

NEWS KIDS CAN **TRUST**

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR*



First News

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INTERVIEWS PUZZLES COMPETITIONS

BULLIED FOR GOING GREEN

by editor in chief Nicky Cox MBE

MORE than half of school pupils say they can't take part in climate action because other classmates pick on them.

Now, they're asking for more support from schools to make it easier for them to take action for the planet.

Education charity Another Way spoke to 1,000 secondary school and sixth form pupils who were involved in environmental projects in school or college, and found that the way many were treated there made them fearful or worried.

Nearly six out of ten (59%) said they'd had bad experiences because they were involved in helping the environment. About one in four (26%) have been teased or called names, and more than one in ten (12%) said

they'd even been hurt with physical bullying just for trying to make a difference.

The report also found that what happens at school doesn't stay at school, with almost one in six (15%) school kids saying that they have experienced cyberbullying because they've posted climate content on social media.

More than two-thirds of students also said they were less likely to get involved in climate efforts because of the way activists can be shown in the media as "troublemakers".

The findings also show that climate change is affecting children's mental health in more ways. Nearly two-thirds (60%) of secondary school children said they have experienced 'eco anxiety', with more than half saying it had become worse in the last year. Three-

quarters (75%) said they'd feel less anxious about climate change if they felt like they could help more.

Amy Bray, the founder of Another Way, who became a climate activist at an early age, said: "The future of this planet depends on young people being able to speak out and make change.

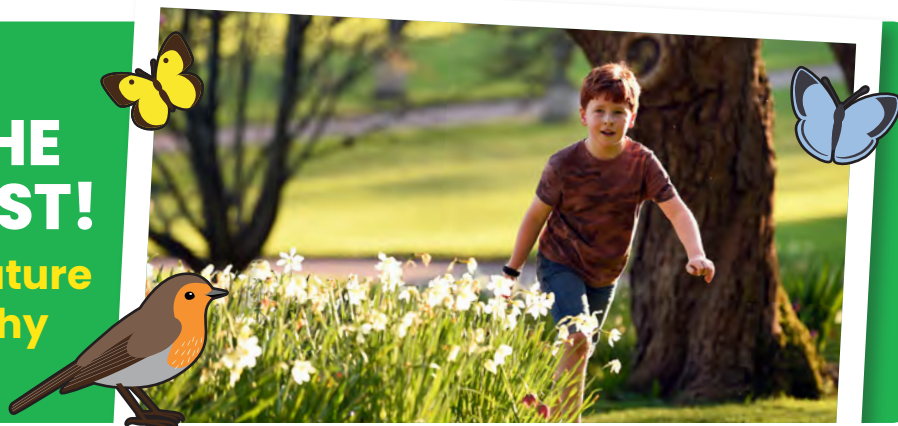
"As the climate crisis continues to loom large, young people are not only looking for solutions, they are demanding space to act, free from the fear of being judged or bullied."

If you're being bullied for your climate action, remember it's cool to care. Go to another-way.org.uk/its-cool-to-care for advice.

Turn to p5 and p9 now to read some news stories that highlight the need for climate action.

ENJOY EASTER
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NATIONAL TRUST!

PLUS, check out our Nature
Around Me photography
competition!



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First
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National
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MEET THE TEAM



Editor in Chief
Nicky Cox



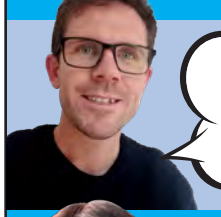
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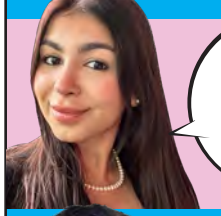
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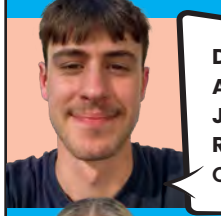
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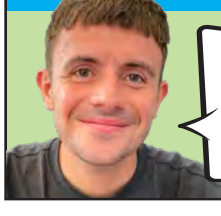
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HAVE YOU HEARD?

Snappy stories to get you talking!



MORE SCHOOL ARTS NEEDED, SAYS REPORT

A new report urges every primary school to become a "singing school" where arts and music are as important as reading and maths. The study, from two groups, The Centre for Young Lives and Child of the North, says all children, not just those from better-off families, should have the chance to be creative. They want £150 million in funding to train teachers in arts education to help students discover hidden talents in music, drama and art. The government says it is already spending £79 million on music education and £25 million on instruments to make arts available to all students.



ROYAL FASHION EXHIBIT OPENS

Dress Codes is a new exhibition at Kensington Palace that explores what royal clothes say about those who wear them, and what they want to communicate to us. The exhibit includes Queen Victoria's black mourning clothes and Princess Diana's sparkly red gown, as well as matching dresses worn by the young Princess – later Queen – Elizabeth and her sister Margaret. The rooms also feature new designs by teenage fashion creators who worked with the palace to reimagine royal style for today's world. Dress Codes runs until 30 November.

THEY SAID THAT!



"I have been watching this tournament since I was a young guy, watching all the champions play on this big court. It means the world to me." – Jack Draper

UK'S TENNIS STAR SHINES

Jack Draper has won his first major tennis tournament at Indian Wells, beating Holger Rune 6-2, 6-2 in just over an hour. The win means the 23-year-old is now ranked No 7 in the world, his highest placing ever.



FAKE NEWS LINKED TO POOR SLEEP

Not getting enough sleep could make people more likely to believe in conspiracy theories because they can't think clearly, claims a new study. Conspiracy theories include the idea that secret groups are behind big events, denying the moon landings and believing the Earth is flat. Researchers at the University of Nottingham studied more than 1,000 people and found the more tired they were, the more likely they couldn't spot the difference between real facts and made-up explanations.

TESCO'S FREE FOOD PLAN

Tesco will give away food that's about to expire at some of its smaller stores to help reduce waste. The supermarket plans to offer items with "yellow sticker" discounts to customers after 9:30pm, after offering them first to charities and staff. The trial, at a small number of Express stores across the UK, is part of Tesco's goal to cut food waste by 45%. As Britain's biggest supermarket chain with over 3,700 UK stores, this move could help many people while protecting the environment at the same time.



CRUNCH TIME FOR SALTY SNACKS

Most snacks in UK shops are too unhealthy, reveals new research from Action on Salt and Sugar. The study looked at 1,200 snacks and found that three-quarters of crisps, more than half of nuts and nine in ten popcorn packs scored 'less than healthy' under government guidelines. Products with a high level of salt and sugar will not be allowed to be advertised on TV or online when new restrictions come into force in October this year. Health experts want to force companies to make healthier products, saying that current voluntary guidelines aren't working.

HUMANS AFFECT FOX DIETS



A new study says that city foxes get more than a third (35%) of their food from humans, while countryside foxes eat mostly natural food. Scientists at Nottingham Trent University studied fox whiskers and found that urban foxes eat lots of leftover human food and pet food, and say this could be bad for their health. In comparison, countryside foxes only get 6% of their food from humans.



BIG WALK AND WHEEL RETURNS

A challenge encouraging students to ditch cars for eco-friendly travel to school has been launched across the UK. The Big Walk and Wheel event, which runs from 24 March to 4 April, aims to get more young people walking, cycling and scooting to school. Last year, over half a million students took part, making more than 2.3 million green journeys – that's more than 14 trips to the moon! The free challenge offers daily prizes and is open to all schools, including those supporting children with special needs. Register at bigwalkandwheel.org.uk.

TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE WITH CARTOON NETWORK

Cartoon Network is calling on young people aged 6 to 12 across the UK to share their creative ideas for tackling climate change in a new competition. The winning idea will be turned into a giant sculpture made from recycled materials by artist Faith Bebbington and displayed in Liverpool's Springfield Park. The campaign, which has already seen over 2.5 million challenges completed, aims to show that small actions can make a big difference in protecting our planet. You can submit your ideas until 31 March. Sign up at cartoonnetworkclimatechampions.com/en-gb.



NEW SCOUTS SPACE BADGE

Teenage Scouts can now earn a brand-new space badge, thanks to a partnership between the UK Space Agency and the Scouts. The badge, launched by British astronaut Tim Peake, lets 14 to 18-year-olds try activities like remote-controlling Mars rovers and growing plants without soil. Young people will be able to learn real space skills used by scientists and engineers in the UK's £19 billion space industry. The badge aims to spark interest in space careers and is part of a wider programme to inspire the next generation of space explorers.



Hi, guys! I'm Chris, one of your reporters at **First News**. This is week five of my training diary for the London Marathon on 27 April!

It's been a bumpy few weeks of training, but I saw a physio about my sore calf and I'm hopeful that now I'm slowly getting back on track.

I managed to pound the local streets and run a third of a marathon in the sunshine last weekend, which I was really pleased with. It paid off too, as it drew a couple of new donations to my UNICEF fund. I'm past halfway toward the £2,000 total I'm aiming to raise.

Another bit of excitement came with the news that this year's London Marathon is set to make history as the world's biggest, with over 56,000 runners. That would beat the current record of 55,646 runners, set last November in the New York Marathon.

I didn't imagine I'd be breaking any records while achieving this dream of running the London Marathon, that's for sure, but I guess all my fellow runners and I might each play a small part in breaking one, after all!

Why I'm running for...

unicef
for every child

UNICEF works in over 100 countries to help provide access to clean water. Like many, Mayada risked injury when climbing into her village's collapsed well to collect unsafe water, which had gradually dried up. Thanks to UNICEF's water system powered by solar energy, communities including Mayada's now have easy access to clean and safe water.



Donate at tinyurl.com/ChrisInTheMarathon

RED NOSE DAY 21 MARCH

This huge fundraising event, now in its 40th year, is organised to help tackle poverty in the UK and across the world.

WORLD WATER DAY 22 MARCH

The theme this year is Glacier Preservation. Did you know that glaciers are important for the planet's drinking water? Read more on p5 & 11.

**CALENDAR
DATES**



Go to the
First News app
for daily news posted
throughout the week.



STARMER'S SHAKE-UP

Scrap
NHS
England

Use the
latest
AI tech

Remove
obstacles
to building
homes



PRIME Minister Keir Starmer has announced a number of changes he's making to the way the country works.

In a speech in Yorkshire, he said he wanted to cut "red tape" – rules, obstacles and organisations that he claims are blocking or delaying his government from delivering his plans for the British people.

What's changing?

To start with, Mr Starmer announced that he's scrapping NHS England, the organisation that oversees the running of the NHS. He's not scrapping the NHS itself. Over the next two years, the role of NHS England will be brought slowly under the control of the government's Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) instead.

"That will put the NHS back at the heart of government where it belongs," said Mr Starmer.

The PM wants to improve the NHS and reduce waiting times for treatments. He thinks that NHS England and the DHSC do similar jobs so, by ditching NHS England, it will slash costs and free up money to spend on doctors and nurses. Neither of Labour's main rivals, the Conservatives

or the Liberal Democrats, were against the idea.

However, it could lead to the losses of 9,000 jobs, which Health Secretary Wes Streeting told Sky News he's "genuinely sorry" about.

Mr Starmer has said he'll scrap other organisations like NHS England, to use the latest tech and AI to help the government to work smarter and cheaper, and to ditch obstacles to make it easier to build 1.5 million new homes.

Criticism from the RSPB

Nature groups fear that, by removing barriers to building new homes, the PM is putting animal habitats at risk.

Beccy Speight, chief executive of the RSPB, said: "The RSPB, and millions of people across this country, care deeply about our natural world and the important sites for nature we have left. But does Sir Keir?"

Also this week, the government announced plans to cut its spending on health benefits, worrying many people who have disabilities and long-term health conditions.

TEAM COACH BANS TIKTOK

THE coach of a college football team in the USA has banned his players from dancing on TikTok.

Rich Rodriguez says that his West Virginia Mountaineers squad can still use the app. However, he wants them to focus on football and team spirit, rather than chasing individual glory by filming and posting videos.

"Twenty years from now, if they want to be sitting in their pyjamas in the basement eating Cheetos

and watching TikTok... knock yourself out," he said. "I hope our focus can be on winning football games.

"How about let's win the football game and not worry about winning the TikTok?"

Does TikTok distract you from your other hobbies?

Vote at first.news/polls

25%
75%
VOTE IN OUR POLL!

No dancing for these guys!



Low-cost food harming UK farms

THE pressure to cut costs and feed ourselves cheaply is bad for our health and our farmers, a new report says.

The Food, Farming and Countryside Commission has found that shopping at big supermarket chains has replaced going to small grocers, that the UK is importing a larger amount of cheap food from abroad, and that we're eating more ultra-processed food.

This has led to a drop in the price of produce from UK farms, which means farmers make less money.

The report says: "This version of

cheapness is expensive. The real price is being paid in people's health, in farming communities... and in Britain's ability to feed itself in the long run."

Farming used to be a well-paid job. In 1970, a farmer's income was almost double the UK's average wage – but now, it's slightly less than the average.

On top of this, big businesses dominate the UK's food and farming industries, and this also causes problems. Just three companies supply most of the nation's fertiliser and, in 2023, eight out of ten tractors were sold by just three manufacturers. This lack of choice means that farmers struggle to shop around to find better prices.

£32,272
A farmer's average income

EDITOR'S COMMENT



Nicky Cox MBE

IT'S really sad that some kids who care about our planet are being bullied for speaking up (front page).

These kids are trying to protect nature, animals and our future but, instead of being supported, they are being made fun of or treated unfairly. That's not right.

Standing up for the Earth takes courage, and we should celebrate kids who do it, not bring them down. They are the ones helping to fight climate change, protect wildlife and make sure we have clean air and water. Imagine how much better the world would be if more people joined them instead of bullied them!



Mr Napa (left) receives care

Lost fisherman

A MAN from Peru has been rescued after surviving for 95 days (over 13 weeks) adrift at sea in a small fishing boat, with no radio. Maximo Napa was blown off course and onto high seas by bad weather in December, and ate cockroaches, birds and a turtle to stay alive. He was spotted by a boat from Ecuador off the coast of northern Peru.



There were 127,350 cases in Europe in 2024

Measles

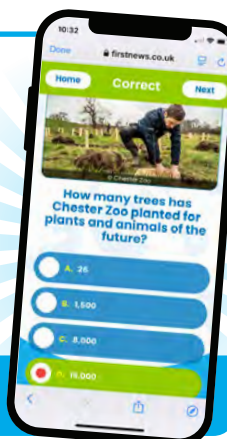
THE World Health Organization says that measles cases in Europe doubled last year, and are at their highest across the continent in 25 years. Measles is a disease that's spread by coughs and sneezes. The MMR vaccine is really good at stopping the virus spreading, but fewer people are taking it.



CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEEKLY QUIZ!

Test yourself on this week's news with our new quiz, included with every subscription. Play with your family, friends or by yourself. Read this week's issue to get all the answers right!

Ask a grown-up/bill-payer for your **WEB ID** to use the app.





HARRY POLLER!

He can cast a spell... but how would he cast his vote?

