

# STAPLES ROAD PRIMARY

January 2026



## January News

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2026! It has been an action-packed start to the year. A huge well done to our choir for an unforgettable Young Voices performance at the O2 Arena! And to our Digital Leaders who had the privilege of attending Judge Bett: an edtech exhibition where groups of school children evaluate educational technology products and software. Finally, congratulations to the students who completed their cycle training this month, building essential skills for the road during their Bikeability sessions.

In our lessons, Reception classes were joined by expert paleontologist Dr. Bones who mysteriously found hidden dinosaur remains in our sand shed! They then got hands-on with history, crafting their very own fossils using salt dough. Year 1 took their creativity into the great outdoors, crafting stickmen in the forest. Back in the classroom, they've been getting stuck into paper-mâché, which they will soon be transforming into custom masks. Additionally, Year 2 visited St Mary's Church where the children learned about the symbols of Christianity and the traditions surrounding Baptism. It was a "WOW" day to remember in Year 3 who explored the world of science making gooey slime and carrying out mini experiments. They also designed detailed 3D story settings within shoeboxes to help bring their creative writing to life. Year 4 kicked off their Iron Man topic with a Robot WOW Day, blending Design Technology with English. They also took a deep dive into geography with a Rivers Workshop, mapping out the journey of water from source to sea. Science has also been a focus in Year 5. Students tested various solids for solubility and conducted a fair test to see which type of sugar dissolved the fastest. Year 6 were busy celebrating a future star: we are incredibly proud of Wilf in Oak Class, who has been invited to train and play with the Essex County Cricket Junior Team! We might be looking at the next Ben Stokes! And in DT, they have been experimenting with flavored essences to create their own Kendal Mint Cake—the ultimate high-energy snack for survival and adventure.

