

31ST JANUARY 2025

ISSUE 17

# PRIORY SCHOOL NEWS

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# Headteacher's News

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of January, there's lots happening across the school, and we're excited to share some important updates with you.

## Photography Day – Monday 3rd February

On Monday, professional photographers will be in school to capture new images for our website. We are looking forward to refreshing our online presence and showcasing the vibrant learning environment at Priory School.

Please ensure your child comes to school clean, smart, and in full uniform so they can look their best in the photos. Our uniform expectations can be found [here](#). Choir members should also bring their choir uniform to change into as needed.

## New School Website Coming Soon!

We are excited to be launching a brand-new school website in the coming weeks! The updated site will provide improved access to key information, important updates, and a real insight into life at Priory School. The new photos will play a big part in capturing the heart of our school community, and we can't wait to share it with you.

## Learning Together Week

A big thank you to all the parents who have participated in this term's learning together week! It's been wonderful to welcome you into classrooms and share the learning experience.

## National Storytelling Week (30th Jan – 7th Feb)

We are excited to celebrate the power of storytelling with engaging assemblies, class activities, and some creative take-home resources. Encouraging children to share and enjoy stories at home can make a real difference in developing their love for reading!

Thank you for your continued support.

# Attendance

Weekly attendance percentages - W/C 27th January

Whole School - 93.7%

Year 1 - 96.5%

Year 2 - 91.1%

Year 3 - 94.8%

Year 4 - 96.8%

Year 5 - 91.8%

Year 6 - 93.0%

Congratulations to Pears with 100% the highest attendance this week!

Important dates:

[Click here](#) to link to the school calendar

[Click here](#) to see term dates for 2024-2025

Leaflets and letters:

Please [click here](#) to go to our leaflets page on the website and choose external providers

Sign of the week:

Chinese New Year

<https://youtu.be/lrykViMw5l0>



# Peek at the Week

## Nursery– 31st January 2025

### Parents' Evenings

Tuesday 25th February and  
Wednesday 26th February.

### Half term holiday

No nursery sessions from Monday  
17th February–Friday 21st February.

It has been lovely welcoming you into class  
as part of Learning Together Week. We also  
had lots of fun celebrating Chinese New Year  
with dragon parades and drumming!



### Learning

#### Personal, Social & Emotional Development

We have been talking about how to  
make sure our Nursery is a happy  
place for everyone to learn in.



This week we have been focusing on how we  
share our toys and take turns with each other.

#### Communication & Language Development



We have been taking part in  
the Big Garden Birdwatch this  
week. We have been learning  
the names of the different  
birds we have seen in our

garden and finding new words to describe how  
they fly.

#### Physical Development

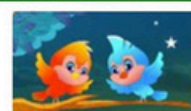
Children have been making houses for the birds  
out of construction  
materials. They have been  
strengthening their finger  
muscles which helps  
prepare the muscles in  
their hands for writing.



**Child of the week:** Sarah for more being more settled this week, joining in with  
different activities and enjoying her rhyme time sessions.

**Nursery rhyme of the week:** Nursery rhyme of the week: 2 Little dickie birds  
sitting on the wall.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aplwz06C5DY>



Next Week's Word of the Week: **'listening'**



Contact us: [nursery@prioryschool.com](mailto:nursery@prioryschool.com)

01628 600300





# Peek at the Week–Reception

## 31.01.25

We loved having parents in our classes on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning! We hope you enjoyed seeing how we start our day in Reception and having a taste of phonics.

This week we have been learning all about the Lunar New Year and the Year of the Snake! Our assembly on Tuesday was all about this special occasion celebrated across the world, and we discussed ways it was similar to some festivals we celebrate. There were lots of exciting activities set up in Reception across the week: Chinese number writing, crafting dragons and a Chinese restaurant even popped up in our classroom!



### Communication and Language

This week we have continued Spring 1 of [Little Wandle](#), as well as recapping the digraphs (two letters making one sound) learned before Christmas. Our new digraphs are: **ar, or, ur, ow and oi**. The children are doing really well with their new tricky words: *my and all*.

Phonic information for Parents [here](#)

### Physical Development

This term, Reception are exploring dance in PE lessons! Alongside being lots of fun, dance is a fantastic way to enhance a child's physical development by encouraging the use of motor skills, balance, coordination, and muscle strength. The repetitive movements and patterns in dance also help children gain control over their bodies and improve their spatial awareness.

- **SLTea Tuesday 4th February–2pm.** EYFS parents are invited to come along to meet with our Senior Leadership team and enjoy a child free cup of tea!
- We have sent out information regarding a **school trip** in Summer term! Please check you have received the letter which was emailed out.
- Please send in any **clean plastic bottles** (water, juice, fairy liquid!) for a crafty activity next

Reception song of the week:

[Chinese Lion Dance](#)



Reception Stars of the Week:

R Rupert: Amayah R Paddington: Alice

Contact us: [reception@priorschool.com](mailto:reception@priorschool.com)

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# Peek at the Week

## Year 1 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025



### Important Dates / Reminders

Please can all book bags be brought in on a Thursday so library books and reading books can be changed.

Please log in to Numbots.



### Homework

- Please read with your child for at least 15 minutes a day and record it in their reading diary.
- Focus core math skill: Ordering and writing numbers to 20.

Our amazing paintings of Antarctica;

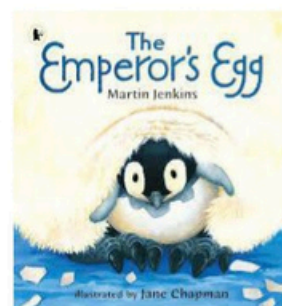


### Our Learning

#### **This week:**

In math, we have been focusing on ordering numbers up to 20. The children have been practicing key mathematical vocabulary, including 'less' and 'greater.' On Thursday, we had a practical math lesson all about estimating on a number line. We created a human number line and practiced estimating the positions of different numbers—it was great fun!

In English this week, we started our new text, *The Emperor's Egg*. The children painted their own scenes of Antarctica and generated descriptive vocabulary to accompany their artwork. We also learned lots of fun facts about Antarctica, and the children were amazed to discover that it is the coldest place on Earth!



In our afternoon sessions, we learned about the famous explorer Neil Armstrong. The children wrote facts about him in their learning logs and were challenged to build a rocket using LEGO in the outdoor area—one that could travel to space!

#### **Next week's learning:**

Math: We will be starting out new topic on Mass and Volume.  
English: The children will be learning about what penguins eat.  
Afternoon sessions: We will be starting our new science unit on animals, including humans.

### Star of the week

1Donaldson: Bani and Aliya

1Jeffers: Sukhmani and Younis



Tricky words of the Week: Mr Mrs Ms School Different Call

Sound of the week: 'aw'

draw straw paw

Contact us: [year1@priorschool.com](mailto:year1@priorschool.com)

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# Peek at the Week

## Year 2 – 31st January 2025

### Important Dates / Reminders

w/c 17.02.25 Half term

Please read with and to your child every day and discuss what you are reading. Once the children have used their phonics to decode the words in the book, please re-read the book several times over the week to help them build up their pace and fluency.



