



Chelmondiston CofE Primary School Newsletter

13.02.26



Parents in need of advice or support?

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/childrens-health/school-nursing-service>

0345 607 8866

Help and/or advice with parenting issues: Freephone Parents Advice

Centre helpline on 08088 010722

<https://www.parenting.org/>

If you have a safeguarding concern please talk to a member of our DSL team:

Kerry Palmer-Long, Lesley Etchingam or Tracy Whyman

For general information about our **Early Help Offer** and other **general information about safeguarding**, both in school and beyond, please follow the link to the safeguarding section of our school website.

<https://www.chelmondiston.suffolk.sch.uk/safeguarding/>

The Good Samaritans

Harry	Cygnets	For helping to cheer up his friends when he can see they are upset
Urte	Melissa	For being a kind and encouraging learning partner
Jessica	Edith May	For showing kindness to whoever she is paired with
Olivia	Thistle	For listening and contributing in group discussions
Isabella	Edme	For being a supportive and encouraging classmate

Well done everyone!

Diary dates from Monday 16th February - Friday 6th March

Monday 16th - 20th February - half term holiday

Mon. 23rd - Children return to school

Young Voices concert trip

Tue. 24th - EYFS/Y1 and Y2 Maths workshop - 2.40-3.10pm

Thu. 26th - Yr2 swimming session - 8:30 am
Thistle sharing assembly - 2.40-3.10pm

Wed. 4th Mar Melissa sharing assembly - 2.40-3.10pm

Thu. 5th - Yr2 swimming session - 8:30am
Twilight Tales - 6.30-7.30pm

Fri. 6th - World Book Day
Read with your child session - 2.45-3.10pm

Dear parents and carers,

Another action-packed fortnight has flown by and we have so much learning to celebrate. Well done to Cygnets and Edme for your wonderful sharing assemblies - it is a joy to behold when our youngest and our eldest pupils can share their learning with such enthusiasm and confidence.

Yesterday, Cygnets, Melissa and Edith May classes were incredibly fortunate to be part of an interactive performance with a real orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, as part of the project organised by Norfolk and Suffolk Music Hub and Orchestras' Live. For several weeks the children have been learning the songs and actions for the performance of the Robot and the Bluebird.



The whole experience was breath-taking and we felt privileged to be involved. Clara commented, "I couldn't believe how many sounds you could hear at once and how different it is [ie live music] from listening to a screen."

Ben said, "I felt the music vibrate through my feet!" Aurora said, "I loved how the flute music went with the blue bird." Arwyn added, "The piccolo was so smooth and gentle." Many children were surprised by how large the instruments were, especially the double bass. Phoebe said, "I loved the bass clarinet because it reminded me of jazz and I like jazz." Tilly said, "I couldn't believe that the percussionist could do so many things at the same time. He even used his feet."

Another incredible highlight was the Year 3 and 4 visit to the Energy from Waste Facility at Great Blakenham last Tuesday. You will find out more in their class section below - the children's enthusiasm and knowledge from their experience as engineers for the day, stood out as they told me about it on their return.



On the same afternoon, some Y5 pupils were invited, by Suffolk Mind and Axter, to the company's office on Fox's Marina. Here they received a certificate to acknowledge our partnership with Suffolk Mind to support children's mental health, all of which was sponsored by Axter Ltd.

This week we have marked Children's Mental Health Week with many activities to acknowledge how talking about and managing our feelings is important. On Monday, we were visited by Steph and Ian from the MHST (NHS Mental Health Support Team) who led an assembly about how we must look after our own health - both physically and mentally. After that we had a variety of workshops to explore different ways that we can look after our wellbeing.



On Tuesday, it was Safer Internet Day. Well done to our Y6 On-Line Safety Monitors, who led a whole school assembly and explained about AI. Thank you to the Y5 and 6 parents who joined us for our online safety workshop and worked with groups of children to discuss scenarios and how to deal with them. With so much ground to cover on this ever growing topic, all should be commended for their contributions. This week I have sent a questionnaire to Y5 and Y6 parents and carers to see if we can work together to facilitate opportunities for parents to share concerns and practical advice and also if parents would like to consider any common approaches to managing screen use and social media, in particular.

