



# Shilbottle Primary School

# Friday Flyer

**30th January 2026**

## **Headteachers Update**

It has been another really positive week here at Shilbottle Primary School, with lots of great learning, thoughtful discussions and lovely moments across school.

On Monday, our assembly focused on the Holocaust. This linked closely with our work around protected characteristics and the importance of treating everyone with dignity and respect. The children engaged brilliantly and showed real maturity in their reflections, making thoughtful links to how people should be treated today and why standing up against discrimination and unkindness is so important. It was a powerful and meaningful start to the week.

On Tuesday afternoon, we welcomed staff from Duchess Community High School, who spoke with our Year 6 pupils about transition to high school. It was great for the children to have the opportunity to ask questions and begin to feel more prepared and confident about the next stage of their education. Now we are part of the Trust we work even more closely with the High School as this is a vital part of making our children ready for the next step.

A big thank you to the parents and carers who attended the SATs information presentation on Wednesday evening. We hope you found it useful and informative. The key message, as always, is not to panic — the children are well supported in school. If you are ever unsure about anything, please do ask. We are always happy to help. I know that parents can be more anxious than their children.

I would like to put a request out to look for volunteers to support school life. Lunchtime supervision is one area where extra help is always appreciated, helping us ensure all children are safe and well cared for. We are also keen to develop our extracurricular offer. With a small staff team, volunteers make a huge difference in allowing us to run clubs and provide wider opportunities. If you have a skill, hobby or interest you could share, we would love to hear from you.

We ended the week in the best way — with our celebration assembly and hot chocolate treats. It is always a pleasure to recognise the children's achievements, effort and positive attitudes and these moments really do capture the spirit of our school.

We hope you all have a lovely weekend and we look forward to seeing everyone back on Monday. I am confident it can't be too much longer until we see the yellow circle in the sky once again!

**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

## RECOGNISING & MANAGING STRESS

According to recent studies, over 60% of young people report feeling regularly overwhelmed – with stress impacting their learning, emotional wellbeing and social connections. If left unaddressed, stress can lead to more serious concerns such as anxiety, depression or disengagement. This guide offers ten practical, evidence-based strategies to help children and young people recognise, manage and recover from stress in healthy ways.

**1 SPOT THE SUBTLE SIGNS**  
Look out for changes in mood, behaviour, or energy levels, such as irritability, withdrawal, or grumpiness. They may not always be obvious. These may include a child who is feeling overwhelmed by talking into these cues early and offering a calm, non-judgmental space to talk, adults can help children feel heard and supported before issues escalate.

**2 KEEP CONVERSATIONS FLOWING**  
Make time for open, informal check-ins – whether it's during car journeys, over dinner, or in quiet classroom moments. Let children know it's okay to talk about what's bothering them. Regular, low-pressure conversations create a safe space where ambitions are validated, not dismissed.

**3 MAKE MOVEMENT PART OF THE DAY**  
Physical activity can dramatically reduce stress hormones while improving mood and focus. Encourage movement through activities children genuinely enjoy – from team sports to dancing around the kitchen, even light activity like stretching or walking the dog can help us all unwind.

**4 SUPPORT HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS**  
Poor sleep makes stress harder to manage. Establish a calming evening routine that avoids screens before bedtime and promotes winding down, such as reading, listening to music, or chanting quietly. Good sleep hygiene helps reset mood, enhances concentration, and boosts emotional resilience.

**5 PRACTISE MINDFULNESS**  
Mindfulness doesn't have to mean long periods of meditation. A few slow breaths before lessons or short family meditation sessions before bed can make a real difference. These simple habits help children ground themselves, reduce emotional reactivity, and build better calm over time.

**6 SET DIGITAL BOUNDARIES**  
Excessive screen time, especially before bed or on social media, is linked with higher stress levels. Set clear expectations of when and where screens can be used and encourage screen-free times like crafts, nature walks, or board games to promote digital balance and reduce overstimulation.

