



Claypool Newsletter

Spring 1 – 2026



Reflections on the first half of the Spring Term

It's been a great half term in school for the children - lots of learning and laughter which I feel is always a good combination but also quite challenging from a staffing point of view. We are now almost back to full capacity, and I want to sincerely thank you all for your support and trust over the past few weeks. Everyone has pulled together to ensure the children continued to receive the highest standard of education and care.

This half term we had the pleasure of watching the Hazel Class Assembly, and what a treat it was. The children's singing, acting and overall oracy skills were absolutely fantastic. They shared a brilliant 'Talk for Writing' piece and spoke confidently about their aspirations for the year ahead. They also performed one of my favourite songs, *Power in Me*, which did bring a little tear to my eye. I felt incredibly proud of every single one of them.

Now for some sad news but also lovely news ...

We said goodbye to Mrs Horne this week. She has been a dedicated Learning Support Assistant here for the past seven years, and before that, a teacher for many years. She has chosen to take early retirement, but has already promised to return as a volunteer whenever she can fit us into her busy schedule. Mrs Horne will be greatly missed by all of us, and we wish her every happiness as she begins this new chapter in her life.

And now for some great news ...



We are delighted to share some lovely news from the Matthews family. Mrs Matthews gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, Joy Ella, on 30th December. She was very tiny, weighing just 3lb 5oz and spent some time in neonatal care, but we are pleased to say she is now home and thriving. Mrs Matthews brought her into school this week, and she is absolutely adorable.

Ofsted Inspection

This half term we have moved into our inspection window. Our last inspection took place in January 2022, and schools are usually inspected every four years. Due to a pause in inspections last term, we may be visited at any point between now and the end of the summer term — but rest assured, we are ready.

The inspection framework has changed significantly. Schools no longer receive one overall judgement; instead, eight separate areas are graded individually, and the new grading system is very different from the previous one. There is a helpful three-minute YouTube video designed for parents that explains these changes if you would like to find out more.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbl0FvY976g>

Attendance and Punctuality

I am pleased to share that our whole-school attendance so far this year stands at **96.4%**. It is incredibly important that children are in school whenever possible, as good attendance has a significant impact on learning, progress and wellbeing.

We do, however, have a number of pupils whose attendance has fallen below **90%**, which is classed nationally as *persistent absence*. We are now putting support plans in place for these families, including referrals to our school nurse where appropriate. If you feel there is anything we can do to help improve your child's attendance or punctuality, please do get in touch. We are here to work with you and support you in any way we can.

World Book Day (A. Bell)

We will be celebrating World Bok Day in school on Thursday 5th March.

Our theme this year is:
'Come dressed as your favourite word!'



Our hope is that this theme will encourage children to learn, use and recall rich and varied vocabulary. Moreover it will be fun to see if the vocabulary increases in complexity with the childrens' age!

We also hope is that it will not be too much of a burden on parents or carers with regards to costumes. For example, sporty, dynamic, resilient, energetic, etc. might lend themselves to sports wear. Whereas magical, mysterious, other-worldly, supernatural, etc. may lend itself to witches or wizards.

Inclusion at Claypool (H. Eckersley)

This week is Children's Mental Health Week, and our pupils have been exploring what it means to stay mentally well. On Monday, they took part in an assembly led by the Bolton Mental Health Support Team (MHST). The children listened brilliantly and asked thoughtful, insightful questions. A reminder for parents: a member of the MHST visits school each week to provide support for pupils who have been referred to the team. These sessions only take place with parental consent and are designed to help children manage worries and develop healthy coping strategies. If you feel your child may benefit from this support, please speak to your child's class teacher. The MHST are also holding an online 'Exam Stress' parent/carers workshop on Tuesday 17th February from 4.30pm - 6pm. The aim of this workshop is to offer advice to parents/ carers that are supporting their children with exam stress. Scanning the QR code below will give you further information about how to join this session. Please see the poster at the end of the newsletter for further details.

Looking ahead to next half term, we will be holding our annual Down's Syndrome Awareness Day on Monday 23rd March. We invite all children to come to school wearing odd, colourful socks. This tradition is part of World Down Syndrome Day and celebrates diversity, raises awareness, and encourages conversations about inclusion. The socks are symbolic because chromosomes—specifically the extra chromosome in Trisomy 21—resemble pairs of socks when viewed under a microscope.

We will also be holding our Autism Awareness Day on Thursday 2nd April. On this day, we encourage pupils with a diagnosis of autism to share their experiences if they feel comfortable doing so. Many of our children love talking about autism as their *superpower*, and it's always a wonderful celebration of individuality and understanding.

Rights of the Child, British Values and Protected Characteristics

Through our assemblies each week, we discuss the UN Rights of the Child, British Values and Protected Characteristics. I thought it would be useful for you to be aware of these at home so that you can discuss them with your child. This is also available on our school website with a little more detail.

