



Shilbottle Primary School

Friday Flyer

13th February 2026

Headteachers Update

As we come to the end of this half term, I want to take a moment to say how incredibly proud we are of all our children and the effort they have shown since returning to school in January. The last few weeks have certainly been cold, wet and rather miserable at times but that has not dampened the spirits of the children at Shilbottle. They continue to arrive each day with smiles on their faces, positive attitudes and a real determination to do their very best. Their resilience, enthusiasm and commitment to their learning truly reflect everything that our school community stands for and it makes me very proud to be part of Shilbottle. Well done to every single one of them.

This week we marked Safer Internet Week, spending time in classes discussing how to stay safe online in a world where technology is constantly evolving. We have talked about making sensible choices, being kind online and understanding how tools such as AI can be used safely and responsibly. This is something we will continue to build on as part of our curriculum. As always, if you are ever unsure about an app, game, device or new technology your child is using, please do not hesitate to get in touch with school. We are always happy to offer advice and support where we can.

A huge thank you goes to our wonderful SPPA for organising the Valentine's events this week. With two after-school events and a special event on Friday, they have once again given up their time to support the school and create memorable experiences for the children. We are very grateful for all they do. If you are ever able to lend a hand at future events, your support would be greatly appreciated. I'm pleased to share that I met with the team this week and we already have several exciting dates in the diary for the months ahead.

I would also like to recognise our fantastic Year 6 pupils, who completed their mock SATs this week. Taking on practice tests in the final week of a half term is not easy but they approached the challenge with maturity, resilience and determination. We are very proud of the way they conducted themselves throughout the week - you have absolutely earned a well-deserved rest.

We ended the week with our final Celebration Assembly and Hot Chocolate Friday of the half term, a lovely opportunity to recognise effort, progress and achievements across the school. Please remember that when we return after half term, Monday is a Teacher Training Day, so we look forward to welcoming the children back on Tuesday morning.

All that remains to say is have a wonderful and restful half term break. I hope you are able to spend some quality time together as a family and that we might even see a little sunshine so you can enjoy some time outdoors. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Mr Shaw



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Safeguarding

Shilbottle Primary School is committed to keeping all children safe. Our staff regularly participate in safeguarding training and are fully aware of how to keep our pupils safe and what signs to look out for. Our pupils know they can share any concerns and we have robust policies and procedures in place which underpin safeguarding. It is our paramount priority to keep all children healthy and safe.

Remember our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in school are **Mr Phillips, Mrs Blackhall and Mr Shaw.**

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO CHOOSE RESPECT

Sometimes, differences between children can escalate into bullying, potentially impacting their mental health in a way that can persist into adulthood. While it's natural to disagree sometimes, teaching children the importance of respect is essential - especially in difficult situations. This guide provides strategies for encouraging considerate behaviour, even during a dispute, to foster a kinder, more inclusive environment for everyone.