HE's finished school, defeated the Dark Lord and rescued the Wizarding World, but how would Harry Potter vote in our Muggle elections?

Would he put his 'X' next to Labour, the Tories or another party? Would he be a Donald Trump lover or hater? Put these sorts of questions to grown-ups, and their answers might be a little biased...

In a study by the University of Southampton, 3,200 adults in the UK and the US were shown heroes and villains from the likes of Marvel, Disney, Harry Potter and Star Wars films, and asked which way each would vote.

It found that adults tend to believe that movie 'good guys' would support the same party that they do – while movie villains would vote for the party they don't like!

Bias casts a spell

It may sound like a bit of fun, but lead researcher Dr Stuart Turnbull-Dugarte thinks that his findings are a sign of growing division between voters. He also worries that biased ideas like these make us more likely to fall for misinformation about politicians.

He said: "To overcome increasing political division, we need to recognise... that reality is always more complex than our biases would have us believe."



What about Spidey?

...or Disney baddie Cruella de Vil?!

Which way to the polling booth?



The influencer vs the wombat

AN American social media influencer angered Australians last week after a video showed her carrying a baby wombat away from its mother.

In her post, Sam Jones is seen scooping up the animal and saying: "I caught a baby wombat!" She carried it across a road while it hisses at her and struggles, with its mother waddling after it. A man filming the video can be heard laughing.

Jones wrote on her post that holding a wombat was her "dream", and that it was "carefully held for one minute" before being returned to its mum.

THEY SAID THAT!

"Take a baby crocodile from its mother and see how you go there..." – Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese

However, she deleted the Instagram post after furious comments from other users.

Animal groups called the video "appalling" and said that Jones put the wombat at risk of harm "for social media likes".

Thousands of Australians signed a campaign to have her expelled from the country. Instead, she left on her own, and said she was "truly sorry".

Sea levels rise faster than expected

NASA tracks the height of the ocean



GLOBAL sea levels rose higher than expected last year, NASA has revealed.

The water's surface climbed at a rate of 0.59cm (0.23 inches) per year, rather than the expected rate of 0.43cm (0.17 inches) per year.

NASA began tracking the height of the ocean in 1993. "Every year is a little bit different," said Josh Willis, a sea level researcher at the space agency. "What's clear is that the ocean

continues to rise, and the rate of rise is getting faster and faster."

In recent years, two-thirds of the water that is causing the seas to rise has come from melting ice and glaciers. However, in 2024 – the hottest year on record – two-thirds came as a result of warmer seas, because ocean water expands as it warms.

In total, the ocean has risen by 10cm (4 inches) since 1993.

Today (21 March) is the very first **World Day for Glaciers**. Its aim is to highlight the growing threat of melting glaciers (large masses of ice that are so heavy, they slide downhill, shaping the landscape). There are more than 275,000 glaciers worldwide, but global warming is causing them to melt at a rapid rate. They're expected to disappear completely from many regions by the end of the century. This threatens communities, increases flood risks and causes sea levels to rise.

Sudan is world's biggest crisis, says UNICEF

THE head of UNICEF says that fighting in Sudan has led to the world's most devastating humanitarian crisis.

For two years, its army has been at war against a powerful military group called the Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

The conflict has destroyed important farmland, wrecked towns and resulted in thousands of deaths and over 12 million people fleeing their homes. The country is gripped by famine (extreme hunger).

In total, more than 30 million people

have been affected – more than half of them children. UNICEF has had reports of serious breaches of children's rights. Some have been forced into armed groups to join the fighting.

UNICEF boss Catherine Russell said: "Children in Sudan are enduring unimaginable suffering and horrific violence. Their stories are heartbreaking – and demand immediate action."

However, charities are struggling to deliver much-needed help.



Girls in Sudan



BOMB experts were called out to a beach in Dorset... to investigate a saucepan!

West Bay Coastguard Rescue Team and police rushed to the scene after the discovery of a "heavily weathered metal object".

A 100-metre cordon was put up for safety, but after the team took photos of the object, measured it and dug it up, it became clear that it was nothing to worry about.

However, the coastguard thanked the person who reported the saucepan, and said it's always best to call 999 if in any doubt.

Ukraine peace talks

Head to the **First News** app for updates on the ongoing talks for a ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine, as they happen.





New Delhi, India



PUPILS celebrate Holi, also known as the Festival of Colours. This celebration is all about welcoming love and the arrival of spring. It's one of India's biggest festivals, with millions returning to their home towns to celebrate with loved ones, and cover them in paint!

London, UK



FULHAM's Rodrigo Muniz leaps over goalscorer Ryan Sessegnon after the Cottagers' second goal in their 2-0 win over Spurs. Sessegnon's celebration was a bit more low-key against his former club!

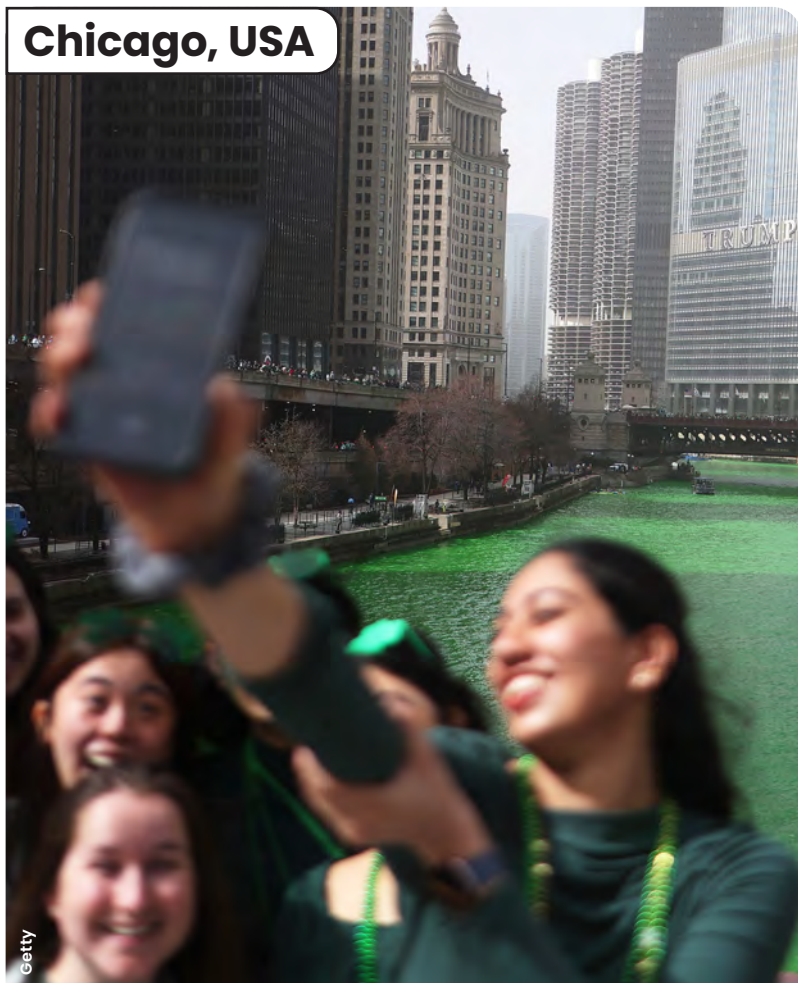
Rongjiang, China



FROM real footballers (left) to robot ones! These humanoid figures wowed crowds when they played in a match at the 2025 Village Super League.