Spellings are sent home on Fridays with a spelling quiz the following Friday. Please practice writing these spellings daily if possible. Please also login in to NumBots and Times Table Rockstars to practise both number bonds and timetables.

Please send your child in the correct PE uniform on **Wednesdays**.

Please also send your child in with a coat daily as we are outside learning in our Year 2 garden for part of every day.

### Our Learning

This week in English, we have started drafting our letters to Mrs Foster, to try and persuade her to build a new wildlife garden at school! In maths, we have used our place value knowledge of tens and ones to help count amounts in pence and then separate amounts in pounds.



In the garden, we have enjoyed the different learning opportunities linked to our English unit on The Secret Sky Garden, our maths unit on money and Chinese New Year, which we learnt about in assembly this week.



Next week, we will be looking at counting mixed amounts of pounds and pence in maths, finishing our letters to Mrs Foster in English and writing them neatly on writing paper ready to hand to her.

We will start a new unit in Geography, looking at the four countries of the United Kingdom, their capital cities and surrounding seas.



### Child of the Week

2Newton: Ashmeet

2Franklin: Ivaanka





# Peek at the Week Year 3– 31st January 2025

## Important Dates / Reminders

06.02.25 3 Jenner swimming lesson 11.02.25 Year 3

Trip to Whipsnade Zoo w/c 17.02.25 HALF TERM

### HOMEWORK

Please read with your child for at least 15

minutes every day and record this in their reading record. Ideas for reading at home can include reading a library book, a book from school or home, reading a bedtime story or following a recipe among other opportunities!

Books can also be read online at <https://www.collinshub.co.uk/login/>

Please practise number bonds and multiplication tables with your child. Times Tables Rockstars: <https://trockstars.com/>

Don't forget that your child needs to wear the correct PE uniform to school each Monday.

## Our Learning

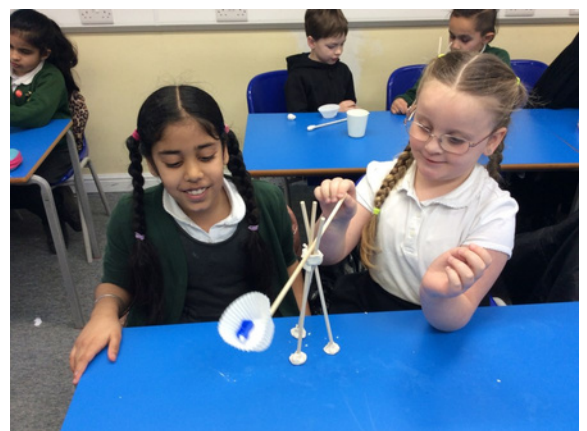
This week, we continued to learn about life in Ancient Egypt. The children were given the opportunity to explore an 'Egyptian tomb' and to see what artefacts can tell us about life in Ancient Egypt.

In English, we collected vocabulary to describe a winter scene and continued to build our class sentence stack inspired by the story the Happy Prince. In Maths, we have been learning how to multiply two digit numbers by one digit numbers.

Next week, we will begin a unit of art work where we will explore collage. We will look at the work of artists including Klimt and Matisse. In English, we will begin to plan out independent writing—a version of the story of 'The Happy Prince'. In Maths, we will be learning different strategies for division of 2 digit numbers. Year 3 need to confidently be able to recall 2x, 3x 4x, 5x, 8x and 10x tables to do this so please practise at home.

In History, we made models of shadufs.

These were machines used by Egyptians to move water.



Word of the Week: century Follow this link to find more super daily activities:

[www.morningchallenge.co.uk/](http://www.morningchallenge.co.uk/)

Contact us: [year3@priorschool.com](mailto:year3@priorschool.com)

01628 600300





# Year 4 Peek at the Week

## Friday 31st January 2025

### Important Dates /Reminders

**Wednesdays:** wear the correct PE uniform to school. Please bring in a water bottle.

**Fridays:** Spelling test. Please remember to read at least three times a week and record it in the reading record. Your child also need to be practising their times tables as much as possible.

### Dates for the Spring Term

**Finding Nemo performance for parents**–Tuesday 4th March  
PM–time to be confirmed.

**Finding Nemo performance for parents**–Wednesday 5th  
March AM–time to be confirmed.

**Year 4 trip to Ufton Court**–  
Thursday 27th March.

If your child needs suggestions for their costume, please speak to their class teacher.

### Our Learning

**This week** has been a great week in Year 4, the children have been practising their songs for our 'Finding Nemo' performance. The children are doing so well and the soloists have been very professional ensuring that they learn their song words. Well done Year 4!

**In English,** the children have been exploring our new story 'Journey'. They have been looking at the images and deciding what they think is happening in the story. The children have been very good at using their imagination to think of creative ideas.

**In Maths,** the children have been applying their times table knowledge to solve problems. They have also continued to learn how to divide by partitioning numbers. Please speak to your child's class teacher if you would like more information on this.

**Next week in English,** the children will be writing a range of sentences based on the story, 'Journey'.

**Next week in Maths,** the children are going to be continuing to practise dividing two-digit and three-digit numbers by one digit.

**In the afternoons,** we are going to be continuing to learn about the history of the Anglo-Saxons. We will be looking at religion during Anglo-Saxon times and life during this time.

### Child of the week:

**4 Turing:** Khuzaimah **4 Lovelace:** Aya **4 Chamberlain:** Rayyan



Remember to read 3 times a week and practise your timetables on Rockstar Maths.

Contact us: year4@prioryschool.com 01628 600300



# Year 5 Peek at the Week

## 31st January 2025

### Important Dates / Reminders

Slough Mosque Trip: Thursday 6th February

World Book day: Thursday 6th March

Science Museum Trip: Thursday 20th March

We used oreos to represent the different phases of the moon.



### Our Learning

**This week**, we learnt more about why there is life on Earth, the Goldilocks planet, and wrote our own space-themed versions of this classic tale.

**In maths**, we continued our topic of division and developed strategies to divide 4 digits by 1 digit, divide with remainders and multiply unit fractions with integers.

**In English**, we continued planned and wrote our own version of One Small Step.

**This term in PSHRE**, we will be looking at Dreams and Goals. Here we will focus on the values of hope and trust.

**Next week**, after finished our exploration of the solar system, we will zoom in to our home planet and start our geography unit: Man's Impact on the Environment.

**In maths**, we will continue using our multiplication strategies combined with fractions and ,further extend our knowledge in applying it, to quantity.

**In English**, we will start our new unit on Plastic Pollution and focus on a persuasive pitch about the affects of plastic pollution.

### Child of the Week

5Dawe: **Lokeshwari** 5Maple: **Abdur-Raqeeb** 5Ofili: **Tayla**

### Word of the Week: **harass**

Remember to read 3 times a week and practise your timetables on Rockstar Maths.

Contact us: [year5@prioryschool.com](mailto:year5@prioryschool.com)

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# Year 6 Peek at the Week

## Friday 31st January 2025

### Important Dates /Reminders

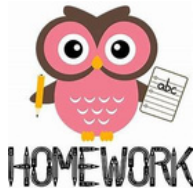
**Thursdays:** Wear the correct PE uniform to school. Please bring in a water bottle.