- 1 LEAD BY EXAMPLE**
As adults, we play a crucial role in modelling respectful behaviour for children: they observe and learn from our actions every day. Be mindful of the way you interact with others in front of children. Keep in mind that you should always approach others with an attitude of mutual respect, even if you disagree with them. Demonstrating this behaviour can influence young people and help them to handle their own conflicts in a healthy way.
- 2 AGREE TO DISAGREE**
Make sure children know that it's fine to have differing opinions - and that disagreeing with someone doesn't mean you can't get along or respect each other's point of view. Help them understand that sometimes we can 'agree to disagree'. Using active listening skills when doing this can also help to build empathy and understanding of others.
- 3 PROMOTE ACTIVE LISTENING**
Teach children about the importance of active listening: that is, making a genuine effort to listen to the other person's perspective without interrupting, before responding in a way that shows you understand their viewpoint, even (or perhaps especially) if you disagree with it. This makes people feel respected and allows for a better comprehension of their point of view, which in turn can make it easier for you to communicate your own opinions to them.
- 4 ENCOURAGE THE USE OF "I" STATEMENTS**
If a child finds themselves in a disagreement with someone, it can be useful to encourage them to use "I" statements during the discussion. Framing their thoughts and feelings using statements like "I feel..." or "I think..." can help them avoid an accusatory tone and encourages them to take responsibility for their own emotions.
- 5 FOCUS ON BEHAVIOUR, NOT CHARACTER**
When disagreements happen, encourage children to focus on criticising and addressing the specific actions or behaviours that caused the upset, rather than attacking the person's character. For example, "I don't like how you interrupted me" is better than "You're so rude". This can help children avoid hurting someone's feelings, which is likely to inflame the situation.
- 6 STAY CALM AND TAKE BREAKS**
It's perfectly normal to feel upset during a disagreement - especially if it's getting heated. Remind children that if they feel overwhelmed, they should try to take deep breaths or even go for a short break to help them stay composed. If conversation becomes too intense, remind them it's OK to suggest continuing it later or in a different setting. This can prevent things getting out of hand, allowing cooler heads to prevail.
- 7 START CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RESPECT**
Talk openly to children about what respect means - to you and to them. Discuss how they might show respect to each other, to friends, to strangers and even to people they might disagree with. You could use examples of considerate or inconsiderate behaviour in books, films or TV to open discussions about the importance of giving others due regard.
- 8 SEEK COMMON GROUND**
When a disagreement has occurred between children, they may find it hard to move past it. You can support them in finding a more positive way forward by helping identify areas of agreement or common ground with the other party. This can help to build bridges between differing opinions and foster a more cooperative atmosphere, as well as preventing those involved from alienating each other.
- 9 AVOID MAKING THINGS PERSONAL**
It's important that we make it clear to children they must avoid name-calling, swearing or derogatory remarks in a disagreement with others. Respectful language sets a positive tone and helps keep the conversation productive. Reminding children to stay calm and take breaks - as mentioned previously - can help them avoid getting too emotional and saying or doing something hurtful.
- 10 REFLECT AND LEARN**
After a child has had a disagreement, encourage them to reflect on the experience and think about what they can learn from it. What did they handle well? How might they improve their communication skills to handle conflicts more effectively in the future? You could use role play, writing and drawing pictures, or hypothetical examples to further develop their skills in showing respect during a disagreement.



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Attendance

As parents and carers we want to share our attendance figures because it is you who can make the big difference. Our children are entitled to a full and balanced education and at Shilbottle we feel we provide one of the best experiences possible.

Current Whole School attendance is 94.3%. Our Whole School Target is 96%

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Mrs Blackhall	96.4%	93.7%
Mrs Kelly	90.8%	94.9%
Mr Phillips	97.7%	94.0%

Days of school add up to lost learning						
Days in school	190	186	180	175	171	170
Percentage attendance	100%	98%	95%	92%	90%	<90%
	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Caution	Cause for concern	Serious concern

Absence Procedures if your child is ill, please keep them at home until they are well enough to return to school. Please notify us by phone call or email before 9.15am if your child is to be absent, and continue to inform us on a daily basis if they continue to be ill.

We have a continual focus on attendance and punctuality and this is of the utmost importance in your child's education. Please remember that our school gate closes at 8.40am as this is when our lessons begin. Anyone arriving after this time is classed as late and will miss valuable learning opportunities, such as phonics, which take place immediately after registration.



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Classroom updates - Bluebell Class

It has been a busy and vibrant half term in Bluebell Class. Our Year 1 children have made a fantastic transition from Drawing Club to working alongside Year 2 in English. They have taken this change confidently in their stride and have truly impressed us with their enthusiasm and developing writing skills. Their most recent extended pieces, inspired by a rainforest narrative, have been an absolute joy to read.



In Reception, the children have continued their Drawing Club adventures with great excitement. This week, in preparation for Chinese New Year, they enjoyed reading *Dragon Noodle Party*, where the Chinese Zodiac animals work together to plan a birthday celebration for Snake. As we prepare to welcome the Year of the Horse, the children drew and wrote creatively about horses, producing some wonderful work.

With the help of Miss Hedley, our EYFS children also transformed the Reception home corner into a Chinese restaurant, embracing their role-play with imagination and enthusiasm. During our afternoon Design and Technology sessions, the children designed and created their own beautiful paper Chinese lanterns, adding even more colour to our classroom.



Continuing the celebrations, on Thursday Katelyn organised a fantastic Chinese-themed lunch for the children. They enjoyed tasting fortune cookies, prawn crackers and a delicious Chinese curry. A wonderful way to explore culture through food.

Although the weather has been rather grey, Bluebell Class have certainly brought colour, energy and positivity to their learning this half term. The children have worked incredibly hard and are now ready for, and have certainly earned, a well-deserved rest.