We also welcomed Harry, a local farmer, and his tractor and found out about the crops he grows in the fields around our school.



Last Thursday we had a phonics Development Day - this is when we work with a specialist phonics teacher to quality assure our daily phonics programme and ensure that we are providing the very best learning opportunities for our children. Children are assessed each half term and now this half term's is completed, once again, most children have made huge strides since their December assessment.

With 2026 being the Year of Reading, it hasn't made a lot of difference for us because we are always reading at Chelmo! Families will have received information about World Book Day, which we will be holding on Friday 6th March (with swimming and PE on a Thursday, it is so much simpler on the Friday!). As always, we will be holding our popular Twilight Tales on the Thursday, when children are invited to return to school, in pyjamas and ready for bed, for a hot chocolate and to share a story

read by our older pupils. On Friday 6th, the PTA has arranged for a local author and illustrator, Emma Graham, to visit and work with us. Later on families are welcome to join us at 2:45pm to further enjoy sharing books together.

Please contact your child's teacher, the school office or catch me on the playground before or after school if you have any questions or comments to share. Thank you for your continued support.

Warmest regards,

Lesley Etchingham, Headteacher

Message from the PTA

A big thank you to all our parents and carers for your continued support - it really does make such a difference to everything we do.

We're excited to share that plans are underway for a PTA Quiz Night on Friday 17th April, with more details coming very soon, so keep an eye out! Fundraising also continues alongside Dan, who is taking on the 2026 TCS London Marathon in support of the PTA and school. We would encourage you to support Dan in this amazing effort, you can find his fundraising page here:

<https://2026tcslondonmarathon.enthuse.com/pf/dan-harper>

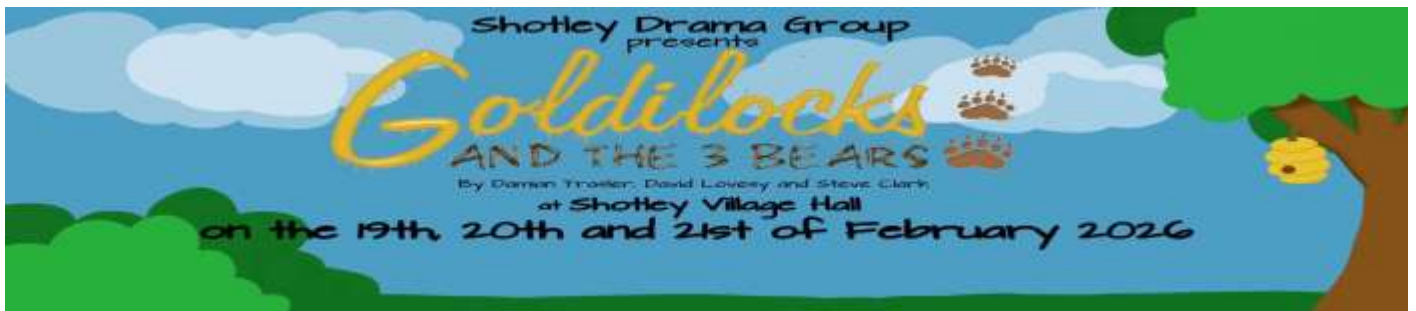
We are absolutely delighted to have arranged for local illustrator, Emma Graham, to attend school on Friday 6th March for World Book Day. Emma will work with and engage with all pupils within school and her books will also be available to purchase. Her books can also be purchased through Suffolk Mind or from Amazon.



Looking ahead, don't forget our Civvies Day on Friday 13th March, and disco on Friday 20th March; always a favourite and guaranteed fun for the children!

Thank you again for all your encouragement and support; we couldn't do it without you.

Clare (Co-chair) - mum to Ella (year 5) and George (year 1)



Here are our amazing learning highlights from the last fortnight:

Cygnets

It has been a very busy and exciting fortnight in Cygnet class. The children have been practising the songs and actions for their special Orchestra visit, where they performed 'The Robot and the Bluebird' alongside the Britten Sinfonia. Inspired by the story, the Reception children also made robots out of junk modelling materials.