Chicago, USA



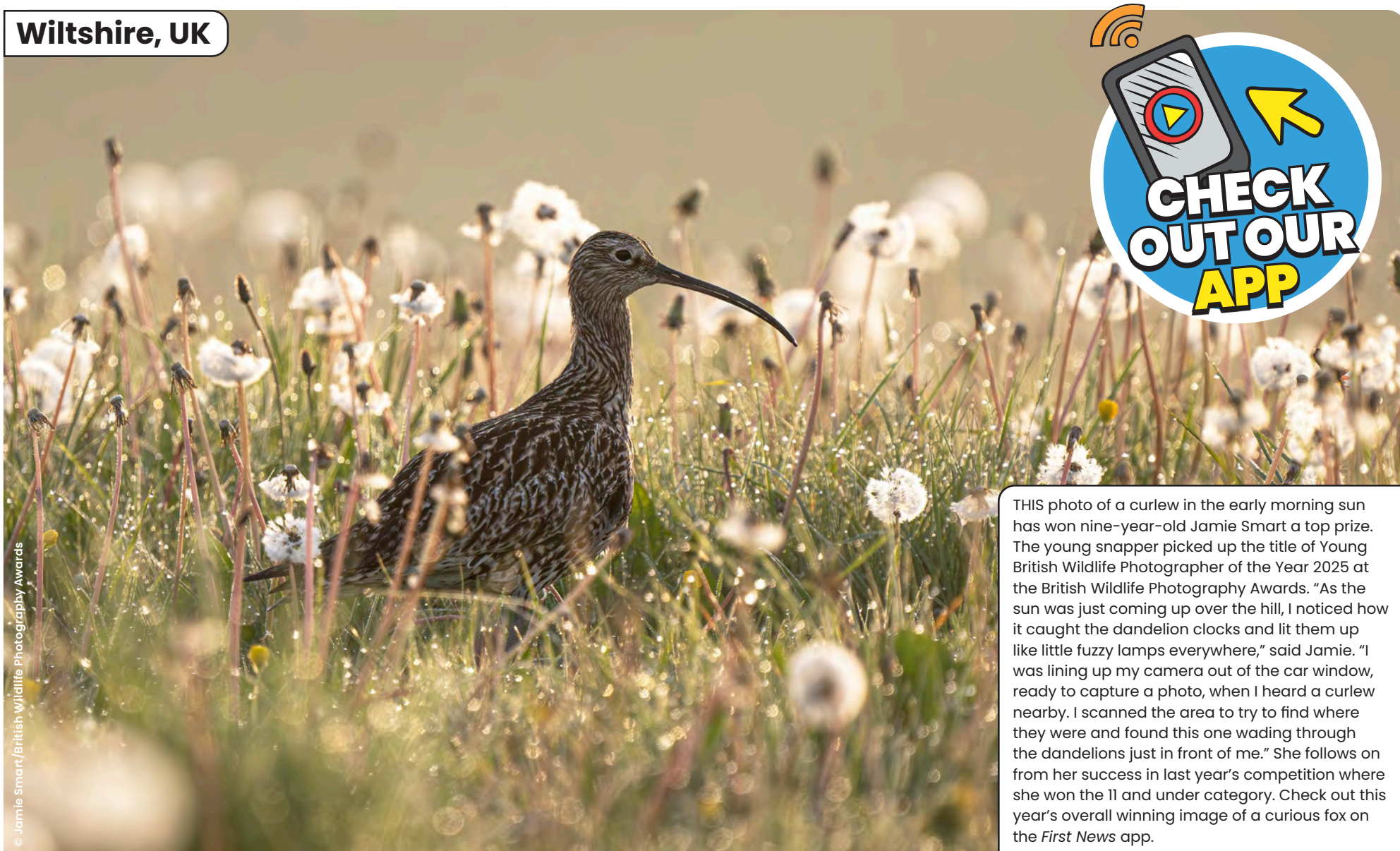
THE Chicago River once again goes green for St Patrick's Day (17 March). Thousands of people packed bridges to celebrate Irish culture and see the annual spectacle, which is created using powder that is safe for wildlife. St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland and is credited with having taken Christianity there in the fifth century.

London, UK



KING Charles III hosts a WaterAid UK reception at Buckingham Palace to highlight water and climate issues. Around the world, 703 million people – almost one in ten – don't have clean water close to home. Extreme floods and droughts are making this worse, so the King brought together young leaders and decision-makers to drive positive change. See page 11 for our special report about World Water Day.

Wiltshire, UK



THIS photo of a curlew in the early morning sun has won nine-year-old Jamie Smart a top prize. The young snapper picked up the title of Young British Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2025 at the British Wildlife Photography Awards. "As the sun was just coming up over the hill, I noticed how it caught the dandelion clocks and lit them up like little fuzzy lamps everywhere," said Jamie. "I was lining up my camera out of the car window, ready to capture a photo, when I heard a curlew nearby. I scanned the area to try to find where they were and found this one wading through the dandelions just in front of me." She follows on from her success in last year's competition where she won the 11 and under category. Check out this year's overall winning image of a curious fox on the *First News* app.

**MANCHESTER****Air taxi on the horizon**

An airline has announced a Harry Potter-like flying vehicle to transport passengers between cities and airports. Virgin Atlantic has partnered with Joby Aviation to bring the air taxi to the UK. The taxi can carry a pilot and up to four passengers at speeds of up to 200mph. One journey for those willing to pay a high price could be flying from Manchester Airport to Leeds in 15 minutes – a journey that would normally take an hour in a car. No climate-warming emissions would be released from the air taxi, either. It's not yet known when we could see them in the sky.



Joby Aviation

Air taxi test flights have already taken place in other countries

CROMARTY**Ring mystery**

A lost ring discovered on a beach in South Africa is set to go on display this month. The ring is engraved with the name, birth date and death date of Hugh Miller (inset), who was an important geologist, writer and voice for Scottish people in the 19th century. There is a lot of mystery around how the ring ended up on Gordon's Bay in Cape Town, South Africa. The ring is believed to have belonged to Miller's daughter Harriet, who travelled to Australia – possibly stopping off in Cape Town – after Miller's death in 1856. It has been donated to Hugh Miller's Birthplace Cottage & Museum in Cromarty.



Getty



Alison White Photography

The gold ring was found by a metal detectorist in 2022

MERTHYR TYDFIL**UK's longest ski slope**

The UK could soon get its longest ski slope after plans for a new Welsh project were approved. The current longest slope in the UK is Chill Factor® in Manchester, which is 180m long. However, the new project at Merthyr Tydfil would see a slope up to 424m in length. The Rhydyar West sports centre would be a training destination for the GB Olympic and Paralympic ski teams, says the developer. The £300m project could also feature a tropical waterpark and outdoor activity area. Councillor Declan Sammon said it was a "once in a lifetime opportunity".



Rhydyar West

What the ski slope could look like



The garden was first created in 1856

National Trust, Claire Humphreys

BIDDULPH**Super stumpery**

What is this unusual-looking wall of spikes? It's the UK's oldest stumpery! A stumpery is a type of garden feature where upturned tree stumps make an atmospheric setting for plants. Biddulph Grange Garden may now be the country's largest as well as the oldest, after work by the National Trust. Nearly 40 huge trunks from trees that fell in a storm have been added to the garden. Head Gardener Paul Walton (pictured) said: "Every stump is different and it is like a complex puzzle getting the stumps to fit together, but the rewards are amazing!"

SALISBURY**Secret station tunnel**

Spooky tunnels have been discovered underneath Salisbury station. Engineers from Network Rail and South Western Railway (SWR) were removing an old phone box when they found the dark world below. Once inside, a labyrinth of tunnels and rooms were revealed, which decades ago would have stored items such as barrels of beer and cider. Now, old signal equipment and maps are down there, giving glimpses into the past. Steve Kelly, Network Rail asset engineer, said: "This was one of the most interesting discoveries during my career on the railway."