We hope you all have a lovely half term break.

Mrs Blackhall



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Classroom updates - Poppy Class

Our final week of half term has been incredibly busy! Thank you to all the parents who were able to attend parents' meetings this week — it was lovely to share the children's progress and celebrate their hard work.

In Maths, we have continued developing our understanding of length and perimeter, applying our knowledge to a range of practical and problem-solving activities. We have also seen massive improvements in our speed multiplication tests, with many children increasing both their accuracy and pace — a fantastic achievement that will support their learning across many areas of Maths. In English, the children have worked extremely hard planning their own myth stories based on *Beowulf*. After carefully exploring the key features of myth writing, they wrote their final pieces and then thoughtfully edited and improved their work using the success criteria, showing great perseverance in their approach to writing.

Our afternoons this week have mainly focused on our DT project: making Viking brooches. We researched different types of Viking brooches, created our own final designs and then carefully crafted them out of clay. Once they are fully dry, we are looking forward to painting and finishing them.

The children continue to make lovely progress in swimming and we have also enjoyed PE sessions with NUFC. Tom visited us on Friday for cricket, which was a great way to end the week on an active note.

This week, we also said goodbye to Delilah, who will be leaving us to attend school in Seahouses. Although she has only been with us since September, she has become a valued and popular member of our class and will be greatly missed. We wish her every success and happiness in her new school.

Have a wonderful half term break and let's hope the rain stays away for at least a couple of days!



Mrs Kelly



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Classroom Updates - Clover Class

As Spring 1 draws to a close, it is the perfect time to reflect. From royal drama to Scandi-engineering, Clover Class has achieved an incredible amount!

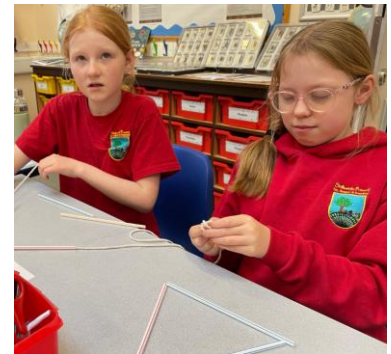
Much of our half-term has been immersed in the most excellent era of British history: the Tudors and the Stuarts. We explored how the Tudors built an "Absolute Monarchy," taking complete control of the Church and state. However, we discovered that the Stuarts faced a much tougher crowd! We've tracked the turning point of English history—the Civil War—and looked specifically at how the Royalist castles of Northumberland defended themselves against the Roundhead rebellion.

Using the Elizabethan era as our muse, we have lived and breathed Shakespeare. The children have truly become lyrical geniuses! Even Reverend Anne commented on how impressed she was with the sophisticated vocabulary the children are now using naturally in their writing.

Fractions have remained our focus in Maths. While this has proved tricky at times—and highlighted why we must keep practicing those multiplication facts at home!—it is a real testament to their character that they don't give up when the numbers get tough.

Our Science labs have been busy investigating material properties, from magnetism to thermal insulation. In PSHE, we tied everything into Children's Mental Health Week, discussing how emotions are simply signals to guide us.

Finally, for something a little different (and to take the pressure off Year 6 and their SATs prep!), we became researchers and engineers. We've been exploring Nordic aesthetics and sustainability to design and create our very own **Scandi Trees**. The results are looking beautiful!



Knowing that when you ask, "*How was school today?*" the answer is often a very short "*Fine!*" To help you unlock some of the excitement from this half-term, here are a few conversation starters for the dinner table or the car ride home:

- "*If you were a knight in a Northumberland castle, would you have sided with the King or Parliament? Why?*"
- "*What is the most 'Shakespearean' word you've learned this half-term?*"

Have a wonderful, restful half-term break!

Mr Phillips



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Dates for your Diary

Events could be subject to change and will be communicated if required

Date	Time	
25/2/2026–1/04/2026		Year 3 & 4 Swimming (every Wednesday)
Monday 23rd February		Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 24th February	8.30	School resumes
Friday 6th March 2026		World Book Day
Thursday 2nd April 2026	15.20	School closes for the Easter holidays
Friday 1st May 2026		Shilbottle School 100-Year Celebrations



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**Happy Birthday to all those celebrating
this week**

Ottilie S