DUCKLINGTON
C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Nurture, Bloom, Rejoice

DUCKLINGTON
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Tel. (01993) 703651 Website: https://ducklington.oxon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs H. Bramwell Chair of Governors: Mrs R. Buckland

Friday 13th February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a wonderful first six weeks it has been! I would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone at Ducklington for the incredibly warm welcome. It has been a privilege to join such a supportive and dedicated community, and I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the children, staff, parents, and governors. During this half term, we have begun making small but meaningful changes to enhance our provision and I am excited to continue this work throughout the year. Our focus remains firmly on ensuring that every child receives the best quality education we have to offer, and I look forward to working together to achieve this.

This week is Children's Mental Health Week and we spent Monday's Collective Worship on ensuring we feel a sense of belonging in our lives and that others around us do, too. You can access resources for families at: Families and communities - Children's Mental Health Week

We are saying farewell to Ms. Carolan this week, too. I would like to thank her for her dedication and commitment to Ducklington and I'm sure you all join me in wishing her the very best for the next phase of her career. After half term, we have Mrs James joining us until Easter, then Miss Goodman will be the permanent class teacher for Year 2 after Easter.

Enjoy the half term, whatever your plans are – let's hope there is some good weather for us all to enjoy. Next term's newsletters will have a different look – watch this space!

With warmest wishes,

Mrs Bramwell
office.3122@ducklington.oxon.sch.uk

Upcoming Diary Dates:

Monday 23rd February – Back to school
Friday 27th February – SEND coffee morning
Monday 2nd March - Tag Rugby Finals (info to follow after half term)
Tuesday 3rd March – Year 2 trip to Woodstock Museum
Thursday 5th March – World Book Day
Friday 6th March – Oracy Project Finals at Cokethorpe
Monday 13th March – Year 6 Residential
Tuesday 17th March – Parents Evening
Wednesday 18th March – Parents Evening

Celebration Assembly Superstars

Here are our Celebration Assembly Superstars:

Cygnets: Dominik, Lucas

Ducklings: Sessi, JJ, Dorothy, Tabi

Owls: Leon, Max, Ed, Alessia

Mandarins: Charlie, Ignacio, Jacob, Toby

Eagles: Jack A, Ethan, Roman, Ben

Robins: All Y4, Daisy, Leah, Gianluca

Kingfishers: All Y5, Owen

Red Kites: Noah, Leo, Rufus, Kendall

Learning around school:

Reception:

The Reception children have been very busy practicing their writing and saying their phonics sounds. They have enjoyed reading their Rocket Phonics books together in class and sharing stories with their friends in the book corner.

In Maths, the children have been applying their knowledge through practical equipment and engaging in games. Recently we have been learning about weighing and using the vocabulary heavier than and lighter than to compare different objects.

We have been enjoying lots of activities based on the story Where the Wild Things Are and have been learning lots of new vocabulary. The children worked hard to create descriptive sentences, which are now proudly displayed in our classroom.

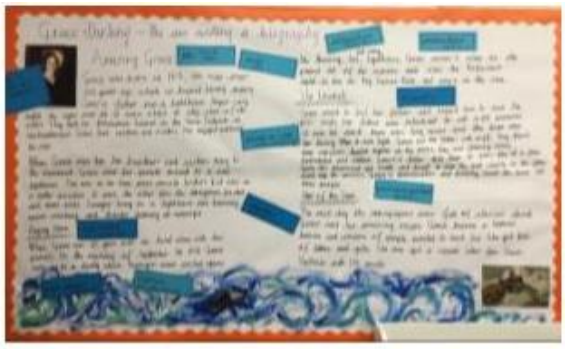
One of our favourite activities was designing and creating our own “Wild Things”. First, we carefully drew our designs and then we used a variety of materials to collage and decorate them. The children showed great creativity and imagination.

Year 2:

Hello from Year 2. We have been incredibly busy since our last newsletter entry. We had a wonderful trip to the library. The children's area is superb and Year 2 had a lovely time listening to the librarians, browsing and reading books.

We have finished our history topic about schools in the past. We planned questions and interviewed a school governor about the school in the 1960s. We then looked at school life in the 1900s and compared this to school life in the present day. The children are looking forward to their trip to Woodstock Museum after half term, pretending to be Victorian school children.

We have also written two biographies, looking at the lives of Grace Darling and Mary Anning. I think lots of children now want to visit museums to look at dinosaur bones and fossils and take a holiday in Lyme Regis. The children were able to recall many grammatical skills they have learnt during this writing unit.



Message from Ms. Carolan:

As I come to the end of my time in Year 2, I wanted to take the opportunity to share my thanks and reflections with you all. Ducklington School has been such a significant part of my life for many years, and it has been a privilege to work with so many wonderful children and families during that time. I feel incredibly lucky to have been part of this community and am very sad to leave it behind.