Week Beginning	Question of the week	UN Rights of the child	British Values	Protected Characteristics
6.1.26	What role will reading play in our future?	 29 AIMS OF EDUCATION	Mutual Respect and Tolerance	All protected characteristics
12.1.26	Can famous people help others make good choices?	 13 SHARING THOUGHTS FREELY	Individual Liberty	Age
19.1.26	Can awards encourage people to help others and care for the world?	 12 RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS	Mutual Respect and Tolerance	Religion or belief
26.1.26	Does how we behave matter as much as how well we play?	 31 REST, PLAY, CULTURE, ARTS	Rule of Law	All protected characteristics
2.2.26	Does seeing yourself in a toy or story help you feel like you belong?	 2 NO DISCRIMINATION	Individual Liberty	Disability
9.2.26	Should children have social media?	 17 ACCESS TO INFORMATION	Rule of Law	Age

Sports at Claypool (S. Miller)

Wow! I know I say that every half term has been a brilliant half term of sporting events, but Spring 1 has blown it out of the water! What an outstanding half term we have had at Claypool with so many of our fantastic children having attended a competition or festival across both KS1 and KS2. From Swimming Galas to Balance Bike competitions - just like last term, it feels like we have done it all! Yet again, our fabulous children have represented Claypool so brilliantly and demonstrated our Rays of Sunshine on many occasions; they continuously make us proud.

Our children have medalled in every single event we have competed in this half term, which is a true testament to their willingness to achieve and their ability to work as a team. Our children have proven that they understand what 'sportsmanship' means and even though we have won medals and trophies; what has made me proudest has been their respect towards each other and their fellow competitors.

A huge well done to all of our wonderful children this half term. Hopefully the second half of the Spring Term will be just as successful - if not more!

Uniform Bundles

As the cost living continues to cause concern for many of our families we do have uniform bundles in school available at no cost to any family who finds themselves in difficulty at the moment. If you could just nip to the school office and let us know the size and gender needed, we will be able to provide you with a bundle of uniform.

Spring Term Fundraising

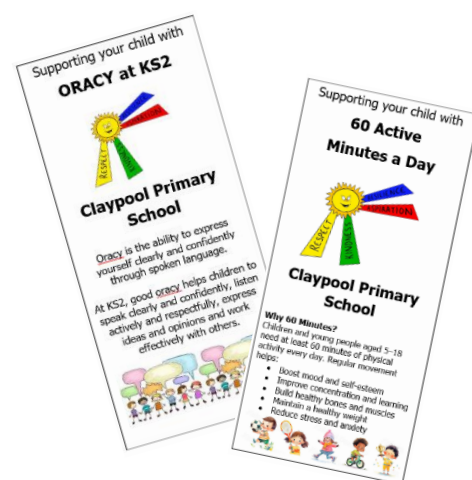
Thank you for your support at the Movie Night, we managed to raise £376 - this will be put towards improving the outdoor area. We also have this week our Valentine's Disco - I'll update you with the amount raised at this event in my next newsletter.

School Website

Just a reminder that all Learning Theme Overviews, Home Learning Challenges and Knowledge Organisers are available on the school website along with Digi Books showcasing the children's learning. These can be found under the Class Pages tab at <https://www.claypool.bolton.sch.uk/>.

Leaflets to support learning at home

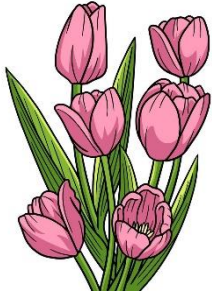
Leaflets related to Oracy, mental maths and 60 active minutes were sent home to all families. We would really appreciate it if over the holidays and beyond you were able to continue to support your child at home with these vital skills. If you haven't receive the leaflets, please pop to the school office and we can provide you with duplicates. We have a lovely new leaflet stand!



Events in the remainder of the Spring Term

March		
3 rd	Morning	Class Photographs
4 th	3.30pm - 5.30pm	Parent Book Look
5 th		World Book Day - dress as your favourite word!
20 th	9.00am	Willow Class Assembly
23 rd		Downs Syndrome Awareness Day - wear odd socks!
26 th	9.15am 5.00pm	Arts Festival
27 th	9.15am 2.00pm	Arts Festival
30 th	9.30am	Rock Steady Concert

April		
1 st		Reports sent to parents/carers
	3.45pm 5.30pm	Easter Egg Bingo
2 nd		Autism Awareness Day
		Last day of term



I hope that you all have a lovely half term break, we look forward to welcoming you back to school on Monday 23rd February at 8.45am.

Thank you for your continued support,

Amanda Hulme

**JOIN FREE
BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL**

BOLTON MHST: ONLINE PARENT/CARER WORKSHOP ON EXAM STRESS

These 90 minute workshops are aimed at parents/carers of young people aged 5-18 and will look at:

- What exam stress is
- How exam stress impacts young people
- Helpful strategies to support your child



DATE: February 17th

TIME: 16:30-18:00



**Greater Manchester
Mental Health
NHS Foundation Trust**

***Scan the QR code or search 'Bolton MHST' on
Eventbrite to secure your place***