**7 NURTURE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS**  
Strong relationships act as a buffer against stress. Whether it's a trusted adult, a sibling, or a good friend, ensure children have people around them who can talk to and spend quality time with. Help them build those bonds through shared activities and meaningful interaction.

**8 PROGRESS OVER PERFECTION**  
Set realistic goals and praise effort, not just outcomes. When children feel pressured to be perfect, stress naturally follows. Celebrate small wins and help children see the value in learning opportunities. This helps build confidence and reduces the fear of failure.

**9 TEACH EVERYDAY PROBLEM-SOLVING**  
Use real-life scenarios to build resilience. Encourage children to identify problems, consider possible solutions, and choose a plan of action. Practising these steps builds a sense of control and reduces the helplessness that often accompanies stress.

**10 BE THE MODEL THEY NEED**  
Children notice how adults respond to challenges. Model healthy coping strategies such as taking breaks, asking for help, or calmly expressing frustration. By showing how you manage stress constructively, you help normalize these behaviours and encourage children to do the same.



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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.

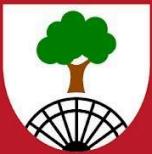
**Current Whole School attendance is 94.4%. Our Whole School Target is 96%**

| Class         | Weekly attendance | Annual attendance |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Mrs Blackhall | 90.7%             | 93.1%             |
| Mrs Kelly     | 91.7%             | 95.4%             |
| Mr Phillips   | 95.9%             | 94.7%             |

| 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.



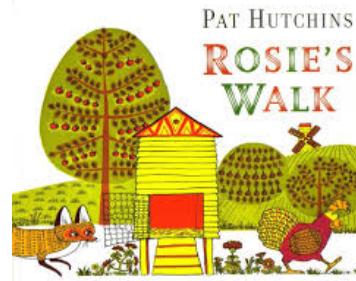
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## Classroom updates - Bluebell Class

We've had another busy and productive week in Bluebell class. Our Red Ditty groups have been *thrilled* to bring home their very first decodable reading books over the last couple of weeks - such a special milestone! Thank you, as always, for continuing to read regularly at home with your children. Your support makes an incredible difference to their reading progress and positively impacts so many other areas of their learning.

In Drawing Club, the children have been sharing the story, *Rosie's Walk* and have absolutely loved it. They were particularly amused by the sly fox repeatedly getting his comeuppance! The children enjoyed writing their own sentences about the characters and were especially fascinated by the beehive - An interest that may well inspire our next story choice.



In English, our Key Stage 1 children have continued their work inspired by Oliver Jeffers' *Lost and Found*, but with an exciting new focus. They enthusiastically began the early stages of planning their own narratives for the boy and the penguin, sharing lots of creative ideas and demonstrating great imagination.



Year 1 and 2 have been learning to add and subtract across 10, which means they have begun using *exchanges*. This has been a challenging new step for many children, but they have shown great resilience and stayed positive throughout their lessons. We have been using Dienes apparatus to support understanding, physically exchanging one ten for ten ones to help make the maths concrete and meaningful.

Finally, in History, we have loved learning about the pioneering aviator Amelia Earhart. Key Stage 1 children wrote thoughtfully about why she is such an important historical figure, while our Reception children expressed their learning creatively by painting their very own aeroplane.



It's been a lovely week of curiosity, creativity, and confidence. Well done, Bluebell class! ☺

**Mrs Blackhall**



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## Classroom updates - Poppy Class

This week in Poppy Class has been another full and productive one, with lots of learning taking place across the curriculum.

In Maths, we have focused on using partitioning to divide larger numbers, a skill that has taken plenty of practice and perseverance. Year 4 have also begun preparing for their upcoming times tables test by completing regular timed practice sessions to build speed and accuracy.

In English, the children wrote their own setting descriptions inspired by *Beowulf*, producing some fantastic pieces of work that used rich, descriptive language to create a strong atmosphere of mood and danger. We have also begun exploring myths, using *Beowulf* as an example, and identifying the key features of myths in preparation for writing our own later in the term.