In Literacy, the children have enjoyed finishing our class story 'Blue Penguin'. They have thought about the differences between the UK and Antarctica and enjoyed asking questions and learning facts about penguins. They have also made zigzag books inspired by the story.

In Forest School, the children have had lots of fun creating rope obstacle courses, drilling and threading to make necklaces, making bird feeders and lots more.



As part of Children's Mental Health Week Cygnet and Melissa class got together and in groups took part in a range of activities. The children all got the opportunity to hear the story of Ruby's Worry. A book we had as our class story previously in Cygnet class. In this workshop the children were able to make a worry of their own and talk about what to do when they might have a worry. In another session the children made their very own dragon breathing cup. This is to help them remember to use dragon breathing when they might be feeling sad, angry or scared. The cups looked fantastic and like real fiery breath... using our breathing to help us regulate by breathing in for 4 and out for more! In the final activity the children got to be creative and have time to settle their thoughts with a mindfulness art task.



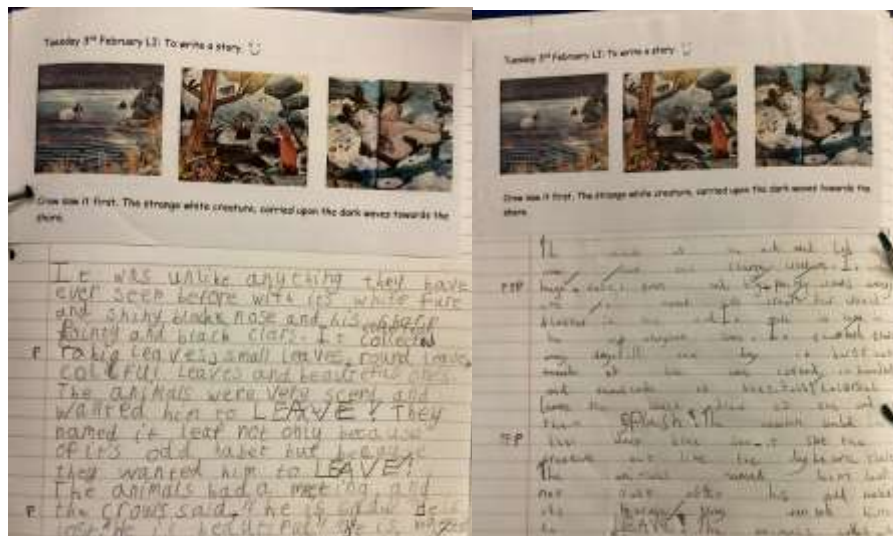
And to add to the excitement we also had a tractor visit! The children listened carefully to Harry, a local farmer, as he told the children about what his farm produces, how this is possible and what can be made out of these products. The children also enjoyed the tour of the tractor and asking many questions about the job, tractors and growing their own 'crops'.



Melissa

This week, some of Melissa class had their first swimming lesson this year. They all did really well and had a fantastic time in the pool. It was noticed how much they have improved in skill and confidence from last year. We are looking forward to more brilliant swimming after half term!

In English, the children have written the story of our class text, Leaf by Sandra Dieckmann, in their own words. The children really enjoyed the text this term and have included some great vocabulary in their writing.



In Science, Melissa class experimented to find out how the strength of materials can be changed. The children conducted a fair test to find out which type of fold made paper the strongest.



In Art, the children have used clay to create their own print blocks with a partner. They painted over the clay and printed their designs onto paper. The children have really enjoyed learning about printing this half term, maybe they could impress you by using their new skills to create some art together at home over half term!



Melissa class also enjoyed a visit from Year 5 in PSHE. The Year 5 children played board games with Year 2 and were great role models. The children learnt how to join in with a group game if they were unsure and how to manage their feelings when playing a game with others.



As well as being involved in our wellbeing activities this week, Year 2 children also enjoyed the opportunity to perform alongside a real orchestra in the retelling of the 'Robot and the Blue Bird' and had many questions to ask Harry, a local farmer, who visited with his tractor and samples of crops that he grows.

Edith-May

It is impossible to overstate what a fantastic experience Edith-May had on their trip at the EFW (Energy from Waste facility). Equipped with safety clothing, thirty budding engineers took a tour of the complete plant, learning about how the centre recovers energy and generates electricity from the waste we discard.