**Thursdays:** Spelling quiz. Homework due:

- Reading record x3
- Spellings x1

Times tables practice on TTRS

Times Tables Rock Stars: Play ([ttrockstars.com](http://ttrockstars.com))



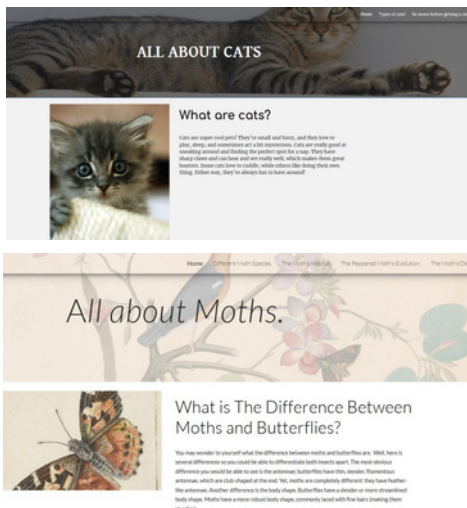
### Our Learning

This week, in geography, we learnt about manmade landmarks in North and South America, as well as the impact of deforestation in the Amazon rainforest.

In English, we used our knowledge of Natural Selection to write our own narrative poem on Darwin's finches!

In math, we completed the topic of ratios by exploring ratios and fractions and applying ratios to worded problems. We then began a new topic on fractions, decimals and percentages, with a focus on converting fractions to decimals and understanding their equivalents.

### Computing – Websites



Next week, in science, we will start our next unit on classification! We will learn about how scientists group living things based on similar characteristics. We will research scientist Carl Linnaeus, and create classification keys.

In English, we will start our new book 'The Last Wild' by Piers Torday. This English unit links to our topic of evolution.

In maths, we will continue our topic of fractions, decimals and percentages, learning how to make equivalences between them.

**PSHRE Focus:** Dreams and Goals. In PSHRE this term, we will understand the difference between realistic and unrealistic goal-setting. We will be able to identify our learning strengths and the steps we need to take to achieve our goals. We will share our dreams for the world by identifying problems and discussing our concerns with other people. We will understand how to work with others to help make the world a better place. Lastly, we will be able to recognise and celebrate our own achievements when our goals are met.



### Child of the week:

6 Attenborough: Ugne 6 Anning: Tyler 6 Darwin: Ariella

**Word of the Week:** hindrance

Follow this link to find more super daily activities: [www.morningchallenge.co.uk/](http://www.morningchallenge.co.uk/)

Contact us: [year6@priorschool.com](mailto:year6@priorschool.com) 01628 600300





# The Orchard–Peek of the Term

## Week commencing: 27/01/2025

### Important Dates

Monday 3rd Feb– Plum class community trip

Wednesday 5th Feb– Cherry class trip to TVAP



### Our Learning

In Pear class, the children engaged in Attention Autism about the Gingerbread man. After, they participated with their parents in three activities relating to the story.

Cherry Class- During yesterday's Learning together afternoon, Cherries parents got the chance to take part in our Drama and play session. We used our topic story Billy Goats Gruff in our identi-play and step by step pretend play activities. As well as using different musical instruments to make a sound for each character.

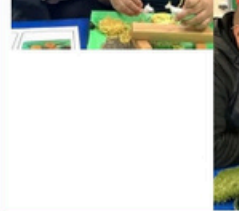
Apple Class- The children had fun in their Art lesson. They watched colour volcanoes in class input then enjoyed mixing colours with paint.

Plum Class- The children had a great time with parents engaging in the Billy Goat Gruff story by acting out the movements.

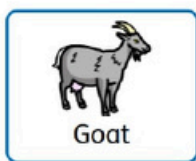
The children really enjoyed having their parents come and learn with them. Thank you for coming.

In their Maths lesson, Plum class and Cherries went to Tesco to buy ingredients to make sandwiches.

Plum class had fun going to Kennedy park and spending money in the nearby shop for their community trip.



Makaton sign:



### Star of the week



Plum Class- All the class for a good Tesco trip **Pear Class-** Pasha for engaging well in class inputs and his activities  
**Cherry class-** Levi for doing the priory mile **Apple class-** Theo for doing fantastic addition and subtraction in Maths



Contact us: [sen@prioryschool.com](mailto:sen@prioryschool.com)

01628 600300



# Peek at the Week

The Woodlands  
Week commencing- 27.01.25

## What the Woodlands has been up to

### **This week:**

**In English,** we have been writing our independent version of The Little Red Riding Hood story. The children have produced some really interesting and unique stories. We are so impressed with the effort and enthusiasm the children have shown.

**In maths,** we have been working on our addition and subtraction skills, by focusing on one step at a time. We have also been practicing word problems using physical resources.

The morning children have also been working with sensory maths!

### **The afternoon,**

We have continued to work on our Zones of Regulation lessons. Working on zones across the day, by recognising that our feelings can change throughout the day. We have been coming up with different names for the zones and how each zones makes our bodies feel.

The children have been practising their social skills by reading social scripts. We have practised how to ask the right amount of questions and how to start a conversation.

Another groups has continued to explore Little Red Riding Hood, using Colourful Semantics.

The children have been practising letter formation using sensory material.

### **Next week,**

**In English,** we are going to explore our new book, learn new vocabulary and sequence the story.

**In maths,** we are going to continue to work on our addition and subtraction skills and word problems skills

**In the afternoon,** we are going to continue our work on social and emotional skills.





## Language of the Month

At Priory School, we are proud that there are children and staff from a variety of different cultures and backgrounds. We would like to celebrate and value all the languages and faiths within our diverse community by introducing 'Language of the Month'. Language of the month will involve introducing commonly used words such as good morning, numbers one to ten, some useful links to facts and a fun song or two! This is a great way to celebrate a variety of languages and give the opportunity to children to learn words and phrases from each other's languages.

To start the New Year, the Language of the Month for January is Chinese. Please see the slides below. The slides have been introduced to the children in school.

This is also a great opportunity for families to share any photos of linked celebrations. Chinese New Year is marked on the 29th January and it is the year of the snake!