Network Rail

What secrets lie beneath?

LONDON**Plaques for pioneers**

Two blue plaques have been unveiled that celebrate the achievements of women who left their mark on British history. The first of the two English Heritage plaques is for two trailblazing designers. Cousins Rhoda Garrett (1841–1882) and Agnes Garrett (1845–1935) challenged gender stereotypes while helping people to change the ways they designed their homes. The second plaque commemorates Una Marson (1905–1965), who was the first black woman producer at the BBC. The Jamaican poet and broadcaster broke down barriers and helped other black women to achieve their dreams. Both plaques have been put up in London.



English Heritage

Marson's plaque marks The Mansions in West Hampstead, where she lived from at least 1939 to 1943



SEND YOUR CREATION TO THE MOON

NASA has launched a worldwide contest to design the zero gravity indicator (ZGI) that will be used on the Artemis II mission when it flies around the moon and back next year.

A ZGI is used so that the crew of a spaceship can see when they've reached a point where they start to experience weightlessness.

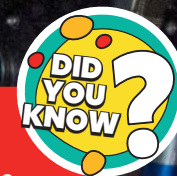
They're quite the opposite of complicated scientific equipment – in fact, they're usually soft toys, as these are light and don't have hard corners, so they can't damage anything when they start floating around inside the cabin.

NASA is looking for an idea that means something to the whole world, and the main requirement is that it has to be under six inches (15.24cm) in any dimension.

You'll need an adult to sign up for an account on the Freelancer website, where you can also find all the requirements and a classroom brief. See tinyurl.com/NASAZGIcontest. Good luck!



CHECK out the daily news section of the *First News* app to see NASA astronauts Christina Koch and Reid Wiseman talking about ZGIs and the competition.



ON the Artemis I mission, a Snoopy plush was used as the ZGI. Snoopy has been part of NASA ever since 1968, when he was first used as a mascot for the organisation's work safety programme.

Reid Wiseman on the International Space Station with the giraffe that he used as a ZGI

A “wake-up call” for Earth

THE latest *State of the Climate* report has shown that even though our planet is giving us more “distress signals”, it's not too late to reach our climate targets.

The annual report from the United Nations' weather agency, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), had lots of alarming statistics. In 2024, the ocean was the hottest it's been in 65 years of records, and is also getting more acidic, which is already affecting fish, shellfish, corals and other creatures.

Sea ice cover in the Arctic is again a huge worry – the 18 lowest levels of ice on record have all come in the last 18 years. The WMO also confirmed results from other organisations that said 2024 was the first calendar year where the temperature was more than 1.5°C above the pre-industrial average (the time before humans started burning fossil fuels in huge amounts).

“While a single year above 1.5°C of warming does not indicate that the long-term temperature goals of the Paris Agreement are out of reach, it is a wake-up call that we are increasing the risks to our lives, economies and to the planet,” said WMO Secretary-General Celeste Saulo.

IN 2024, we saw record levels of the main three greenhouse gases that warm our planet: carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide.



This kangaroo went into space on board Space Shuttle Endeavour



Here's a three-toed sloth along with Suhail, the mascot for the UAE's space programme



This little kitty went to space in 2021

This report is from the Science Museum Group

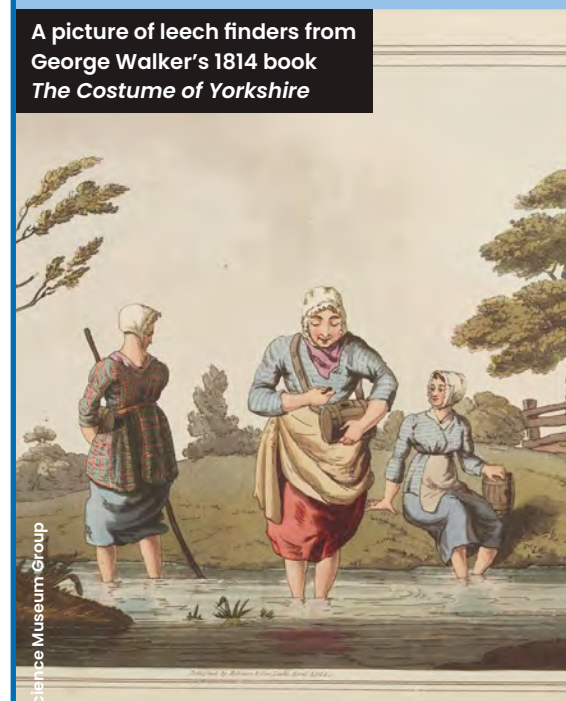
SCIENCE
MUSEUM
GROUP

IN the 1700s and 1800s, doctors used leeches in bloodletting, a historic therapy based on the idea that removing blood helped to prevent or cure diseases.

It was the job of the leech collectors, usually lower-class women and elderly people, to collect these creatures for medical use. They would use their own legs to attract the bloodsuckers, then once a leech latched on, they would peel them off and pop them in a water bucket to be sold to doctors.

The demand for medical leeches in Europe exploded in the early 1800s, with St Thomas' Hospital in London using up to 50,000 leeches a year. In the 20th century, leeches were thought to have become extinct due to over-farming, but were rediscovered in Britain in 1970.

A picture of leech finders from George Walker's 1814 book *The Costume of Yorkshire*





LANDMARKS GO DARK FOR EARTH HOUR

AT 8:30pm on 22 March, famous buildings across the world will switch off their lights for 60 minutes to show support for WWF's Earth Hour.

Places like Buckingham Palace and the London Eye in Britain, Sydney Harbour in Australia and the Acropolis of Athens in Greece will go dark as part of the event.

This annual global switch-off, which started in 2007, encourages people to think about saving energy and helping the environment.

WWF says this special hour helps people connect with nature and think about how to preserve our planet. They suggest activities like listening to nature sounds or joining community events during the time the lights are out.

People at home can join in too by turning off their lights and spending time in nature.

Andrea Bonetti & Antonis Koutsoukos/WWF-Greece



The Acropolis of Athens in Greece will have its lights turned off

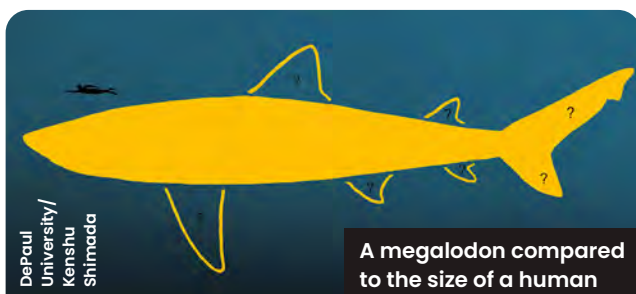
Giant shark even bigger!

SCIENTISTS have discovered that a prehistoric shark called megalodon was much larger than previously thought, measuring up to 24 metres (80ft) long – that's twice the length of an average bus!

New research from DePaul University in Chicago, USA, also suggests this ancient sea creature wasn't chunky like today's great white sharks, but instead had a slimmer body shape similar to modern lemon sharks.

Scientists worked this out by studying fossilised bones and comparing them with 145 different types of living and 20 types of extinct sharks.

The research was published in the journal *Palaeontologia Electronica*.



A megalodon compared to the size of a human

Record seal numbers in Cumbria



© Cumbria Wildlife Trust

A WILDLIFE reserve in Cumbria has recorded its highest-ever number of grey seals, with 563 counted this season!

The South Walney Nature Reserve, near Barrow, has seen its seal population grow from just a few in the 1980s to today's record-breaking numbers.