At the EFW, Edith May learnt some fantastic facts about recycling, which include:

- Recycling 1 tonne of plastic bottles saves enough energy to power a home for a year
- Ten recycled bottles can power a laptop for over 25 hours
- Producing one new can from new material uses the same amount of energy needed to make 20 cans from recycled material
- Recycling 1 tonne of paper in the UK saves between 3,000 and 4,000 kwh-enough to power an average three-bedroom home in the UK for an entire year!
- Foil can only be recycled in your blue bin once it is the size of a tennis ball - so save and scrunch it until it is big enough!



The EFW team explained to the children that whilst recovering energy (through burning waste) is better than landfill, it is far better to **recycle, re-use, reduce** and **prevent** waste in the first place, in fact a staggering 60% of the waste in the bunker is made up of items which could have been recycled in our blue bins. As well as seeing how a busy plant and process work, we trust that the experience will help Edith-May consider how they can make choices to become responsible custodians of our precious planet.



In Maths, Edith May has been learning about perimeter and tackling problems with a variety of measurement units, such as kilometres and metres or centimetres and millimetres.

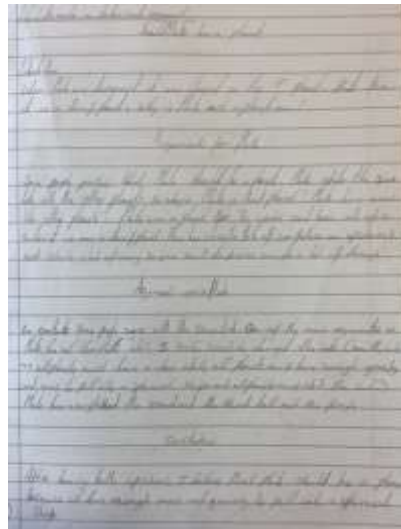
Our reading chart is continuing to enthuse the children and several children have recently added to their routine by establishing reading regularly at the weekend, as well as during the week-well done!

In History, the class has shown a lot of enthusiasm for learning about Tudor crime and punishment and this has generated some good discussions as children have explored what led some Tudors to break the law given the severity of the punishments.

Thistle

What a fantastic half term Thistle class has had. There have been many highlights, creative projects and lots of engaged learning. Thank you to those that attended the Online Safety Workshop - an important topic which involved interesting discussions.

As writers, the children completed their balanced argument, answering the question: Should Pluto be a planet or not? Thistle researched and found evidence to justify their ideas, adopted a formal style of writing and included their own recommendation at the end. This week, the children wrote an informal email to a character in our book, Cosmic, persuading her to travel to China to go on a 'Thrill Ride'.



As mathematicians, the class concluded their multiplication and division learning and continued with developing their understanding of fractions. This week, the class multiplied fractions by an integer and found fractions of an amount.

In P.E., the students are focusing on dodgeball and handball, both sports that require accurate hand-eye coordination. The class has practised passing with accuracy, catching and throwing with the aim of 'getting someone out'.



The children completed their D.T. unit and created their own, working automata toys! Working in pairs, they have designed their toy, accurately measured and sawn wood, cut dowels to make an axle, and created their decorations. As I'm sure you can agree, the class did an amazing job.