Language of the month

Good morning  
**Dzaoww-shung**  
**haoww**  
再见

Thank you  
**Sshyeah-sshyeah**  
谢谢

Yes  
**Shrr**  
是

Hello  
**Nee haoww**  
你好

Sorry  
**Bào qiàn**  
抱歉

Well done  
**Sshyeah-sshyeah**  
谢谢

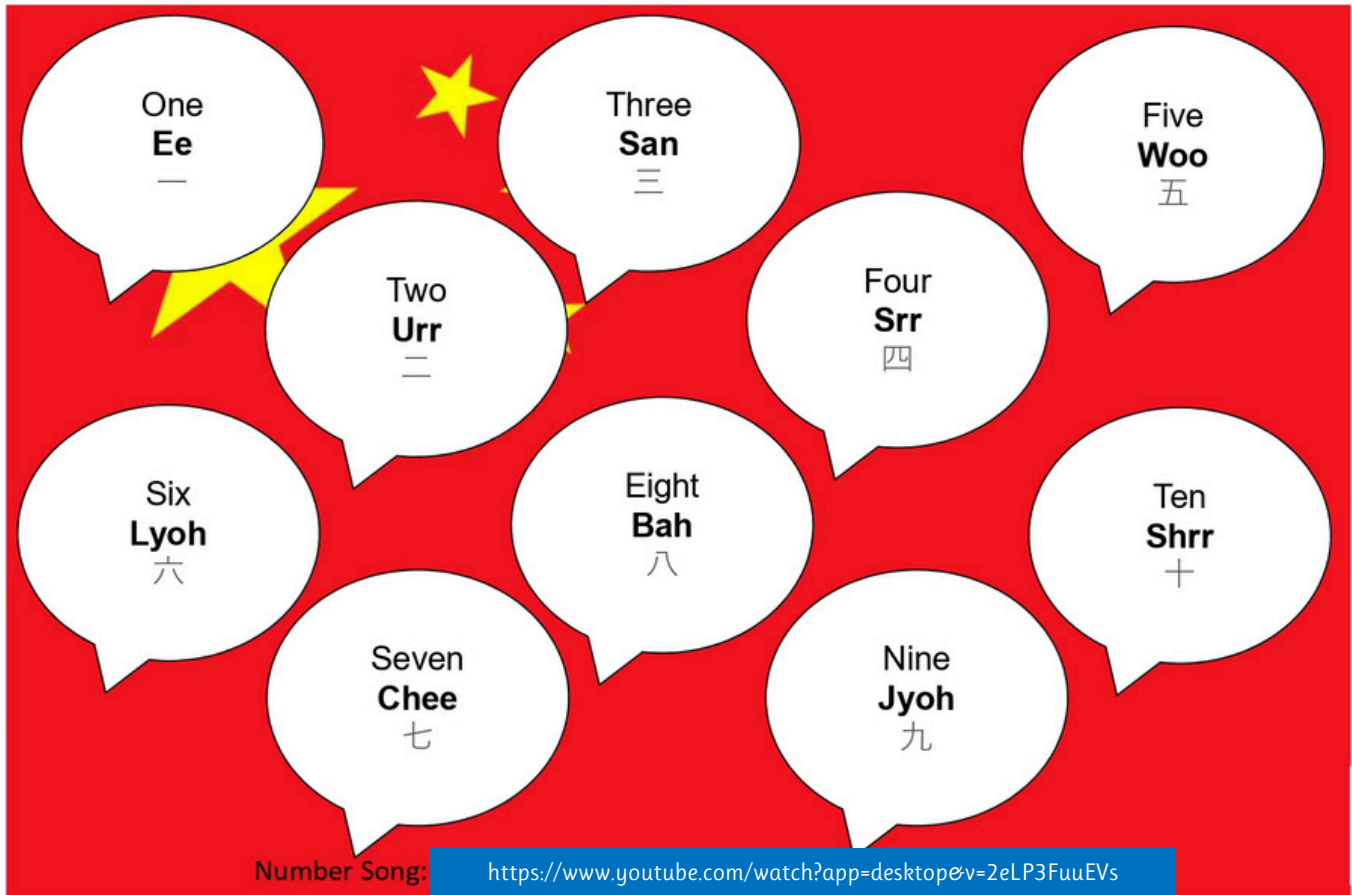
Please  
**Qǐng**  
请

Good afternoon  
**Sshyah-woo**  
**haoww**  
下午好

No  
**Boo-shrr**  
不是

Goodbye  
**Zàijiàn**  
再见

January - Chinese



One  
Ee  
一

Two  
Urr  
二

Three  
San  
三

Four  
Srr  
四

Five  
Woo  
五

Six  
Lyoh  
六

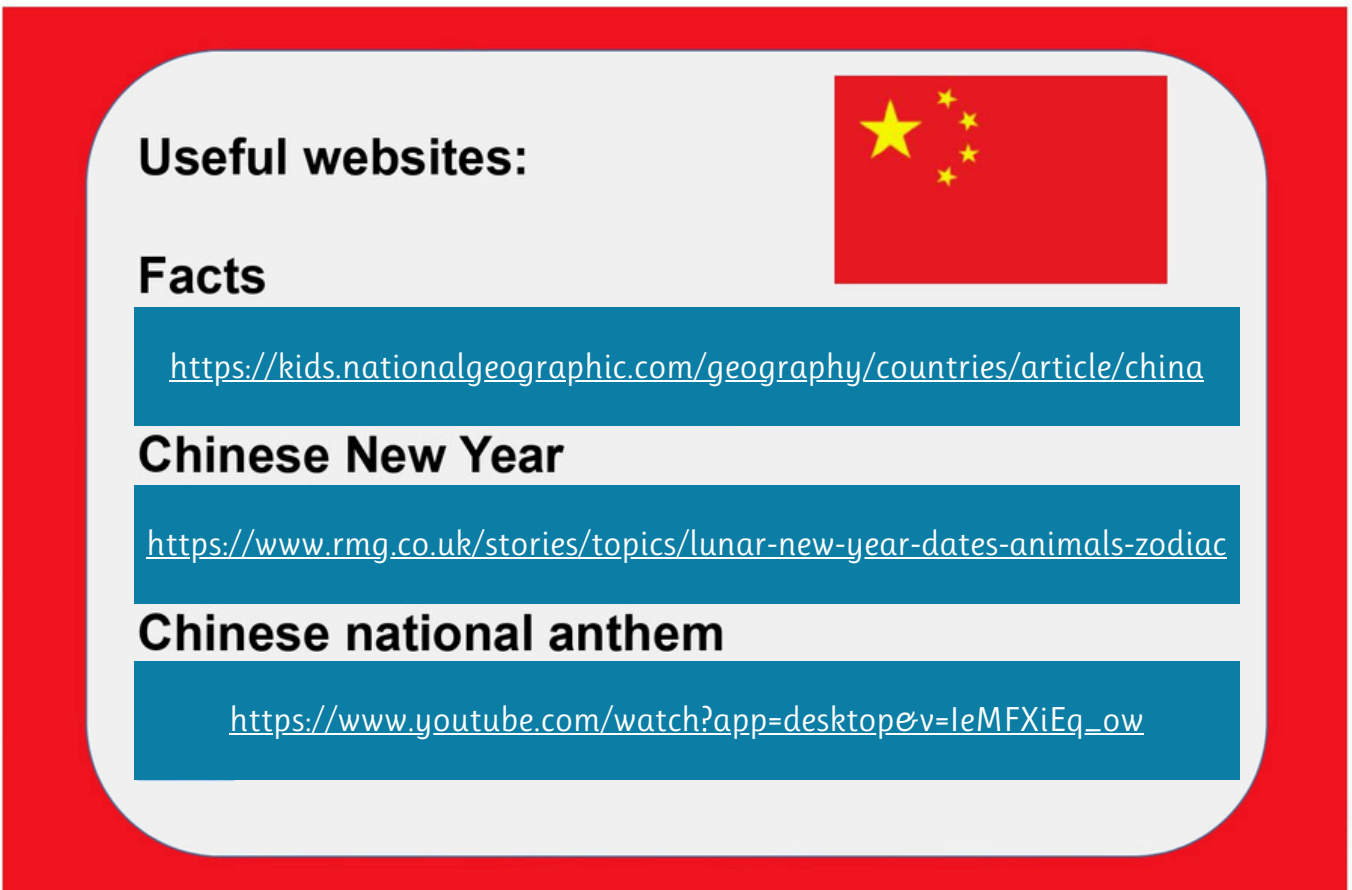
Seven  
Chee  
七

Eight  
Bah  
八

Nine  
Jyoh  
九

Ten  
Shrr  
十

Number Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=2eLP3FuuEVs>

**Useful websites:**

**Facts**

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries/article/china>

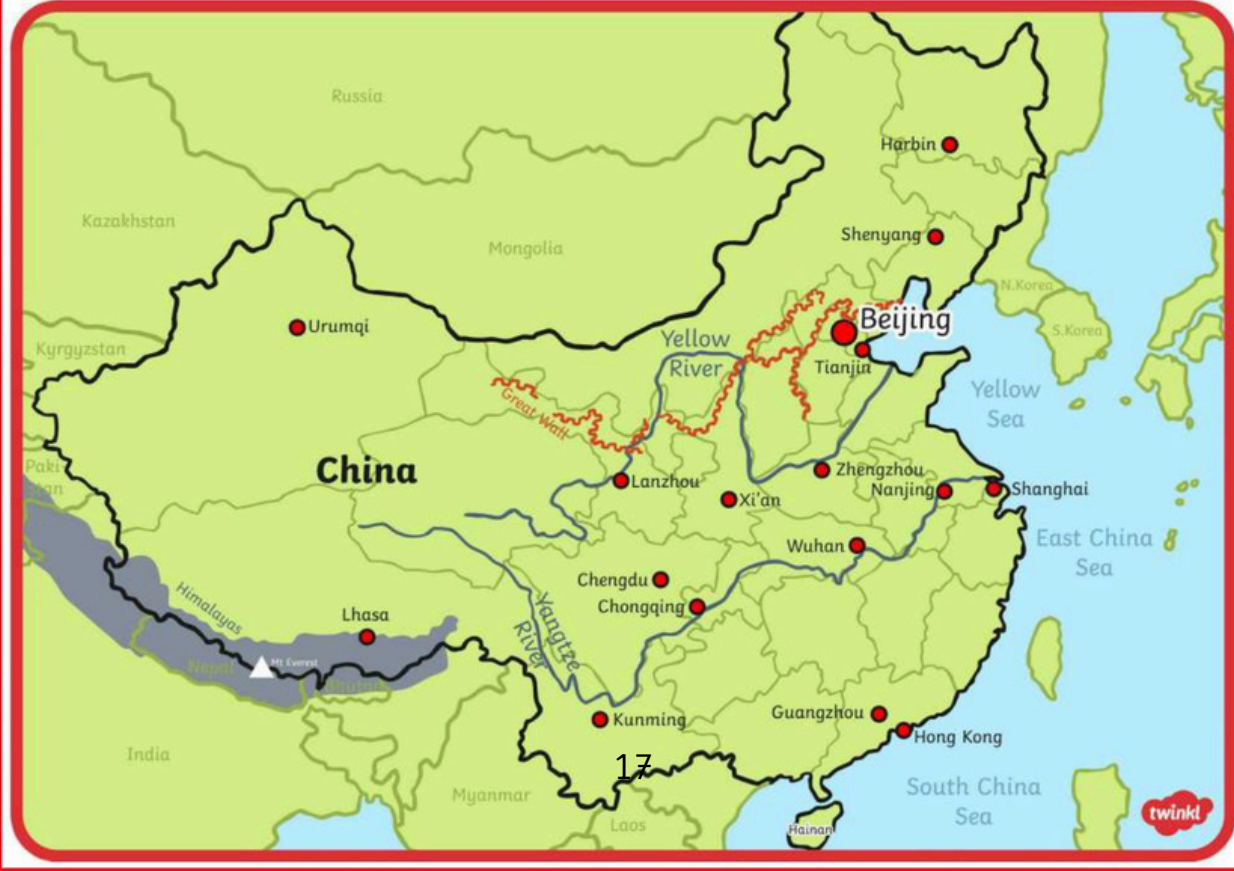
**Chinese New Year**

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/lunar-new-year-dates-animals-zodiac>

**Chinese national anthem**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=leMFXiEq\\_ow](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=leMFXiEq_ow)







## Why is my child worrying?

Worries/fears are **normal**.

Worries **come and go**.

Sometimes worries can grow over time and stop your child from doing something or going somewhere.

For example, they may make your child:

- Avoid going to a park where there may be dogs that frighten them
- Avoid going upstairs on their own at home
- Avoid speaking to new people
- Have sleep difficulties
- Feel less confident in themselves, thus unable to do their best or enjoy activities



BHP090 CYFF 07.12.20 v.1.0 - Getting Help Slough Primary School

## Working together to create positive changes:

We can think of all behaviour as a form of communication. When we hold this in mind it's important we try to understand what drives behaviour. This can often be difficult for children and young people to express or identify themselves.

Through our interventions we will work together with you to help identify needs and emotions underlying the behaviour. This greater understanding offers the opportunity to explore helpful coping strategies to create positive changes over time.



<https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/mhst>

This leaflet has been adapted from Burton and Uttoxeter MHST, Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust with kind permission.

## Mental Health Support Team (5-18 years)

## Mental Health Support for Children of Primary School Age



This leaflet is for  