Experts from the Cumbria Wildlife Trust used special drones and binoculars to count the seals carefully.

They say visitors can watch these amazing animals from a safe distance at the reserve's Groyne Hide, or through online cameras.

The Trust asks everyone to stay at least 100 metres (330ft) away from the seals to ensure everyone's safety.



ANEESHWAR Kunchala is a ten-year-old wildlife campaigner and officially the world's youngest newspaper columnist! He shot to fame as a finalist on *Britain's Got Talent*. Now, he's presenting the documentary *Save Our Wildlife* from Sky Kids and Sky Zero. You can watch it at first.news/climatecrisis.

Aneeshwar's Animal of the Week is the...

WAXWING



iStock

HABITAT:

● In urban and suburban areas, as well as farmland in the north of the UK and east coast.

FUN FACTS:

- A group of waxwings is called a museum.
- They don't breed in the UK, but visit from Scandinavia in winter, when their food runs low.

SPECIAL SUPERPOWER:

● Both the cedar and Bohemian waxwing have an arrowhead-shaped tongue to scoop up berries and pull them down the throat.

CONSERVATION STATUS:

● The Bohemian waxwing is the only one of the three species to visit the UK. It is of least concern, says the International Union for Conservation of Nature.



Aneeshwar's waxwing art

We're asking you to send in photos of your own drawings or paintings of wildlife to add to an online gallery. Ask a parent, guardian or teacher to send in your photos by emailing them to yournews@firstnews.co.uk. You can view the gallery by asking a responsible adult to scan this QR code.





WHY THE WORLD NEEDS CLEAN WATER

THIS World Water Day (22 March), we want to highlight the power of water and how it affects all aspects of life, from education to health, nutrition and much more. We spoke to the charities World Vision and WaterAid to find out why clean water really is so important.

**WORLD WATER DAY
22 MARCH**

THE FACTS

- **703 million people** lack access to clean water. That's **one in ten people** on the planet.
- Women and girls spend an estimated **200 million hours** carrying water every day, walking 6km (about 3.7 miles) every day to haul 18 litres (which weighs 18kg) of water.
- **More than 1,000 children under the age of five** die every day from diseases related to lack of safe water, sanitation and hygiene.
- **1.69 billion people** live without access to good enough sanitation (things like clean toilets and washing facilities).

Why do we need clean water?

- It is a basic human right. No-one should spend lots of their life walking for water, or drinking water that makes them sick.
- It is essential for a person's health.
- It is vital for a better future. When a child has to walk a long distance to get water every day, it often means that they can't attend school.
- Having a clean water source near home helps to keep children safe from danger. When children have to walk long distances to get clean water, they face threats from wild animals, people who want to harm them, hot sun and soaking rain, harsh ground and physical exhaustion.

How does water affect our planet?

Our planet is suffering from a water crisis too. A report by WaterAid called *Water and Climate: Rising Risks for Urban Populations* studied 100 of the most populated cities in the world and found:

- **Almost one in five (17%)** cities are experiencing 'climate whiplash', which means they are getting more extreme droughts and floods.
- **One in five of the cities (20%)** are experiencing dramatic shifts to extreme wet or extreme dry conditions, referred to as 'climate hazard flips'.
- Cities across Africa and Asia are emerging as the most at-risk from extreme climate shifts. This is affecting those communities' access to clean water.
- **Nine in ten (90%) climate disasters** – be it drought in cities like Madrid (Spain) and Cape Town (South Africa), to large-scale flooding across cities in Bangladesh and Pakistan – are driven by too much or too little water.

Mohammad Younis sits in what was once a room in his home. It was destroyed during the torrential rains in Pakistan in 2022



WaterAid / Khadija Jorjil

Mervis's story

Mervis is an eight-year-old girl from Malawi. In August 2024, she and her 13-year-old sister Donata went to the water point in their village – an hour-long trip – throwing their buckets down the steep slopes, when Mervis slipped and hurt her leg. She was rescued by some teenage boys, but is now scared to go to the well on her own.

The sisters' mother Magdalena collects water eight times a day if the girls don't help her, but if the girls do help, they only have to make four trips.

The family needs about 240 litres of water each day, which is around 12 buckets of 20 litres each. This is used for cooking, bathing, washing dishes, cleaning their clothes, watering their garden and drinking. The girls go with Magdalena first thing in the morning from 5am to 7am on school days, which means they sometimes get to school late, and can even be sent home. The dirty water also carries a risk of health issues like diarrhoea and trachoma, a disease of the eyes caused by bacteria from dirty water. Thankfully, child sponsorship support from World Vision brings clean water to people like Mervis and communities in need.

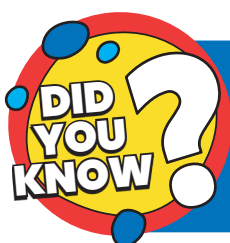


© 2024, Laura Reinhardt / World Vision

Mervis

What can be done to help?

The charities are calling on the UK government to keep its promises to fund climate efforts across the world and tackle the water crisis. Tim Wainwright, WaterAid UK's Chief Executive, added: "We need to turn commitments into action – for leaders to build and invest in systems worldwide that can withstand extreme weather and keep clean water flowing globally."



WATERAID warns that weather-related disasters such as flooding and drought have increased by a factor of five in the last 50 years.



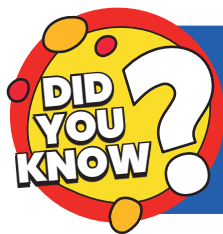
BSL IN SCHOOL

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS?

BACK in 2023 the previous government announced that pupils in schools in England would be able to study British Sign Language (BSL) as a GCSE. It was supposed to be brought in this year, but it's been delayed. Many in the deaf community were really disappointed with the news. Guest FYI presenter Sam, who is deaf himself, finds out more.

What is British Sign Language?

BSL is a way of communicating using gestures, facial expressions and body language.



IT'S estimated that there are around 151,000 British Sign Language users in the UK. Just over half of them are considered deaf.

Campaigning for change

There are about 25,000 people in the UK who use BSL as their main language, and yet many people aren't familiar with what it means or how to use it. People have been campaigning for a long time to get BSL taught in schools, including Daniel (pictured below) who wants it to be offered as a GCSE option.



Daniel has been campaigning for a BSL GCSE for seven years

What did the previous government say it would do?

Schools in England were supposed to offer BSL as a GCSE in September, but it's been delayed. In Wales, the plan has been suspended. Daniel told us: "It's really disappointing. It means that more children are going to miss out."

Has the new government given any update?

A Department for Education spokesperson said: "We are continuing to work closely with Ofqual (the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) to make sure the qualification is the best it can be for students." Meanwhile, an Ofqual spokesperson said: "The GCSE in British Sign Language is a completely new qualification. It is different from other language GCSEs and so working out how to assess students' achievements properly will take time." A firm date to introduce the GCSE has not yet been set.

Why is having a BSL GCSE important?

For those who use BSL, it could change their entire school experience and make them feel much more included

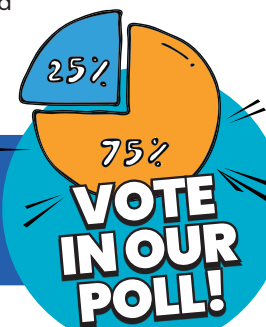


Pupils at Elm Tree Primary School learning BSL

in everyday activities. Daniel explains: "I was the only one who signed [used BSL] in school. If we'd had the GCSE back then, my life would be really different. I'd have had more friends. I'd have had a lot less problems communicating with other children."