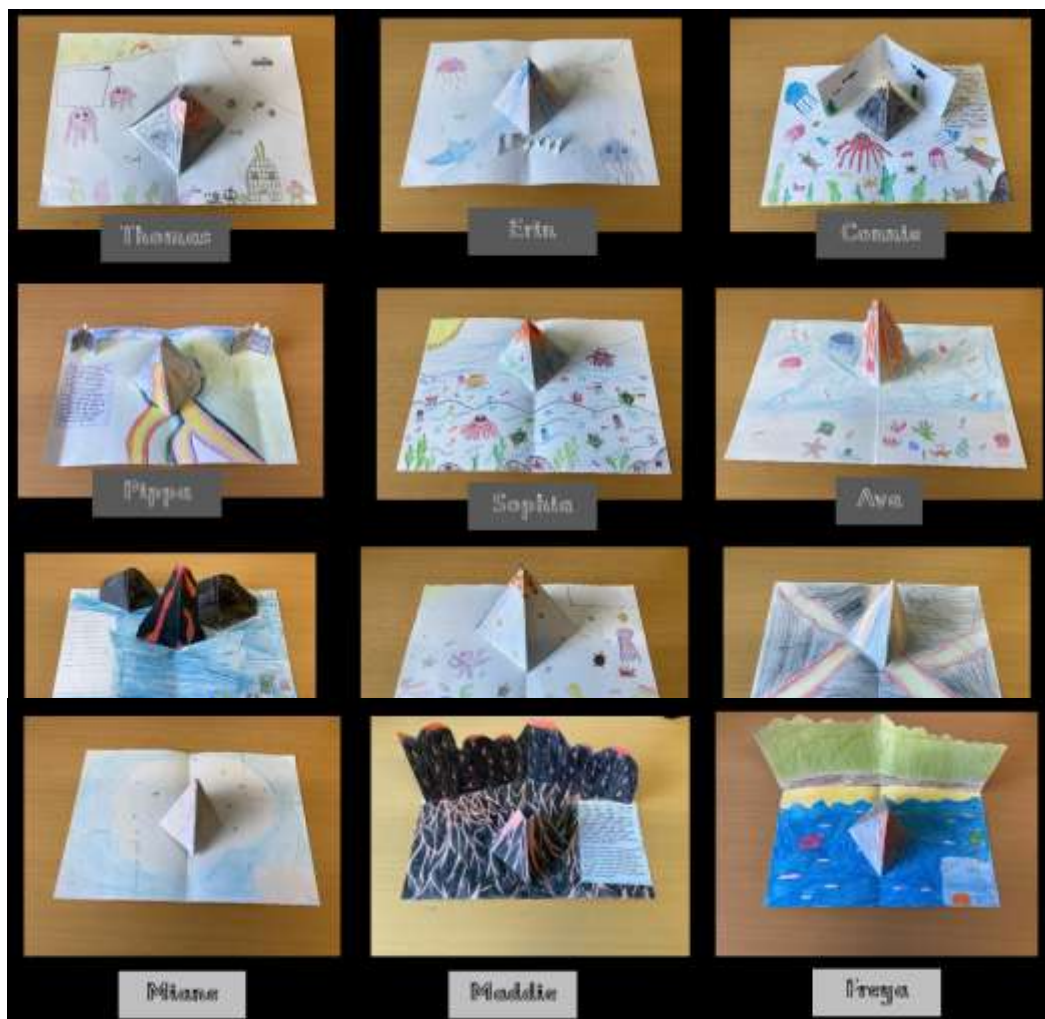


Edme

The final fortnight of this half-term has been very enjoyable. Aside from preparing for their spring-term sharing assembly, Edme Class has been busy with a whole host of other exciting learning experiences.

English lessons have focused on recounting events from recent developments in our class book. Having read about the desperate demise of the *Endurance* and the hardship suffered by the crew, the children watched documentary clips and listened to recorded interviews with the crew members to inspire them to write in role. Using formal language and a limited word count, the children wrote entries for the Ship's Log to capture for posterity the harrowing turn of events.

As engineers the children have been working hard on their volcano-themed pop-up pages. Using accurate measurements and razor-sharp folding, the children have used the pyramid pop-up structure to create an erupting volcano as the focal point of their pop-up page. Some children have embellished their designs further by adding a v-fold. What an eye-catching array of designs! Well done, Edme!



With this week being Children's Mental Health Week and Tuesday marking the annual event of Safer Internet Day, the children have taken part in a range of workshop-style activities with the rest of KS2. On Monday, the children spent time thinking about their uniqueness as individuals, the contributions they can make and how they belong. They made *mindful mandalas* and learned some yoga poses, skills that they would like to practise more.



Finally, our Online Safety Ambassadors led an assembly on Tuesday to teach the rest of the school about the safe and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies. In the afternoon, Year 6 worked with the children from Thistle Class to explore some thought-provoking online safety scenarios. They discussed ways to stay safe online and the pros and cons of the different apps they are currently using. The children impressed us with their maturity and their openness to discuss these topics. We hope that you were able to join us for our sharing assembly this afternoon.