



Staff and pupils from Bacton Primary with Barbara the ewe and her lamb

Image: Lucy Taylor, EADT

In this Edition:

- Key Messages
 - Online Safety – dealing with upsetting content
 - Every Day at School Matters
 - SEND – Suffolk Local Offer
- Governance Spotlight ...
- News from our Schools

As we approach the end of the Spring Term and cautiously celebrate a turn in the weather, we would again like to thank parents/carers and all our pupils for continuing to contribute to positive attendance figures across our schools. Regular attendance is one of the biggest factors in your child's success at school and we are pleased to say that all our schools are at or above the National average for attendance.

Secondly, we have introduced a new section highlighting our fantastic volunteer governance teams. The first spotlight is on Kathy Ramsden, our newest Trustee and current Chair of the Local Board at Rose Hill Primary.

Thirdly, it has been another event filled Term at all our schools, with activities and achievements aplenty. Please do take time to read about all the schools in our Trust.

Finally, we hope that you enjoy our Spring Term Newsletter providing a snap-shot of the news and activities that have taken place across our Trust.

Key Messages

Online Safety: Dealing with Upsetting Content

Raising children in the digital age seems to be getting tougher, with the world experiencing so many uncertainties. The guidance and advice on **page 4** provides some help in discussing upsetting events with children and young people.

Every Day at School Matters

Did you know? Regular attendance is one of the biggest factors in your child's success at school.

Why it matters:

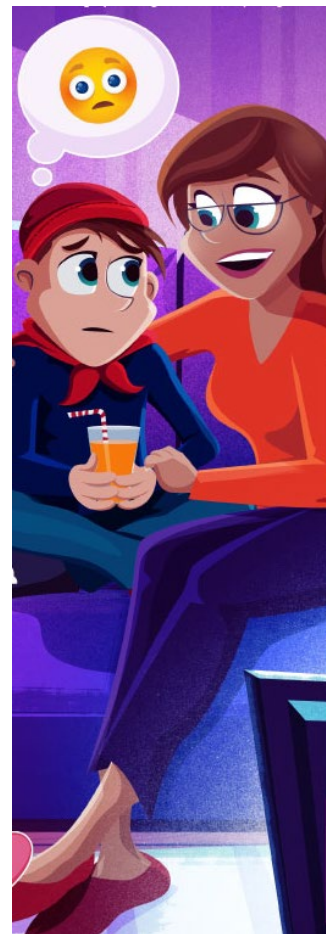
- Lessons build on each other – missing days creates gaps in learning
- Friendships and confidence grow through daily connections
- Good attendance habits now set your child up for life

Contact your school: We're here to help

If your child is finding it hard to come to school, please talk to your child's school straight away. We won't judge – we'll listen and work with you to find solutions that work for your family.

Conversation starter:

Ask your child: *"What was the best thing about being at school today?"*



Belonging Together in Suffolk for SEND families

Suffolk County Council and partners will be holding three events for parents, carers and children and young people with SEND.



You are welcome to join them for free teas, coffees, cakes, stalls and the opportunity to speak with a variety of organisations around SEND in the community.

The dates of the events will be:

- 22 April 2026: 1 - 6pm The Mix Stowmarket.
- 29 April 2026: 1 - 6pm The Battery, Lowestoft.
- 6 May 2026: 12 - 5pm Kesgrave Community Centre.

Please keep an eye on the [Suffolk Local Offer website](#) for updates and booking information.

Governance Spotlight:

Kathy Ramsden

Kathy is our newest Trustee, with a long history of being involved in education and governance. Here, Kathy reflects on what has shaped her life ...



Kathy worked in Education for all of her career, having qualified as a teacher in 1978 and held positions as Head of Maths, teaching up to A Level, Assistant Principal (achievement) and Director of Learning. Kathy also worked for GCET establishing the data systems when the Trust first started.

On retirement, Kathy became a governor and has served on Copleston High School's board and is now the Chair of the Local Advisory Board at Rose Hill Primary. Kathy became a Trustee on the Trust Board in December 2025.

If my career had not been in education, I would have become ... I wanted to be a nurse all through school and only at the last minute decided I wanted to teach. I started off wanting to teach Primary and ended up teaching A level!

My sources of joy are ...

- My family – especially my grandchildren.
- Walking particularly beach walks – I have a beach hut at Felixstowe which also gives me peace and quiet unless the family all invade, but I love that too.
- Reading and sewing – I have a sewing room which is my little haven of peace.
- Swimming – regularly swim all year round in David Lloyd pool, also in the sea but only in the summer!
- Finishing the daily cryptic crossword and number puzzles.

When things get tough I ... Retreat to the sewing room with a cup of tea and Classic FM. Also use my swimming time as thinking time as lane swimming is very tedious otherwise!

The book I wish everyone would read ... The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse by Charlie Mackesy. Reads at many levels and makes me reflect.

The thing that motivates me most of all ... Helping others to achieve their potential – their success is my success.

