



# Wise Owls News

Spring Term One 16th February 2024

## Welcome to Doddinghurst Infant School Newsletter

### Dear Parents, Carers & Friends,

This week has been another busy one with lots of exciting learning happening across the school. It also marks the end of the first half of a very wet term. We are now half way through the school academic year and I am sure, like us, you are all ready for this well-deserved break.

As part of our work on well-being, we linked into Children's Mental Health Week. The theme, 'My Voice Matters,' is about empowering children with the tools/strategies to express themselves. Children who feel that their voices are heard and can make a difference, have a greater sense of community and self-esteem. To support the children we encouraged them to find their **SUPERPOWERS** to help them realise their unique and unlimited potential. The children enjoyed lots of the activities, to help prompt this realisation that we all have a **SUPERPOWER** we just needed to believe. We used the story of the 'Tiger Who Came to Tea' where they explained how their body changes when they feel nervous. We had fun encouraging the children to make eye contact when they talk to someone; some were very good at the staring contest; why don't you give this a go! All of these different activities aim to help equip our children with vital tools to help them flourish.

Thank you to all our families and staff who participated so enthusiastically in our Sleep Hero day, when we all came to school in our PJs/Onesies! The focus was on Sleep Hygiene; showing children, that adequate amounts of sleep improve attention, how we behave, our learning, improve our memory and overall mental and physical health. We invited families into school for a chat over a coffee/tea to talk through issues around routines and sleep. It also gave them the opportunity to discuss how their child slept.....or not! We used the book 'What Will I Dream Tonight' and made Dream Catchers to help capture some of our worries—we had a great day!



"Always remember you matter  
you're important and you are loved  
and you bring to this world



"Things no one else can."

Thank you to those who attended their child's Parent consultation appointments and for the positive feedback given to staff. It was lovely to chat with our families and see how proud they are of their children and the progress they have made from their starting points.

It does feel like this half term has flown by, but we have certainly managed to pack a lot in. Next half term is going to be very exciting. We have World Book Day, details of which were on the yearly diary dates, and Mothers Day assemblies; I know the children are creating their invites, please reply as this is a lovely keepsake. We hope that you have a restful half term and we look

forward to welcoming you back on **Monday 26th of February**.

*Mrs Nicholson*

## EYFS UPDATES

### SWIFTS and WOODPECKERS

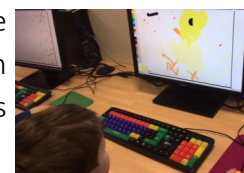
When we returned after the Christmas break we read *The Colour Monster* book and discussed all the different emotions we feel. We listened to different genres of music and discussed how the songs made us feel before making marks in time with the music, considering the pitch and tempo. The following week, we began our spring topic of Life Long Ago and read the story *Once There Were Giants*. We collected baby photos from home and created a timeline in class, including significant events from the past. We learnt new vocabulary, such as past, present and future. Through our story and baby photos we discussed how we looked in the past and things we can do now in, the present, now we're older.



During Science Week we had a blast! We enjoyed visiting different teachers, first investigating forces by making our own rockets in Year 1, followed by exploring different materials in Year 2. We even conducted an experiment involving invisible ink! As the weather was cold that week we carried out our own experiment in our outdoor area and predicted if we thought the water in our tray would turn to ice. The following day some of us explained that the ice would turn back into water because the sun would melt it. We finished the week with a spectacular assembly and watched some exciting experiments.



The following Monday, we couldn't believe our eyes when we found an incubator full of eggs in the Blue Room. We discussed what living things start life as an egg and made lots of predictions about what was inside the egg, including ducks and swans. When the first egg began to hatch there was huge excitement throughout the school. We were shocked on Wednesday morning to find seven baby chicks. Some of us were brave enough to handle them and in Literacy we wrote our observations about them before using our inspiration to draw chicks in our computing lesson. We tried to include all of their features such as their beaks and little clawed feet.



During Children's Mental Health Week we discussed good habits to promote a healthy mind and body, such as sleep. We practised some meditation and discussed how this can help us if we're feeling angry or worried about something. Some of us made some shakers, which we used as a tool to help us when we need to regulate our emotions. In Maths, we were exploring the number 6 and used the part-part-whole model to show different ways to make 6. During Science Week we explored capacity, looking at different containers and predicting how much liquid they could hold. We had great fun investigating capacity in the water trays outside. Using dominoes we sorted amounts into 1 more or 1 less than a given number. Then we used blank dominoes to show number bonds to 10. This half term we have attempted to record number sentences in our Maths books and have been working hard to place each digit and symbol in their own box. We ended the half term with making pancakes even writing our own instructions.