During my time at Ducklington, I have greatly enjoyed leading English and Art across the school. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to you all for:

- reading the reading newsletters and engaging so positively with them
- volunteering your time to come into school to read with children
- your generous book donations, which have helped enrich our book corners
- your continued support of FODS, whose contributions have allowed us to invest in high-quality books and resources
- your enthusiasm for whole-school art trips, exhibitions, and the visiting artists who have worked with our children

Achieving Arts Mark Gold and being part of the OxTrail, with Mr Ox outside the office, were genuine highlights; achievements that reflect the creativity, enthusiasm, and commitment shown by the children, staff and families. Thank you for helping make that possible. I wish all the children and their families every success, happiness, and confidence as they continue through Ducklington School. They are a wonderful group of young people.

With warmest wishes,
Ms Carolan

Year 4:

We have been having an electrifying time in Y4. In our English lessons we have been reading 'A Life Electric', a children's book about the extraordinary life of Nikola Tesla, to create effective sentences for when we write our own biographies.

This links in beautifully with our Science work about electrical circuits. We had great fun making a circuit using a cell, wires, a bulb and finally, a switch.

Perseverance became a big part of the learning because Science investigations don't always go as smoothly as you expect, but we all got there in the end!

Year 6:

This term in Year 6, we have been exploring the work of the artist Frankie Grieg. The children studied his unique style of portraiture and how he uses bold colours, expressive lines and a variety of materials to create striking faces.

Each week, the children focused on a different facial feature – eyes, noses and mouths – experimenting with a range of media including: oil pastel, charcoal and chalk pastel. This allowed them to practise specific techniques, develop shading and texture skills, and build confidence in capturing expression and detail.

After developing their skills piece by piece, the children brought everything together to create a final self-portrait inspired by Frankie Grieg's distinctive style. I am incredibly proud of their creativity, effort and the individuality shown in their finished artwork!

Sporting news:

On Monday, a group of pupils from Years 3, 4 and 5 took part in a boccia tournament at Henry Box School. They worked brilliantly as a team, supporting each other throughout. They represented the school so well with their fantastic behaviour and positive attitude. Well done to all who went, and a huge thank you to Mrs Coombe and Mrs Horne for accompanying them for the morning.

Year 4 Trip to Hill End:

Last week, our class went to Hill End for the day to learn about Anglo-Saxons. Our instructor, John, showed us all the different weapons Anglo-Saxons used: flaming arrows, axes, spears and shields. Did you know, you don't throw spears because you'd just be throwing away the only weapon you have! We were shown different things that Anglo-Saxons would do in the village like grinding wheat into flour, cleaning furs and collecting firewood. We all got on with the jobs. After lunch, we did a series of fighting challenges including archery, javelin throwing and axe throwing. Finally, our last challenge was a big battle (Wessex V Mercia) and we had lots of fun trying to attack our opponents with our foam swords. All in all, it was a brilliant day and a great school trip.

By Eve Jackson

World Book Day:

World Book Day is taking place on Thursday 5th March. The children are welcome to come dressed as their favourite book character and we will be enjoying lots of reading related activities on the day and during the week.

Star for a night:

Last Wednesday, some very talented (and brave!) pupils from Years 2-6 performed in Star for a Night 2. It was a fantastic evening, full of fun, laughter, dancing and magic, with an audience who participated brilliantly along with the acts. We could not have been prouder of all who took part and were overwhelmed at how confident each of them was. A huge thanks also needs to go to the staff who gave their time to support the children in getting ready for their performance and the encouragement they provided – thank you!

A wonderful amount of £424.93 was raised for The Oxford Children's Hospital which we know will be put to great use.

Thank you to all who contributed and helped. You were all stars for the night!

Online Safety:

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BUILD EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

With increasing societal pressures, many children struggle with managing emotions, facing challenges and processing failure in a healthy way. This is why building emotional resilience in young people is vital for their mental health and personal success. This guide provides practical strategies for parents and educators to help children develop resilience and foster confidence, adaptability and a positive mindset.

1 ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Regularly engaging children in open dialogue fosters trust and emotional expression. Encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings freely without judgment. Set aside time daily, perhaps during dinner, to ask open-ended questions such as, "What's made you happy today?". This encourages children to express themselves openly.

2 MODEL POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Children often learn how to manage emotions by observing adults. By modelling calm and positive responses to challenges, you can teach them valuable emotional management skills. If you've had a difficult day, verbalise how you're feeling and explain how you plan to handle it, such as "I'm a bit worked-up, so I'm going for a walk to clear my mind."

3 TEACH PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Helping children break down challenges into manageable steps encourages a proactive mindset. Explain that every problem has a solution, even if it's not immediately obvious. For example, if a child is stuck on homework, support them in breaking the task into smaller steps, saying things like "Let's focus on just this first question for now."

4 FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET

Encourage young people to view mistakes as learning opportunities. A growth mindset helps them see setbacks as part of the process, rather than something to be upset about. After a child loses a game or performs poorly on a test, for example, ask them what they've learned from the experience. This reinforces the idea that effort – and even failure – leads to improvement.