In Science, we continued our learning about rocks, exploring the different reasons why rocks weather and erode and how this changes the landscape over time. The children particularly enjoyed History this week as we learned about Viking gods, including Odin, Freya and Thor, helping them to develop a deeper understanding of Viking beliefs. In RE, we explored Hinduism further by learning about puja and how Hindus use it to show devotion. Our PE sessions included energetic circuits with NUFC, alongside swimming and cricket with Tom, keeping everyone active and engaged.

I hope you all have a lovely, restful weekend and look forward to another exciting week of learning ahead.



**Mrs Kelly**



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## Classroom Updates - Clover Class

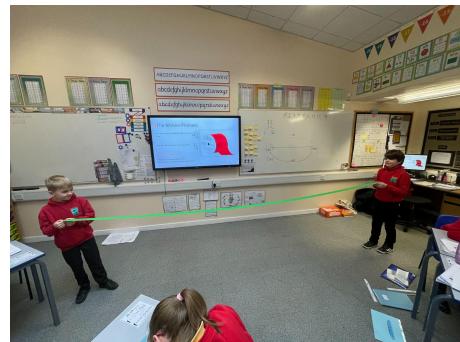
**Where is the Spring Sunshine?** With two weeks left of the half-term, we were hoping for a glimpse of blue sky. However, with the grey weather persisting, we have had to rely on the sunny, cheery atmosphere created by the children instead!



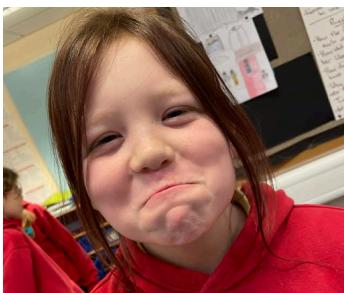
Forever on the hunt for new challenges, the class has excelled this week. In English, we focused on the "domino fall" of events in Romeo and Juliet. It has been fascinating (and sad) to map out exactly how our impulsive hero's decisions led to his tragic end.

**Maths has been a real mental workout.** Fractions became trickier this week, but the class rose to the challenge magnificently. We tackled mixed numbers, improper fractions, and adding and subtracting across the whole with the help of measuring jugs of juice and lengths of ribbon. My word, we have done a lot!

**A Royal Revolution.** We hit a major turning point in our History topic: The English Civil War. We learned that Charles I believed he was answerable only to God—unfortunately for him, the people didn't agree! The Roundheads won, the Monarch was executed, and Oliver Cromwell ushered in a new era.



**Body Signals & Artistic Details.** In PSHE, we explored how emotions are just signals from the body, leading to a very mature discussion about how we all feel things differently. Meanwhile, Art saw us mastering the realism of drawing mouths (getting ready for our final portraits), and in Science, we evaluated our thermal insulation data.



**The Biggest News of the Week...** We are thrilled to welcome a new member to the Clover Class family: Zac! Zac is an avid reader with an incredible amount of knowledge about... well, pretty much everything. He has settled in beautifully and is already a huge asset to the class. Welcome, Zac!

Another busy, brilliant week in the books and there's even a **No-Stress guide video to SATs** for Year 6 on Clover Class Dojo!



**Mr Phillips**



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## Dates for your Diary

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

| Date                      | Time        |   |
|---------------------------|-------------|---|
| 7/1/2026-11/2/2026        |             | Year 3 & 4 Swimming (every Wednesday)   |
| Monday 9th February       |             | Mock SATs Week - Y6                     |
| Tuesday 10th February     | 15.00-17.20 | Parents Evening                         |
| Wednesday 11th February   | 15.00-17.20 | Parents Evening                         |
| Friday 13th February 2026 | 15.20       | School closes for the holidays          |
| Friday 1st May 2026       |             | Shilbottle School 100-Year Celebrations |
|                           |             |   |



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

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