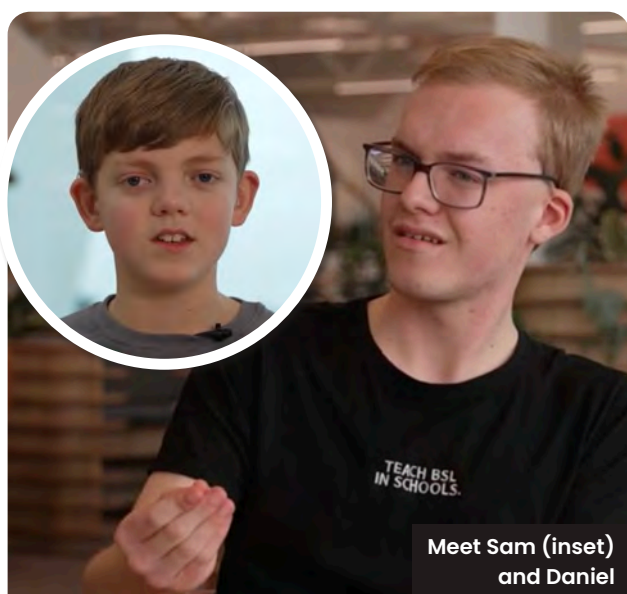
Are some schools already teaching BSL?

Yes! One of those is Elm Tree Primary School in Suffolk. The school decided to get rid of French and Spanish lessons in favour of teaching BSL instead. A pupil from the school said: "I think more schools should be teaching BSL even if you're not deaf, because I have a family member who is deaf and I like how I can communicate with them."



Do you think it would be more useful to learn BSL than foreign languages?

Vote at first.news/polls



Meet Sam (inset) and Daniel



FEATURE ON THE SHOW!

Want to be in an episode of FYI? Just ask your teacher to set up a **First News FYI News Club** at your school by heading to first.news/FYInewsclub to find out more.



FYI is a weekly news show from Sky Kids that helps you stay up to date with what's going on in the world. You can watch loads of cool videos from them by heading to first.news/fyi or on the *First News* app.

**IRELAND**

The vandalism happened while Trump welcomed the taoiseach (prime minister) of Ireland, Micheál Martin, at the White House (right)

**Trump's golf course vandalised**

Police are investigating "criminal damage" after a golf course owned by Donald Trump was vandalised. It's believed that sections of the course at Trump International Golf Links Ireland, in County Clare, were spray-painted with messages criticising the US president, and supporting the Palestinian people in Gaza. Last month, Mr Trump revealed his future vision for Gaza, which would involve forcing Palestinians to leave, and transforming the territory into a huge luxury resort. Earlier this month, another of Mr Trump's golf courses in Scotland was dug up, with the words "Gaza is not for sale" spray-painted on one of the greens.

**ITALY****Residents camp outdoors after earthquake**

Residents in Naples spent the night sleeping in the streets and in their cars after a 4.4 magnitude earthquake shook the city in the early hours of Thursday 13 March. The tremors were felt in several areas in the region. It caused rubble to tumble from some buildings and damaged the bell tower of a local church, and some schools stayed shut the next day to make sure they were safe. Naples sits on a volcanic crater called the Campi Flegrei, and small tremors happen quite regularly.



Rubble smashed this car

**YEMEN**

A boy fills tanks with water at a camp for people who have fled their homes

Ten years of war in Yemen

Civil war (fighting between two groups from the same country) has been raging in Yemen for over ten years, and it's created a humanitarian crisis across the country. Oxfam tells *First News* that bombings have happened without care for innocent people – 19,000 people have died, five million have fled home, and it's had an impact on children's mental health. The charity says: "Everyone in Yemen desperately needs an end to the conflict and permanent peace."

More stats:

- **Over 17 million** people don't have enough food to eat.
- **Over three million** children aren't able to attend school.
- **Over half (55%)** of the population – 19.5 million people – need humanitarian help and protection from harm.

**USA****Tornadoes rip through country**

A series of tornadoes have left a trail of destruction across midwest and southern parts of the US. The extreme weather affected a stretch of the country that's home to over 100 million people, triggering hundreds of wildfires, flood warnings, dust storms and blackouts across dozens of states. When *First News* went to press, at least 42 people were known to have died. In Missouri, the worst-affected state, the force of the winds lifted vehicles and damaged hundreds of homes, schools and businesses. Governor Mike Kehoe said: "The scale of devastation across our state is staggering."



Flattened homes in Missouri

**CHINA****Teenagers wee in restaurant soup**

A popular chain of hotpot restaurants has given refunds to more than 4,000 customers after a video was posted online of two teenagers taking a wee in the soup. After investigating, the company, Haidilao, discovered it happened at one of its restaurants in downtown Shanghai. It reported the incident to police, who tracked down two 17-year-olds and held them in detention. Haidilao says its staff failed to follow training procedures to handle the incident, and said: "We fully understand that the distress caused to our customers cannot be fully [made up for] by any means."



Urine deep trouble if you pull a stunt like this...

**AUSTRALIA****Dino footprints found at a school**

The imprint of 66 footprints from dozens of three-toed dinosaurs have been found in a boulder at a high school! Dr Anthony Romilio, from the University of Queensland, identified the footprints. He explained that they belonged to small herbivores (plant-eaters) that were 15-50cm long and had long legs, chunky bodies and beaks. "The footprints are from 47 individual dinosaurs which passed across a patch of wet, white clay, possibly walking along or crossing a waterway," he said. The two-tonne boulder was gifted to Biloela State High School 20 years ago.

IN PARTNERSHIP

**First
News**

NEWS KIDS CAN TRUST

National
Trust

ENJOY EASTER TRAILS IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS!

THIS Easter bank holiday weekend, there are more than 190 National Trust Easter trails to choose from across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Each National Trust Easter trail features activities inspired by nature, beauty and history. From identifying spring flowers and wildlife to uncovering intriguing histories and local legends, every Easter trail is jam-packed with outdoor activities and experiences.

Every trail ends with a chocolate egg, or a vegan and Free From chocolate egg, made here in the UK using cocoa from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms.

National Trust Easter egg trails cost £3.50 per child, plus normal National Trust admission/free admission for National Trust members/guests of National Trust holidays.

To find your nearest trail, visit nationaltrust.org.uk/easter. Here are some of the amazing events on offer!

Osterley Park and House, West London 5-21 April

A friendly bunch of animals have escaped from the Tapestry Room at Osterley House and are now running about in the beautiful gardens. Make your way along the trail, find art and nature-inspired activities and help us return the animals to their tapestries.



Kingston Lacy, Dorset 3-21 April

Be a whisk-taker and complete the rope maze, become an eggs-pert baker in the nature kitchen and complete an egg-streme egg and spoon race!

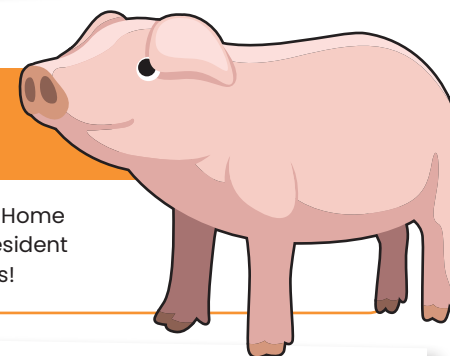
EASTER FA AT THE NATI



Wimpole Estate, Cambridgeshire 1-25 April

Enjoy lots of fun Easter activities, including bunny balancing, carrot throwing and egg spotting. Then

continue your adventure at Home Farm and say hello to the resident pigs, sheep and Shire horses!