5 PROMOTE SELF-CARE PRACTICES

Teaching children about self-care helps them understand the importance of balancing work with relaxation to maintain emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers could start a screen-free hour before bedtime where the family engages in relaxing activities like reading, setting an example to the child for how to unwind.

6 BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Strong relationships with peers and adults provide a support system that enhances resilience. Encourage positive, respectful interactions to develop social skills. Playdates or group activities can be instrumental in teaching children how to resolve conflicts with friends by modelling and practicing calm communication.

7 SUPPORT EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Helping children to identify and name their emotions allows them to manage those feelings more effectively. When a child's upset, encourage them to talk to you about what they're feeling in an empathetic and supportive manner, and ask them why they might be experiencing these emotions.

8 ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE

Giving children opportunities to make their own decisions boosts confidence and problem-solving skills. A good example of this would be letting children choose and pack their own lunches for school, guiding them with options but allowing them to assume responsibility for the task to help them take ownership.

9 DEVELOP COPING STRATEGIES

Teaching children techniques like mindfulness, deep breathing or journaling can help them to manage stress. Show them how to perform breathing exercises when they're feeling anxious, and practise this regularly. Reinforcing this behaviour in young people will make it easier for them to use these techniques of their own accord during stressful moments.

10 CELEBRATE SMALL WINS

Recognising effort, no matter how small, reinforces perseverance and encourages children to keep trying. After a child completes a difficult task, makes progress on a project or reaches another type of personal goal, praise their efforts. Emphasise the hard work they've put in and be sure to let them know how proud you are!

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, which works with schools on improving their mental health provisions.

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Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow

Every School Day Counts!

Attendance:

This week, the children have been introduced to Attendance Ted; the newest member of our school community!

Regular attendance is vital for your child's learning and wellbeing – every day at school matters for their progress and development. To celebrate great attendance and encourage all our pupils, we've introduced 'Attendance Ted', a special teddy who will spend each week with the class that has the highest attendance, recognising their commitment to being in school and ready to learn. He will be awarded to the class with the highest attendance each week during Celebration Assembly.

FODS

CHALLENGE 2026

THE CHALLENGE

We are challenging all pupils to raise £20.26 by the end of February half term!

HOW?

Any way you like! We can't wait to see your creative fundraising ideas!

The aim is to raise £20.26 but there is no minimum or maximum amount to take part.

WILL THERE BE PRIZES?

Yes! Prizes include:

-a non uniform day for the class who raises the most money

-most creative fundraising ideas and more!

FUNDRAISING IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED

-Sell something you have made (cakes, crafts or art)
-Read-a-thon (get sponsored for every book you read)
-Sponsored walk, swim, cycle or run
-Car wash
-Helping with chores at home
-Sponsored silence
-Toy sale

Or surprise us with your own fundraising ideas!

*All funds can be donated via ParentPay

*Please tell us how you raised it using the google form link on ParentPay to be eligible for creativity prizes!

Jan 2026

upcoming FODS EVENTS

JAN/FEB 2026	Challenge 2026
30 JAN	Disco
4 FEB	Talent Show (FODS selling refreshments)
13 FEB	Non Uniform Day
MARCH	Wonderlicious bars for sale
30 APR/ 01 MAY	Book Fair

For FODS questions or to volunteer at an event please email chairfods@hotmail.com

Events and dates are subject to change - please check the latest newsletter for FODS updates

RATTLE & ROLL PERFORMANCE

Ofsted Registered

February 2026

St Nicholas' Holiday Club

Open to all children aged 3 to 11 years

Activities include dodgeball, dance, drama, yoga, multi skills, ball games, art and crafts, team and confidence building activities and much more.

LOCATION:
St Nicholas' Primary School, Oxford

COST:
£38 per day
All childcare vouchers accepted

DATES & TIMES:
8:00am - 5:00pm
Monday 16th to Friday 20th February

HOW TO BOOK:
Scan the QR code to book and use code HHSNIC to take you straight to the club or visit our website

rattleandrollperformance.com
enquiries@rattleandrollperformance.com
07722 014301

Follow us on social media

Vicky's After School & Holiday Club Ltd

Providing quality & accessible childcare for children aged 4-11 years within a safe, fun & stimulating environment

Tax free childcare vouchers accepted!

February half term

Monday 16th - Friday 20th February

8:30am - 5:00pm

Location: Aston & Cote Primary School

MESSY PLAY

SPORTS

BAKING

STEM

OUTDOOR PLAY

GAMES

NERF WARS

ARTS & CRAFTS

BOOK NOW!

Contact Vicky Hickman

078887711454

holiday@vickysafterschoolclub.co.uk

www.vickysafterschoolclub.co.uk

Bring your own packed lunch & a light tea will be provided

£42 per day

Fun for ages 4-11