children aged 5-11 years

If you would like to hear more about our service please contact us via:  
[CAMHSGettingHelpEast@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:CAMHSGettingHelpEast@berkshire.nhs.uk)

## Who are we?

**Mental Health Support Team (MHST) supports children and young people with emerging, mild or moderate mental health difficulties which may be affecting day to day life.**

The MHST is a new initiative and the service is being offered to 14 participating schools in Slough.

We offer selected schools:

- Interventions to support children with mild to moderate mental health difficulties
- Surgeries for staff
- Mental Health Network meetings
- Staff training and support schools to have more of a focus on emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Peer mentoring
- Online access to resources and peer support on emotional wellbeing and mental health for parents/carers and professionals via digital platforms called SHARON

Depending on the age of the child or young person, we may work either directly with them or with their parents/carers. We also work with school staff supporting them to have a greater focus on emotional health and wellbeing in the various aspects of school life.

The team consists of:

- Team Lead
- Educational Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs)
- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) Therapist / Clinical Supervisor
- Clinical Psychologist / Senior Clinical Supervisor
- Administrator

## Ways we can support you

- Managing fears and worries
- Separation anxiety
- Panic attacks
- Phobias eg: dogs, the dark
- Behavioural and sleep difficulties
- Problem solving

**What to expect**

After an initial assessment with both you and your child, we work collaboratively with you, the parent/carer, over 6-8 sessions. These sessions may consist of:

- Learning about the cause and maintenance of anxiety/behavioural difficulties in children
- Setting and working towards goals that your child would like to achieve
- Developing techniques in sessions that you can use at home when supporting your child

## How to get support

If you would like support, you have three options:

**As a parent/carer you can refer your child**

Self-refer by sending an email request for a referral form to:

[CAMHSGettingHelpEast@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:CAMHSGettingHelpEast@berkshire.nhs.uk)  
or call the MHST on 0300 365 0123

**Your School Contact**

Contact the Mental Health Lead in school and request a referral to the MHST.