# Young Voices



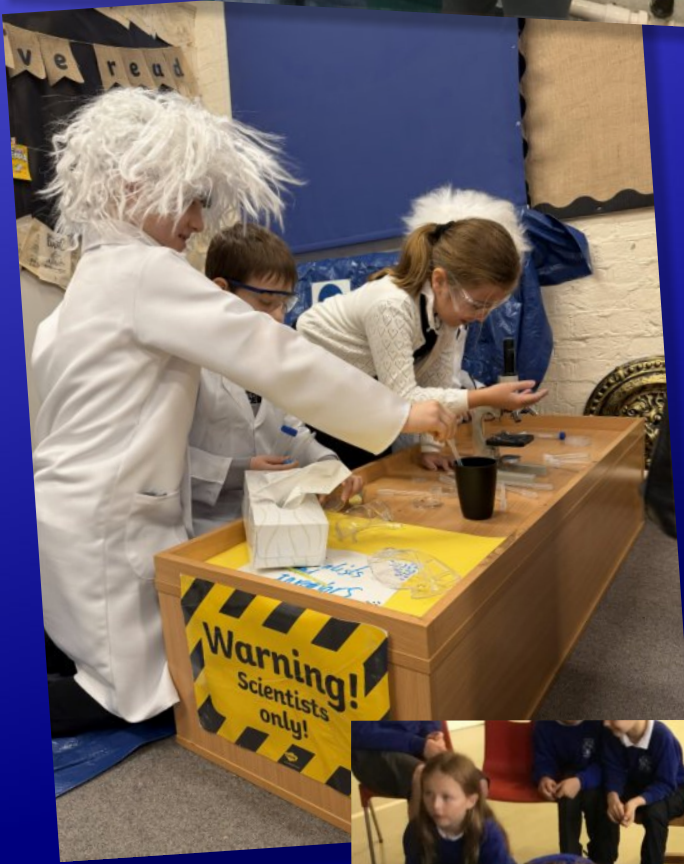
Judge BETT



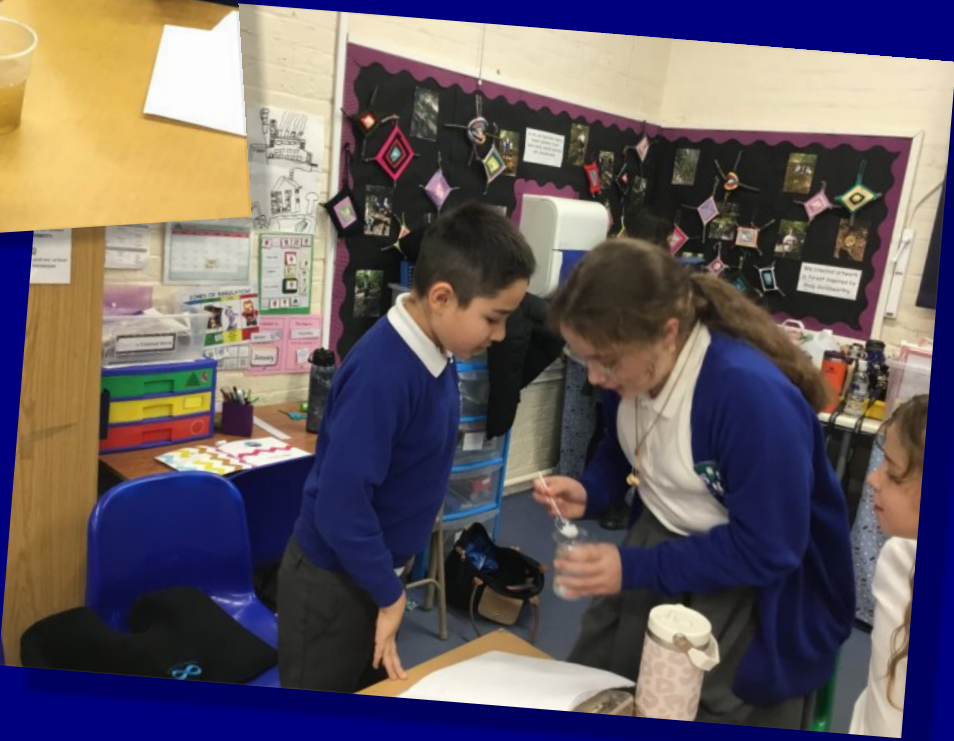
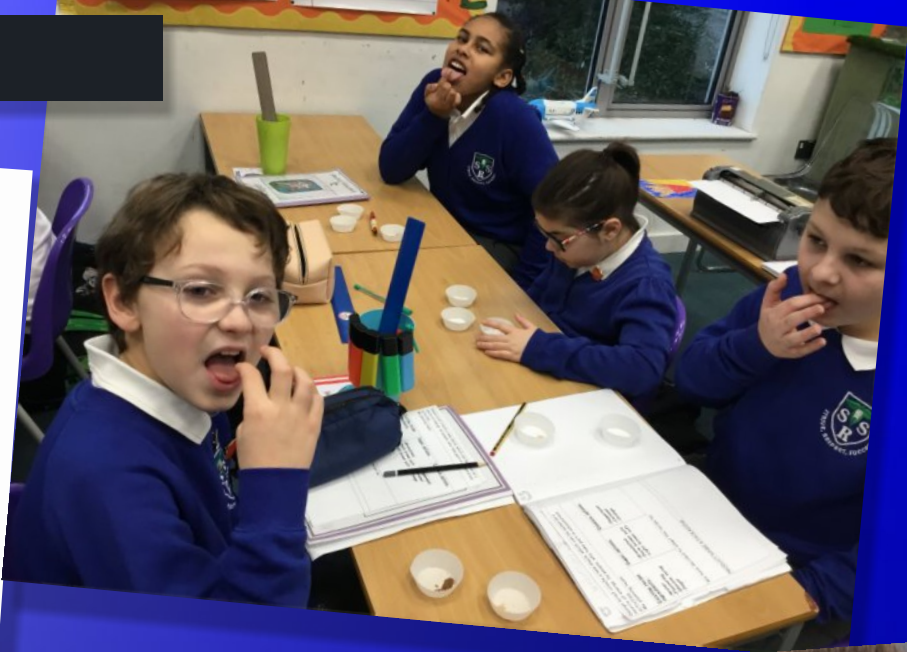
EYFS Y1 and Y2



Y3 and Y4



Y5 and Y6



# WHY 'KINDNESS MATTERS' & HOW DOING GOOD DOES YOU GOOD

'WE MAKE A LIVING BY WHAT WE GET. WE MAKE A LIFE BY WHAT WE GIVE.'