Thank you for all your support at home and we hope you have a restful break.

## YEAR ONE UPDATES

### CHAFFINCHES and ROBINS

Wow! We cannot believe it is half term already! The weeks since Christmas seem to have flown by, probably because the children have all been working so hard. We had a brilliant start to the term with the children returning to school ready to begin our new topic 'Life Long Ago'. In Year One we have been learning about Queen Victoria and the Victorian time period. The children have been fascinated to learn some interesting facts about Queen Victoria and her life, please do ask them as they love to share what they have learnt.

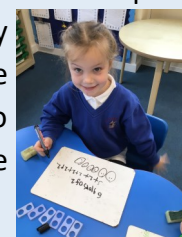


In Art we have been studying the Victorian artist William Morris and his wallpaper designs, we even designed and printed our own. The children worked hard at each stage of the design and printing process.



Our English book this half term has been 'Queen Victoria's Bathing Machine' which is based on a true story. The book has a rich and ambitious vocabulary throughout, which has given plenty of opportunities for discussion. The children particularly enjoyed coming up with elaborate ideas as to what the 'bathing machine' might be. If you visit the Isle of Wight, the original bathing machine can be found at Osbourne House where Queen Victoria and Prince Albert spent many holidays.

Our new maths topic this half term has been multiplication. We started by learning our doubles for numbers to 10 and then counting in multiples of 2s, 5s and 10s. The children then spent time rehearsing the vocabulary and practising their skills, linked to multiplication, using a variety of resources, including Numicon and cubes. The children have worked very hard - maybe they could even do some practise during the holiday!



It was a cosy and comfortable day when the children (and teachers) arrived at school in their pyjamas to mark 'Sleep day.' We enjoyed reading the story 'What Will You Dream of Tonight?' and discussing our perfect dreams. The children learnt about good habits to get into before going to bed to ensure they get the best nights sleep. Hopefully the dream catchers they made at school are helping.

In RE the children have been very interested to learn about the weekly Jewish celebration of Shabbat. They enjoyed learning about how Jews prepare for this special day as well as, the things that they must avoid doing on Shabbat. The children were particularly interested in the Challah bread, they were especially excited when they were able to try some!

There was much excitement and anticipation when the eggs arrived in the incubator earlier in the term. The children were enthralled to watch and wait with anticipation of when they might hatch. When they did hatch we were all addicted to going to check up on them and observe how they were growing and how much food they had been eating. All in all it was a wonderful experience for them, especially when they were each given the opportunity to hold one of the chicks. Perhaps the children could tell you how we were able to tell the difference between the girls and the boys?



As you can see, we have been very busy — have a rest over half term, ready for next half term!



## YEAR TWO UPDATES

### SWANS and KINGFISHERS

We have spent the first half of the Spring Term travelling back in time to 1666 and have been learning about 'The Great Fire of London'. We found out so many interesting facts about this significant event from the past, and of course, the diary of Samuel Pepys. We have discovered that only a small number of people died in the Great Fire, but around 13,000 houses and 87 churches were burnt down, including the original St Paul's Cathedral! We have written facts and diary entries detailing the events of the fire; and even written a fictional story about a boy named 'Toby', who worked for a bookmaker in London when the Great Fire took place. Our teachers have been very impressed with our knowledge and enthusiasm for this topic.



At the start of January we began learning about Multiplication. As a year group we completed lots of fun practical Maths challenges. We have managed to answer 'true' and 'false' questions, solve word problems, and count in multiples of 2's, 5's and 10's. We spent lots of time developing our reasoning skills and showing our working out using arrays. After half term we will continue to explore division in more depth.

Science Week was a blast! We took part in lots of different Science experiments around the school and even found a way to write secret messages using wax and watercolours; we completed the Curly Wurly Challenge and managed to stretch our Curly Wurlys to almost 1 meter in length! Louie said ***'The secret message experiment was so much fun- I wrote a message to Jacob, I felt like a secret spy!'***



For Science Week we welcomed Mrs Howard, who is one of our Year Two Mums, but also a Science Teacher at Shenfield High School. She showed us some mesmerising Science experiments including how to make elephants toothpaste and how to make a 'Jelly Baby' scream! We loved watching her and want to say a HUGE 'Thank You!' from all the staff and children in Year Two.

We wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate all the children that took part in the Multi Skills Competition at Shenfield High School. The children proudly represented our school and took part in lots of exciting sporting challenges. Teddy M said ***'Throwing the bean bags into the hoops was so much fun, I was really good at it!'***, Florence said ***'My favourite part was the balloon volleyball, because it was so much fun and I think I was very good at it!'***



We hope you all have a fun Half Term break, stay safe and be happy! We look forward to seeing you all in the second half of the Spring Term where we will be celebrating Mothers Day and looking forward to all the Easter Celebrations that we have planned.

# Maths Challenge

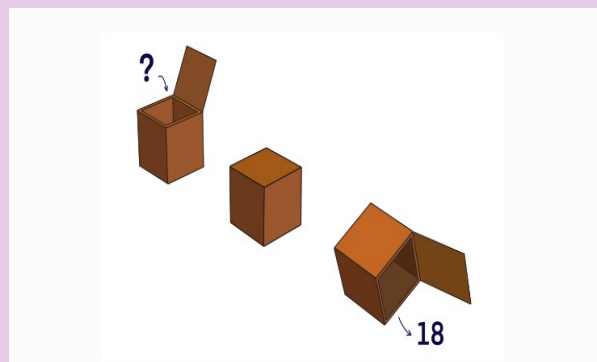


Remember to show your school values of 'perseverance' to help you complete the challenges.

## What Was in the Box

In the picture, a number is being put into the box. Inside the box, something happens to the number, and then a new number is tipped out of the box.

The first time this happens, 10 is put into the box. **What happens inside the box to get the number 18?**



## Challenge 1:



Now three more numbers go into the box, one at a time. The box does the same thing that it did before, and the numbers that are tipped out of the box are:

**12**

**8**

**15**

What were the three new numbers that went in? Remember that the same thing as before happened to all three of those numbers.

## Challenge 2:

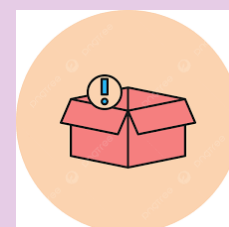
The box does something different to before. Four new numbers are put into the box, one at a time. One of these numbers is 10 and the rest are secret. Something happens inside the box, and the numbers that are tipped out are:

**0**

**19**

**1**

**11**



What could have happened inside the box? The same thing has happened to all four numbers that went in. What could the four numbers have been that went into the box?

Are there any other possibilities? How do you know?

# SLEEP TIPS

## Sleep Hygiene for Children

Sleep hygiene — a collection of habits and behaviors that promote good sleep — is vital for children. Many sleep struggles are caused or made worse by poor sleep hygiene. When practicing sleep hygiene, remember that consistency is key. Sleep strategies take time and repetition to be effective.



## Create a Routine:

Let your child's body and mind know that it's time to settle down and prepare for sleep. The actual routine can be specific to your child, but it should last around 20 minutes and consist of three to four quiet, soothing activities such as putting on PJs, brushing teeth, a warm bath, and reading.

Bedtime routines provide children with a sense of familiarity and comfort, which acts in direct opposition to the uncertainty of insomnia.

## Set a Bedtime:

A sleep schedule works with your child's natural biological clock to promote dozing off with regularity. Bedtimes are most useful when they're consistent, so try to keep the same bedtime on weekends as on school nights. Altering bedtimes during the weekend will make it more difficult for child to maintain their normal weekday schedules.

| Your child's age         | Recommended sleep time in 24 hours |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Infants 4 to 12 months   | 12 to 16 hours including naps      |
| Children 1 to 2 years    | 11 to 14 hours including naps      |
| Children 3 to 5 years    | 10 to 13 hours including naps      |
| Children 6 to 12 years   | 9 to 12 hours                      |
| Teenagers 13 to 18 years | 8 to 10 hours                      |

## Implement a Screen Curfew:

The fact that electronic devices are everywhere makes this rule hard to implement, but it's well worth it. Mobile devices, TVs, and tablets emit a type of [blue light](#) that suppresses melatonin, a hormone that promotes sleep. Children may be particularly vulnerable. Screen time also stimulates the brain, making it harder to wind down for sleep. Electronic devices should be kept out of the bedroom and ideally not used within one hour of bedtime.

**Get Exercise:**

Physical activity is proven to help people of all ages fall asleep faster and stay asleep. Most children need at least one hour of exercise per day. Just make sure to avoid vigorous activity within two hours of bedtime. Otherwise, your child may feel wound-up and find it harder to fall asleep.