**By post**

Request a referral form by writing to:

**CAMHS Getting Help East Service**  
Fir Tree House, Upton Hospital  
Albert Street, Slough, SL1 2BJ

If your child is having suicidal thoughts or extreme mental health difficulties and you need to talk to someone now, you can contact our mental health support team by calling 0300 365 1234.

Early intervention in childhood has long-term benefits such as improving self-esteem, social development and performance at school







**17TH-21ST  
FEB**

# **FEBRUARY CAMP**

**8AM - 5PM - £31**

**9AM - 3PM - £24**

**FOR CHILDREN AGED 5-11  
YEARS OLD**

**EARLY BIRD 10% DISCOUNT STARTS NOW!**

# **FEB10**

**EXPIRES MIDNIGHT FRIDAY 31ST JANUARY**

## **ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:**

- Hall Games
- Outdoor Sports
- Archery
- Arts & Crafts
- Team Competitions
- Dodgeball
- Balloon Volleyball
- Dance
- Parachute Games
- Individual Challenges



Priory School;

Orchard Avenue, Slough, SL1 6HE



[campse-in-2-group.co.uk](mailto:campse-in-2-group.co.uk)

[IN2CARE.MAGICBOOKING.CO.UK](https://www.in2care.magicbooking.co.uk)



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL LITERACY

Emotional literacy refers to the ability to recognise, understand and express our feelings effectively. It plays a crucial role in strengthening a child's wellbeing by enhancing their relationships and resilience. However, emotional literacy is not necessarily an innate talent, and its development may present challenges. This guide gives parents and educators practical tips on supporting children to cultivate this essential skill.

### 1 NAME THE EMOTION

Encourage children to identify and name their emotions. This helps them understand what they're feeling and why. Use simple language and relatable examples to make it easier for them to share their emotions. This builds a foundation for emotional understanding and open communication.



### 2 MODEL EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Demonstrate healthy emotional expression by sharing your feelings visibly. When children see adults properly displaying how they're doing and what they're thinking, they learn to do the same. Discuss how you handle emotions in different circumstances, providing a real-life framework for young ones to follow.



### 3 MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES

Teach children mindfulness practices to help them stay present and manage their emotions during more challenging moments. Activities like deep breathing, meditation or yoga can reduce stress and enhance emotional regulation. Regular practice can improve focus and emotional stability, which can significantly help children both as they're growing up and throughout their adult life.



### 4 USE STORYTELLING

Incorporate storytelling to help children understand emotions. Stories can offer relevant scenarios illustrating how the characters experience and manage their feelings. Discuss the emotions depicted in stories and ask children how they might feel in similar situations.



### 5 PRACTISE EMPATHY

Teach children to consider others' views and emotions – and to explore why they might think or feel this way. Role-playing and discussing various scenarios can enhance their ability to empathise. Understanding others' emotions helps children to develop compassion and improves their social interactions.



### 6 ENCOURAGE JOURNALING

Suggest keeping a journal to make note of thoughts and emotions, as writing can provide an outlet for self-reflection and emotional processing. Encourage children to write about their daily experiences and feelings, helping them gain insight into their emotional world. Do this alongside them, so they can see and experience how to do it effectively.



### 7 TEACH PROBLEM-SOLVING

Do what you can to help children develop problem-solving skills to assist in managing emotional challenges. Discuss potential solutions to emotional conflicts and encourage them to think critically about what they (and others) can do to process their feelings in a healthy way. This empowers children to handle emotions positively and build resilience.



### 8 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Establish an environment where children feel safe to display their emotions without judgement. Encourage open exchanges and reassure them that all feelings are valid. This supportive atmosphere promotes trust and encourages children to express themselves with confidence.



### 9 USE VISUAL AIDS

Take advantage of visual aids like emotion charts or mood meters to help children identify and express their feelings. Use these tools regularly in your interactions. They provide a visual representation of emotions, making it easier for children to communicate their emotional state.



### 10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Acknowledge and celebrate progress in emotional literacy, and praise children for expressing their emotions and handling them effectively. Positive reinforcement is a useful tool that will encourage continued growth and reinforces the importance of emotional literacy – encouraging young people to maintain the good habits and healthy behaviours that you've taught them.



### Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, an organisation that supports schools in improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®



# How to share books and talk together

**Babies love to communicate.** They are born sociable and come into the world with a willingness to communicate and learn. Their experiences in their early years shape their future social, communication and learning skills.

Books can be a great way to help babies during this period of discovery.

Seventy-five per cent of brain development occurs in the first two years of life and babies need stimulation and attention to make the most of this opportunity. This is not as daunting as it may first sound as stimulation comes from simple, everyday activities such as talking, listening, singing and sharing books together.

A language-rich home helps a child to develop in many ways. Talking and reading to babies helps them learn to listen, and gives them the chance to respond and be listened to. Over time, their coos, babbles and smiles will move on to words and sentences. Engaging with them, and what they are looking at and interested in, helps this natural process along.

Storytelling and book-reading are an easy way to have regular talking time. Storytelling introduces new words, structure and language patterns that help form the building blocks for reading and writing skills. Reading aloud combines the benefits of talking, listening and storytelling within a single activity and gets parents and carers talking regularly to young children.

Reading to children on a daily basis gives them the best start to life. It is never too early to start communicating.



## About this guide

This guide is a tool for parents and practitioners to encourage communication between parents, carers and young children through book sharing. Books are a great tool for getting parents and carers talking to young children. Regular talking is one of the best ways to help develop speaking and listening skills from a young age.

Reading can help to break down some of the barriers to communication between parents and young children. Some parents say that:

- They don't know what to say to babies and young children
- They don't want to look foolish, as they don't see other people talking to babies
- They think that babies do not understand what is being said

Babies and young children do understand when they are being talked and read to and they respond in many ways, by cooing, babbling and smiling. Talking to babies encourages them to find their own way of communicating and stimulates brain development. However, some parents and carers feel inhibited, foolish or shy. Books give them something to talk about, and can be a great way of overcoming these barriers, getting parents and carers talking to babies and young children.