I'd like to tell my younger self ... Never underestimate yourself – have the confidence to reach for what you want.

News from our Schools:



As we write, Forty-five KS2 pupils are eagerly anticipating a trip to Wembley Stadium on Friday night (27 March) to watch England play Uruguay in a friendly match that evening. The 1am anticipated arrival time back in Ipswich will not cause any problems as the next morning is the start of the Easter holidays!

This follows on from a term of tremendous sporting participation and success which has led to our Year 6s making it through to the national finals of the Dodgeball Competition taking place next term.

This is in addition to success for all participating year groups in the recent Gymnastics Competition at Hadleigh Stars Gymnastics Club which saw our team of KS1 pupils attain first place! We also sent forty KS2 pupils to participate in the annual cross-country competition at Holbrook School.

Meanwhile we are delighted that Britannia has been only the fourth school in the entire country to be awarded the prestigious accolade of Talk for Reading Showcase school. This will allow other school to visit us to observe our approach taken to the highly effective teaching of reading using the particular approach advocated by the scheme's highly regarded architect, Pie Corbett.



Cedars Park
Primary School

The Spring term has been a busy time for the pupils at Cedars Park, with the school calendar, as always, being packed with a host of exciting activities. Children in KS2 took part in an U9 Athletics Festival back in January: there were a number of stand-out performances, particularly in shot put. Later this week, students will be taking part in the U11 Swimming gala at the local leisure centre - we know they'll make the school proud!

World Book Day saw the children enjoying their reading with parents in school, as well as some children visiting Cedrus House, the local care home, to read to the residents as part of 'World Read Aloud Day'. Caribbean Steel Pan workshops amazed the children last month, with the whole school enjoying a dance to the rhythm! Recently, Year 5 pupils loved their annual 'Space Sleepover' at the school, where a highlight was the travelling Planetarium.

School Councillors put the local MP, Dr Prinsley, to the test in their recent Q&A during his visit to the school, and Young Carers at the school came together as a community to meet and support each other as part of Young Carers Action Day.



Bacton
Primary School



Mendlesham
Primary School

Bacton and Mendlesham Primary Schools were filled with smiles and celebration as we welcomed mums and special ladies into school for a marvellous Mother's Day event. Families enjoyed a wonderful afternoon tea, complete with delicious home baked cakes by Heads of Kitchen Wendy and Sam.

As part of our World Book Day celebrations, children were thrilled to learn about renowned children's and young adult author Bali Rai - best known for writing powerful, engaging stories that explore themes such as identity, diversity, multicultural Britain, friendship, family and social justice. His books often draw on his British Punjabi/Sikh heritage, giving pupils an authentic window into different lived experiences and broadening their understanding of the world.

Bacton also welcomed an ewe and her lamb into school. Children were fascinated as they learned how to care for the animals, asked thoughtful questions and explored what they need to stay healthy. The visit created a wonderful real-life learning opportunity, helping children understand not only how to look after living things, but also where some of our food comes from and how farming plays an important role in our local community.



Rose Hill
Primary School

This term at Rose Hill, we enjoyed taking part in Red Nose Day, with children invited to come in with *funny hair for money*, bringing plenty of smiles across the school. We also celebrated World Book Day, where pupils loved reading and sharing their favourite stories together.

Our recent parent maths course, run by Realise Futures, was fully booked—with a waiting list! Parents worked alongside their children and discovered helpful strategies to support learning at home, making it a hugely positive and well-received event.

It has been another very busy term at Copleston with lots of opportunities to celebrate some very talented students. Our school production of 'Legally Blonde Jr' was full of energy, with a cast made up of students from across the school and some incredible singing, dancing and acting.

Our top musicians performed superbly in front of a visiting panel of judges for our first ever Young Musician of the Year competition and a team of Sixth Formers won the Rotary Club Youth Speaks competition against other local schools.

At the time of writing, our academy girls' basketball team are about to play in the national finals after a nail-biting semi-final where they showed impressive resilience to come from behind and take the win at the very end of the game. Every form in Years 7-10 recently recorded a performance of the poem 'Have you Earned Your Tomorrow' and we had some incredibly creative and enthusiastic entries, with the winning form classes being announced in our upcoming achievement assemblies.



We have also welcomed numerous speakers and visitors to inspire our students or to support staff development, many of whom comment on the excellent behaviour and attitudes of our students.



This has been an exciting term at Stowupland High School. We started the term with two celebration events for students and parents (one for KS3, one for KS4) to commemorate the students earning the most merits and golden tickets in the Autumn Term. Year 11 have completed their second set of mock examinations, and we welcomed the team from 'Maximise your Potential' to help Year 11 prepare for their exams.

At half term, 26 students enjoyed a memorable ski trip to Folgaria in Italy, whilst earlier this month, 26 students went to the Phoenix Theatre in London to see Stranger Things - The First Shadow.