**Avoid Scary or Violent Content:**

Feeling scared or worried is a common reason children can't sleep. So it's no wonder that scary or violent movies, TV, video games, and even books in the evening are linked to sleep disturbances. If your child likes the gory or spooky stuff, save it for the daytime.

**No Caffeine:**

This is a no brainer. Caffeine is a stimulant that can both make it harder to fall asleep and reduce the quality of sleep. In addition to the usual suspects like soda, coffee, and energy drinks, watch out for more discreet sources like tea, decaf coffee (which still has trace amounts of caffeine) and chocolate. Even small amounts of caffeine can have a big impact. Don't let your child consume caffeine within six hours of bedtime.

**Don't Sleep With a Pet:**

While it's tempting for children to snuggle ups with Fido in bed, a pet's movements and noises during the night can awaken them from a peaceful slumber. Try having your furry family member sleep outside of your child's bedroom for a few nights to see if that helps. To make the transition easier, include saying goodnight to pets in the bedtime routine.



### ATTENDANCE — YEAR TO DATE

1<sup>st</sup> = Robins - 95.5%

2<sup>nd</sup> = Kingfishers - 94.8%

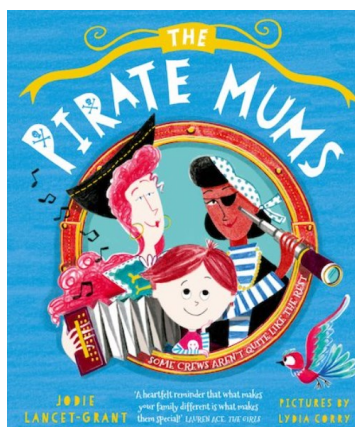
3<sup>rd</sup> = Swans - 94.4%

4<sup>th</sup> = Chaffinches - 93.8%

5<sup>th</sup> = Woodpeckers - 93.2%

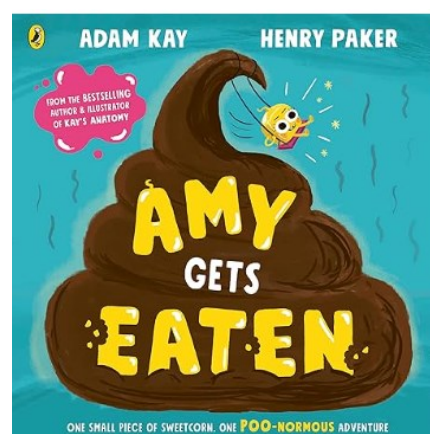
6<sup>th</sup> = Swifts - 92.8%

**WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE: 94.1%**



For our youngest readers, a resident of the Spark Book Awards shortlist: 'The Pirate Mums' by Jodie Lancet-Grant. For fans of adventure, parrots, and the inexplicable sea shanty craze of 2021, this is a lovely story about family love and unity. It's great!

The book is dedicated to the serious study of the human digestive system, which is to say that it follows the plight of an excitable piece of sweetcorn who is eaten (on a pizza slice, of all things) and then follows the full course of innards before exiting the process via the usual route. It is enjoyably gross, or just enjoyable, depending who's reading it.





**19th February — 23rd February inclusive Half Term break**  
**Pupils return to school on Monday 26th February 2024**

### UPCOMING DIARY DATES

|            |          |  |
|------------|----------|--|
| 5th March  | 10:00am  | Mother's Day assembly—Year 2 parents only  |
| 6th March  | 10:00am  | Mother's Day assembly—Year 1 parents only  |
| 7th March  |          | World Book Day - Come to school dressed as a character from your favourite book! |
| 8th March  | 10:00am  | Mother's Day assembly—EYFS parents only  |
| 14th March | 3:00pm   | Sharing Hour   |
| 15th March |          | <b>RED NOSE DAY - Wear red; be as red as you can!</b>                            |
| 27th March | 3-4:30pm | Easter Stay & Play   |
| 28th March |          | Wear any hat day for Brain Tumour Awareness                                      |



**Easter Holidays — 29th March—12th April inclusive**  
**Pupils return to school on Monday 15th April 2024**

#### COMMENTS, IDEAS OR SUGGESTIONS

**16th February 2024**

If you have any comments, ideas or suggestions, please write in separately. We welcome your comments.



**Do you have a worry about one of our Children?**

**Please telephone or visit the school and ask to speak to Mrs Nicholson or in her absence Mrs Gutteridge.**

**01277 822721**



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