this creates the apparent movement of the Sun across the sky. We also discussed the importance of time zones and how they work. We really enjoyed our first swimming lesson of the term earlier this week!

Year 6

This week, Y6 has written poems about the sun using a poetic rule called MOREAPS (metaphors, onomatopoeia, repetition, emotion, alliteration, personification, similes). In computing, Yr 6 has made their own games using Scratch. This week in maths, Yr 6 has been collecting data to use in pie charts. In art, we have looked at perspective in *A Regatta on The Grand Canal*.

By Mollie and Ava

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.

Community news

Newnham Brownies

Please see the attached poster for a taster session with the local Brownie group.