This guide includes:

- Information on why reading is good for talking
- A handout for parents on sharing books – 2 pages to photocopy
- Reading and talking activity ideas
- Other sources of information and resources

If you would like more information or have any comments on this guide please contact us on:

Bookstart  
Booktrust  
[www.bookstart.org.uk](http://www.bookstart.org.uk)

National Literacy Trust  
Email: [EWT@literacytrust.org.uk](mailto:EWT@literacytrust.org.uk)  
[literacytrust.org.uk](http://literacytrust.org.uk)

## Why reading is good for talking

- Sharing books with babies and young children is a fun way to share talk. Adults and children will both enjoy the experience, which means there is a strong chance it will become a regular activity.
- Talking and listening to young children develops their social and literacy skills and reading aloud is a good way of encouraging two-way communication.
- Babies love the sound of their parents' voices and reading aloud to them can be calming during times of distress or unease. Coupled with the appearance of their favourite book and/or character, it can be a very soothing experience and help build the bond between carer and child.
- Books introduce children to the exciting world of stories and help them learn to express their own thoughts and emotions.
- Stories provide parents and carers with a structure to help them talk aloud to children and listen to their responses. It helps overcome adult inhibitions and provides topics for discussion.
- Reading together gives babies and young children the chance to respond. A gurgle in anticipation of a favourite story ending, or a smile of enjoyment, shows parents and carers that young children like to communicate and do so from a very young age.
- Characters, words and sounds discovered through books can be talked about outside of reading time. Books are an important source of new vocabulary.
- Songs and rhymes are especially good for children as the rhythms and repetitive language make it easier for babies to learn language skills.
- Reading aloud combines the benefits of talking, listening and storytelling within a single activity and helps to build the foundation for language development.
- The majority of brain development occurs in the first three years of a child's life. Reading to babies and young children, and giving them time to respond, will help make the most of this opportunity.



## Tips for parents

### Sharing books and talking together

Sharing books with babies and young children is a great way of helping them learn to talk, and a wonderful opportunity to share a cuddle at the same time.

- If you are at home, find a quiet place and turn off the TV or radio. This will help your child to listen without distraction.
- There are many talking time opportunities throughout the day and reading can be a regular part of this. Try and keep a book in your bag at all times. Reading together can help a long journey or waiting time pass quickly and enjoyably.
- Your baby will recognise and enjoy the sound of your voice. At times of distress reading can be very calming, particularly when your voice is coupled with her favourite book or character.
- Be slow and clear when you read and don't be afraid to use sing-song or funny voices for characters, or for words or phrases that are repeated throughout the book. After reading a book several times, your baby will anticipate hearing the change in tone and may well show this with a smile, widening of the eyes or a wiggle.
- Don't be embarrassed or shy about using different voices or tones. Your baby will be an enchanted audience.
- You can use props, such as puppets or a favourite cuddly toy, to help bring the words alive and add actions to your words. It all adds to the appeal of spending talking time together.



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## Tips for parents

- Give your child time to respond to your chatter. This could be with a babble, arm waving or gentle finger movement. Listening shows how interested you are in hearing what she has to say and encourages her in her natural discovery of communication.
- As well as reading the story, talk about the pictures. Pictures and book characters are a great topic of conversation during and after reading time. If there's a picture of a dog in a book, talk about a dog you know. Or if you see a dog in the park or on the street, refer back to the dog in the book: "Oh look, there is Spot/Scooby Doo/Hairy Maclary..."

"Having read to my own children since birth, I found it frustrating watching my brother's child not being read to at all.

At first it was because he was 'too young' and now it's because he 'can't concentrate', but I feel the two are linked. Had he got into the habit of listening, he might now be able to concentrate for longer. At two-and-a-half he has very poor language skills."

**Mother of three, Surrey**

- Don't put pressure on your child to name pictures or objects, but if he follows your words, praise him and say the words again.
- Don't read for too long. Young children get bored easily, so little and often is best. Try regular bedtime or bathtime story sessions.
- Let other grown-ups – grandparents, carers and older brothers and sisters – join in too. Reading aloud makes sure carers always have plenty to talk about with young children.
- It's good to share favourite books again and again. Repetition helps children to understand and remember the language they hear. It is not unusual for young children to want to hear the same book over and over.

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- Remember, you're not teaching your child to read. You learn to talk a long time before you learn to read, and book sharing is a wonderful way to help your child's language development.



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Happy New Year and welcome to January's edition of the SEND newsletter.

**As we jump into 2025, we are taking the opportunity for a reset in SEND and for us to continue to work on improving the services, that we provide to you and your families. We are excited to update you - so keep an eye out for service updates and other helpful information in future newsletters.**

## Introduction from Cllr Puja Bedi, your Lead Member for Education and Children's Services

**As Lead Member for Children's Services at Slough Borough Council, a very important part of my role is being involved in advocating for and working to provide high quality SEND services in Slough.**

I feel passionately about the importance of developing and implementing our SEND and Inclusion strategy over the next 5 years and seeing our vision come to life.

The SEND team works incredibly hard to provide these vital services for children, young people, and families, to ensure they can thrive, and by building strong relationships between the team and the cabinet, we hope to progress further on in the future.

Our SEND vision is "Through inclusive practice, all children and young people are happy, healthy,



safe, take an active part in their community and have fulfilled lives" and this is something I hold close to my heart, and I am hugely thankful for the work that has been done over the last year, and I am excited for what is to come.

[Puja.bedi@slough.gov.uk](mailto:Puja.bedi@slough.gov.uk)

## Contacting the SEND Team

There are two dedicated email addresses to help you contact us, and to help us effectively respond to you, we would ask that you please use the correct email address depending on the nature of your contact with us:

**[SEND\\_EHCNArequest@slough.gov.uk](mailto:SEND_EHCNArequest@slough.gov.uk)**

This email is the address to send all your ECH Needs Assessment requests.

**[SENDteam@slough.gov.uk](mailto:SENDteam@slough.gov.uk)**

This email is for all other enquiries.

Or call us on **01753 787676**.

**Join our mailing list, so you don't miss out on future updates on the service!**

Anyone can join our SEND newsletter mailing list, so please encourage your fellow SEND parents and carers and fellow professionals to subscribe for direct updates and information. They can email us directly at [SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk](mailto:SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk) to be added to the mailing list.

We are changing the way that we do things, and we want you, and our children and young people to be at the heart of everything that we do!





# Phased Transfers Deadline for 2025

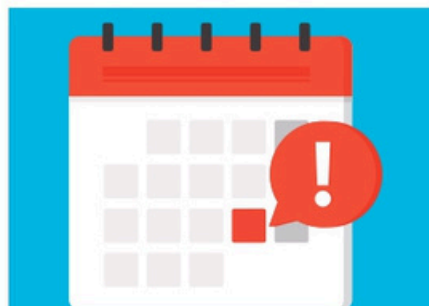
**For the SEND Team, the first two months, into a new year, are dominated by the Phase Transfer Process.**

This is where children and young people, with EHCPs, transition from nursery to reception, or from primary to secondary school. Secondary young adults, moving into post-16 provision, will have their EHCPs finalised in March.

## **What happens during phase transfer for children and young people with an EHCP?**

Moving to a new school or further education setting is both an exciting and anxious experience for all children, young people, and their families. However, when your child has an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), the process can be particularly worrying as you may not be sure how a new setting will meet your child's needs.

The local authority's SEND Service is here to help. They will guide you through the transfer process and answer any questions that you may have. If you'd like to speak with a member of the SEND team, please call: 01753 787676.



**The deadline for phase transfer reviews remains the same every year:**

- **31 March in respect of secondary to post 16 institutions.**
- **15 February in all other cases.**

## Special Voices - A Parent Carer Forum for Slough

**A parent carer forum is a group of parents and carers of disabled children who work with local authorities, education, health, and other providers, to make sure the services they plan and deliver meet the needs of disabled children and families.**

The main aim of Special Voices is to raise awareness about the rights and needs of children/young people with additional needs, and to ensure that they and their families are consulted and involved in any decisions made, during planning or developing services for them.