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

THE FOCUS FOR THIS YEAR'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK IS 'KINDNESS MATTERS'. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK INTO THE BENEFIT OF HELPING OTHERS WHICH IS GOOD FOR IMPROVING OUR OWN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL BEING. HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU THINKING:

## ALTRUISM

Altruism is acting in someone else's best interests in order to improve their welfare. When we feel compelled to donate money, shop for someone, call a relative in need or help a neighbour, we are considering the needs of others even when we may not know them. Showing kindness like this, often motivated by empathy, creates a sense of purpose, making us feel good and developing our wellbeing. Children and young people can take part in altruistic activities at home or school. They could create a video for those in isolation, fundraise for a local cause, bake cakes for neighbours or write letters to older members of the community who may feel isolated.



## GENEROSITY

In the context of kindness, being generous with our time, resources and words can provide a low-cost approach to helping others. A generous act is accessible to all. Giving compliments, for example, are a well-researched way of creating a sense of wellbeing and positivity in a community at school or with family. It helps us to recognise the positivity in others as we actively choose to notice and comment on what is valuable and meaningful in someone else. When compliments are given regularly, consistently and with meaning, the community benefits are far reaching!



## GIVE TO GIVE, NOT TO RECEIVE

Sometimes when we are kind there is no payback, which can make it more difficult to keep being kind. Our natural reaction is to shrink back and withdraw our kind act, feeling frustrated that it has either not been reciprocated or that it has not been valued. This is probably one of the most difficult concepts for children to understand and where the 'random acts of kindness' approach is helpful. If it is a random act then it is 'just because' and for no other reason than a one-off act for someone.



## HOLDING OTHERS IN MIND

By holding someone in mind we show that we have been thinking about them and that they matter to us. This act of kindness is so important now, more than at any other time, due to isolation. A simple text to say 'I saw... on the telly last night and it made me think of you!' or a quick call to say 'I was just thinking about you yesterday and was wondering how you're doing?' can mean so much. We probably all do this naturally as part of showing kindness and care to others, but perhaps may not appreciate the importance of this for wellbeing.



## COMMUNITY

When we help others in our community, it improves our wellbeing by helping us to feel less isolated as we connect with others. When we show kindness, it is something which we feel we can control, particularly when things may feel a bit chaotic and unusual. Helping others can often give us a different perspective on our own challenges and our own problems. Peer support, for example, is often overlooked as an important part of improving wellbeing. Older students can often greatly benefit from sharing similar, shared experiences and can offer a level of empathy and understanding that adults may not be able to.



## KINDNESS WITH CAUTION

There is a very helpful analogy that is used when we are in an emergency, 'we should put our own oxygen mask on before putting on someone else's'. What's helpful here is that giving to others can often improve our mental health and wellbeing. However, there are times when helping others can create stress or overwhelm us. This is sometimes called 'compassion fatigue'. So, we must balance our own wellbeing with the wellbeing of others. We should notice if we start to feel resentful or negative or if we start avoiding others, have difficulty concentrating or start experiencing unusual sleep patterns. If this happens it's a good time to take a break or ask someone for help or support.



'KINDNESS IS A SILENT SMILE. A FRIENDLY WORD. A NOD OF ENCOURAGEMENT. KINDNESS IS THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL THING WE CAN TEACH CHILDREN.'

RA KATVIST

The National College

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



For further info, check out these online resources:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/blog/random-acts-kindness>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/get-involved>