Notable sporting successes are an 8-0 win by the Year 9 Girls' football team against Ixworth High School and bronze medals for the U15 girls' team in the Suffolk Schools futsal finals. Finally, we are very much looking forward to our production of 'Fame Jr' taking place at the end of term - the cast and crew have worked incredibly hard and it promises to be a superb show.

Trust Contact Details:

Telephone:

Ipswich Campus **01473 277243**

Mid-Suffolk Campus **01449 742422**

Email:

mail@oxlip.uk

Website:

www.oxlip.uk

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEAL WITH UPSETTING CONTENT

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Raising children in the digital age seems to be getting tougher, with the world currently experiencing so many uncertainties. From climate change to military conflicts around the globe, right now children across the globe can scarcely go online without being exposed to unsettling stories, images and ideas. Reassuring a concerned child can be difficult, especially when bad news feels omnipresent. We've put together some advice to help you in discussing upsetting events with young ones.

1 FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS

There are many ways that children are exposed to upsetting content in the media, both online and offline. Before swamping your child with information, find out what they know already. Show them you're interested in what they have to say, practice active listening and try to gauge how much your child has been impacted by what they've seen.



2 RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE

Starting a conversation about upsetting content probably isn't the best idea when your child is studying for an exam or about to go to bed. Choose a time when they're relaxed and open to talking, to make sure you have their full attention. Remember, these conversations can become emotional, so choose somewhere your child feels safe and comfortable.



3 KEEP IT AGE APPROPRIATE

With younger children, try and keep the conversation more general and avoid leading questions and complex detail. You can go slightly deeper into the specifics with young teenagers but keep monitoring their emotional response. With older teens, you can be more open about the realities and consequences of what's happening – but again, do stay aware of their emotional state.



4 EMPHASISE HOPE

Upsetting content can make anyone feel angry, scared, sad or overwhelmed. Try to find stories of hope, generosity and strength related to the content you're discussing. Children often feel reassured when they know they can do something to help, so encourage your child's sense of control through activities which make them feel they're positively impacting the events they're concerned about.



5 MONITOR REACTIONS

All children react differently, of course, and young people might not directly say that they're scared, angry, anxious, confused or uncomfortable. Emotional reactions are natural when discussing upsetting topics, so take note of your child's body language and reactions. Allow them to express their feelings in a non-judgmental space and try to stay mindful of how they might be feeling.



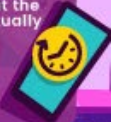
6 CONSIDER YOUR OWN EMOTIONS

It's not only young people who find upsetting news difficult to process: adults also have to deal with strong emotions in moments of stress. Children develop coping strategies by mirroring those around them, so staying on top of how you appear to be regulating your emotion on the outside is important for supporting your child through worrying times.



7 SET LIMITS

Managing screen-time and content can be difficult even in normal circumstances, but especially in unusual or stressful periods (at the start of the pandemic, for example). It's virtually impossible to keep children away from upsetting content completely, but it's important to try to limit exposure by using parental controls, talking about the dangers of harmful content and enforcing screen-time limits.



8 TAKE THINGS SLOWLY

Try not to overwhelm your child with information all at once: instead, take the discussion one step at a time. You could make the first conversation a simple introduction to a potentially upsetting subject and then wait until your child is ready to talk again. Opening the door to the conversation and demonstrating that your child can talk to you about this type of issue is a vital first step.



9 ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Online, troubling images, posts, videos and stories are shared across multiple platforms, many of which your child might access. Even if the content is actually inappropriate, encourage your child to discuss what they saw instead of being angry at them for seeing it. Children are still learning that not everything online is accurate – you want to be their ultimate source of information, not their device.



10 FIND A BALANCE

There's often a tremendous compulsion to stay right up to date with events. Our phones frequently send us push notifications urging us to read the latest article or view the most recent video on social media. It's essential to remind your child that it's healthy to take regular breaks, and to focus on positive events instead of 'doomscrolling' and risking becoming overwhelmed by bad news.



11 BUILD RESILIENCE

News has never been more accessible. While our instinct may be to shield children from upsetting stories, it's important that they're equipped with the tools to manage this content when they are exposed to it. Talk about upsetting content more generally with your child and emphasise that they can always tell you or a trusted adult if something they see makes them feel uneasy.



12 IDENTIFY HELP

It's hugely important that children know where to find support if they encounter upsetting content online. Encourage them to open up to an adult that they trust, and make sure they're aware of who their trusted adults are. It is essential that children understand that they're not alone, and that help is available if and when they need it.



Meet Our Expert

Cayley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa, which is a reporting system that is currently being used by schools and companies to fight bullying around the world. FaceUp helps give a voice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up and get the help they not only want but need.



Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-5045906> <https://www.chikris.com/blog/supporting-your-child-with-upsetting-content/> <https://www.uncstg.com/parenting/how-talk-your-children-about-conflict-and-war>



@natonlinesafety



/NationalOnlineSafety



@nationalonlinesafety



@national_online_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 18.10.2023