Special Voices has a main steering group of voluntary parents/carers who have taken on the role of gathering your collective views and presenting them to service planners and decision makers to ensure that services are needed. To find out more, visit the Special Voices website [www.specialvoices.co.uk](http://www.specialvoices.co.uk) or call: 07990 693439.



**Mandy Gunn**  
Chair of Special  
Voices

## update

**Since we produced our last newsletter, we have welcomed three new members into our service.**

A huge welcome to Jay Murphy, who joins us as our SEND Operational Lead. Jay comes to us with an extensive legal background, having worked as a barrister for many years. Jay's understanding of SEND services, local authorities, and the law, means that she is very well placed to be able to drive the service improvements that are needed and what our children, young people, and families deserve.

We also welcome Charlie Randell and Veronica Cummings, who join us as experienced SEND Case Officers this month, and who are eager to meet some of our SEND Community here in Slough. December was also a month of goodbyes, with some of our case workers moving onto other roles outside of Slough Borough Council. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Joanne Jackson, Vanessa Taylor, Diana Moore-Gibson and Claire Steel for all of their hard work and wish them all the best going forward.

We will be recruiting to further posts in 2025 and we are excited to update you in upcoming newsletters!



You said...

We did...

**An important part of any improvement journey is listening to feedback from parents and carers, who have a lived experience of using the SEND service and who are best placed to advise of what we could do better!**

Following on from a review of our active complaints, we were able to look at themes such as lack of adequate communication, with families frequently reporting delays in responses, inconsistent updates due to caseworker changes, and a lack of clarity about next steps. There are also ongoing concerns about significant delays in finalising EHCPs, actioning annual reviews, and implementing Tribunal orders, many of which exceed statutory timeframes.

Additionally, complaints often highlight the negative impact these delays have on children's development and access to appropriate support. In addressing these complaints, we realised that we were able to really understand where children and young people, parents, carers, and professionals felt, and where we were going wrong.

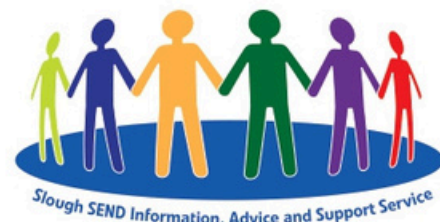
To address some of the common themes we have created the following.

1. A dedicated and experienced Complaints Officer - Sofia Farid,

who was previously a Team Leader in the SEND service and who has extensive experience in all aspects of the SEND processes and casework. Since changing role in December, Sofia has been proactive in responding to any concerns raised corporately, which has seen the number of outstanding complaints reduce significantly for the first time in many months.

2. A dedicated enquiries phone line, that is managed on a rota basis throughout the working day. This enables adequate cover and ensures that there is someone available during office hours, to handle your query. We have also reviewed the telephony system and are currently working with our provider, to ensure that we have a robust and fit for purpose telephone system going forward.

Each month we will take the opportunity to update you on the continued improvement plans and ideas, via our newsletter. But you can take a more proactive role in helping to guide the improvements required, to deliver a service that is worthy of our children and young people. It is easy to get in touch with your ideas and feedback - email us [SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk](mailto:SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk)



## SENDIASS training opportunities

We are pleased to share that regular training sessions on a variety of SEND topics are available on the SENDIASS website.

These training opportunities are designed to support parents, carers, young adults, and professionals alike, offering valuable insights into the SEND system and how to navigate it effectively.

Both morning and twilight sessions are available, providing flexible options to suit different schedules. We encourage everyone to take advantage of these sessions to gain a deeper understanding of SEND-related topics and improve their knowledge and skills in supporting young people with SEND.

For more information and to book a place, please visit Slough SENDIASS [www.sloughsendiass.org.uk](http://www.sloughsendiass.org.uk)



### Chat to SENDIASS

We will provide free, impartial, and confidential advice and support to parents, carers, and young people with SEND

Including:

- all aspects of SEND, from initial concerns and identification through to ongoing support and provision
- the law on SEND, health and social care
- Slough's local policy and practice and much more.

**Every Wednesday**  
**Starting 15 January 2025, 5-7pm**

Email or call for Teams log in:  
[sendiass@slough.gov.uk](mailto:sendiass@slough.gov.uk)  
01753 787693







# GEMS

Autism & ADHD Support Service  
East Berkshire

The GEMS team is passionate about transforming services for children, young people and adults who have been diagnosed with, or who may have autism and/or ADHD. Helping people navigate their way through a range of information and make sense of this, reflecting their personal needs and preferences.

As a parent/carer, you may feel that more information, help, or advice is needed when supporting the needs of your child, who may have behavioural, sensory, social and/or communication challenges. GEMS recognise this and have provided a variety of FREE courses and workshops that will help develop your knowledge of autism and/or

ADHD. Your child does not need to have a diagnosis for you to be able to attend, they can be waiting for an assessment, or you can suspect they may have Autism and or ADHD.

You will be listening to and speaking with trainers with extensive experience of delivering autism and or ADHD courses and will have the opportunity to meet and share strategies with other parents/carers. To view and book on available training on a range of topics, visit the website:

[www.gems4health.com/workshops](http://www.gems4health.com/workshops)

Landline: 01753 373244

Freephone: 0800 999 1342

Email: [gems.4health@nhs.net](mailto:gems.4health@nhs.net)

# Sibs

For brothers and sisters  
of disabled children and adults

**Sibs exists to support people who grow up with or have grown up with a disabled brother or sister.**

It is the only UK charity representing the needs of over half a million young siblings, and over one and a half million adult siblings.

Have you ever thought about running a group support for young siblings? Our sibling group leader training session, will give you all the information that you need to plan, run and evaluate your own local sibling group. It is taking place online via Zoom on Wednesday 26 March at 9.15am-1.15pm. For more information and how to book, please visit [www.sibs.org.uk](http://www.sibs.org.uk)



## Newsletter feedback:

this is your newsletter!

If you would like to suggest any changes to this newsletter, see additional information, be added to the mailing list, and/or give feedback, please email [sendnewsletter@slough.gov.uk](mailto:sendnewsletter@slough.gov.uk)

## Thank you to Joanna Adams (SEND Officer)

For her work on supporting a child at our school. Previously I have had poor experiences where SEND Officers will avoid any communication and not pick up the phone or respond to emails unless escalated.

From my perspective, the entire experience was incredibly positive. Joanna demonstrated a high level of professionalism and a solution-focused approach throughout.

I was particularly impressed by her responsiveness and proactive communication. When I sent an email requesting an urgent

meeting, she promptly scheduled a Google Meet for the following morning, demonstrating a clear commitment to addressing my concerns.

Joanna's dedication and professionalism serve as an excellent example of the high standards we should all strive for within Slough. If this level of service and support becomes the standard, I am confident that the future of SEND provision and education in Slough looks bright.

Coral Snowden  
Principal - Western House Academy

Thank you for taking the time to catch up with us. If you would like to make any article contributions, in future editions, get in touch [SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk](mailto:SENDnewsletter@slough.gov.uk). We would love to hear from you!