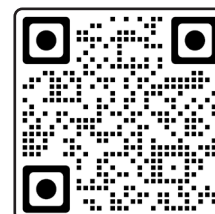


Castle Ward, County Down 15-27 April

This Easter trail is inspired by the incredible animals that call Castle Ward home, including majestic deer, elusive badgers, playful pine martens and lively red squirrels. Build a cosy den for the badger, gather tasty nuts for the squirrel, jump like a fox, solve the raven's riddle and immerse yourself in the wonders of the forest and underwater-themed barn.



Ask an adult to scan this QR code to check out loads of great Easter trails at National Trust properties across the UK.



Visit nationaltrust.org.uk/easter

FAMILY FUN ONAL TRUST

Nostell, West Yorkshire 5–21 April

Head off on this Easter trail and tackle the egg and spoon race, Easter egg toss, hula hoop challenge and matching egg pairs game. Then shake out the picnic blanket and relax among the daisies and buttercups, before jumping, swinging and sliding your way to the adventure play area.

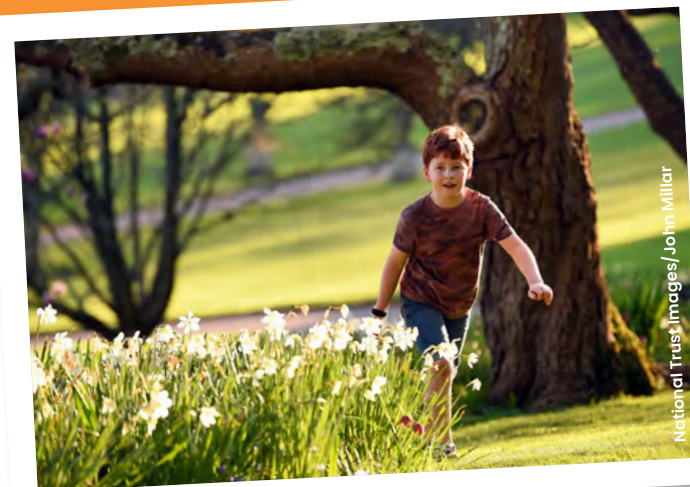


Bodnant Garden, Conwy 5–27 April

Explore the garden at Bodnant and find out more about all kinds of eggs, from the tiny insect eggs that are hidden below rocks to the biggest bird egg you can find in a garden! With ducks and geese nesting in the Far End and frog and toad spawn in the lily ponds, there's plenty of wildlife to spot too.

Dunham Massey, Greater Manchester 3–27 April

Explore the fascinating world of pollinators. From bees to butterflies, and wasps to beetles, join the fun discovering the busy lives of these minibeasts.



WIN! A TWO-NIGHT STAY IN NORFOLK AND A PRIVATE TRIP TO SEE THE SEALS!

OUR Nature Around Me competition with *First News* is back for a second year! We had so many fantastic entries last year, we can't wait to see what you've got up your sleeves this time around!

● The task

While enjoying your Easter holidays, we want you to take a photo of what nature means to you. It could be a beautiful tree in your local park, a petal floating in a puddle or a spider hiding in a bug house. Your photo can be black and white or colour, landscape or portrait and can be taken on a phone, camera or tablet. Please make sure your entry contains no identifiable faces and is taken in the UK, featuring UK wildlife and nature.

● The prize

The lucky winner and their family will get a two-night stay in a National Trust holiday cottage worth over £350! You'll get to spend a summer's weekend at 4 Cart Lodge Barn in Norfolk, a wonderful cottage by the sea, and explore Sheringham Park. Plus, we're giving you a trip on a private chartered boat to Blakeney Point with a National Trust ranger to see the amazing seals and their pups! You'll also get a *First News* subscription for yourself and your

school, and a Wi-Fi bird box.

Two runners-up will win a *First News* subscription for themselves and their school, and a Wi-Fi bird box.



Check out last year's winning entries, and our top photography tips, at the link below!

The judging process

Entries will be judged on composition, focus and storytelling.

The prizes will be judged in three categories:

- 7 to 9-year-olds
- 10 to 11-year-olds
- 12 to 15-year-olds

How do I enter?

Ask an adult or teacher to upload your entry at www.firstnews.co.uk/national-trust. The closing date is 4 May 2025.

Please note: This competition is only open to those aged 15 and under and residents of the UK & Republic of Ireland, except employees of *First News*, First Group Enterprises Ltd, the National Trust and any associated companies and their families. The prize must be taken on 5 July 2025. Travel is not included. No cash alternative for any prizes will be offered. For full terms and conditions, visit www.firstnews.co.uk/national-trust.

ENTER NOW at www.firstnews.co.uk/national-trust



GEORGE WEBSTER



TO mark World Down Syndrome Day on 21 March, we spoke to TV presenter George Webster about his new book and why representation and diversity in literature is so important.

man at my friend's wedding. It was such a brilliant night, I just loved it.

● **Hi George! *George and the Mini Dragon* is your first book for older readers. Can you tell us what it's all about?**

Yes! It's all about George's birthday. He would love a pet but his parents won't let him have one. So when it gets to the party and he blows out the candles, he wishes for a pet dragon. He goes outside and plays with his friends and he finds a mini dragon! It's super exciting and features me (at age seven!), my friends, Makaton [which uses signs and symbols to support spoken language], magic and mischief!

● **How was school for you growing up?**

I absolutely loved school. I was really involved and really included in classes and in school clubs. I did a lot of performances. I loved everything, but I loved drama as I love acting, and I loved food tech as I love my food. I also really liked history, I found that really interesting.

● **Did your mum and dad try all your creations from food tech?**

Yes, every week! My food tech project was finger food. There were pastries and all sorts.

● **Do you stay in touch with people from school?**

Yeah, I made loads of great friends! I was best



Tim Budden

● **Have you always enjoyed reading and writing?**

I've always loved both! I love writing lists of things, like my favourite musicals or films. I love reading lots of books. Growing up I loved the Charlie Bone series, *Room on the Broom*, all the Julia Donaldson ones.

● **Why is it important to see different people portrayed in books?**

There are lots of stories that need to be portrayed, and there are lots of different messages. Like being different – it's a great thing, it's not a negative thing or a scary thing, it's a great thing. Everyone is different. We need to celebrate that through different stories and illustrators.

● **You've written books, become a presenter for CBeebies and won a BAFTA. Have you always had big dreams for yourself?**

I've always had big dreams! I always work hard. My mum and dad have always been there for me to let my dreams come true. I think anything is possible!

George and the Mini Dragon is available to buy now.



Lester Magoogan

ALSO out recently is *The Mizzy Mysteries: A Skeleton in the Closet*, by Claire Hatcher-Smith.

The main character, 12-year-old Mizzy (left), dreams of being a detective, and nothing will stand in her way – least of all her Down syndrome. So she sets out to solve a shocking family mystery,

and prove herself to her doubting cousins and the world.

The book is beautifully illustrated by Lester Magoogan, who has Down syndrome, and on the audiobook, Mizzy is brought to life by Poppy Mae Barrett – an actor who also has Down syndrome. It's a total triumph for representation.



READER REVIEW

***Super Sleuth* by David Walliams**

I ENJOYED this book because there was always a climax at key points and it was exciting to read.

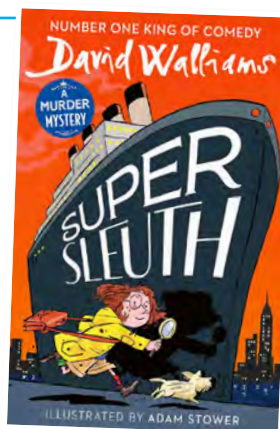
The book is about a girl called Dilly. Dilly loves a good murder mystery book and she finds herself in her very own murder mystery! She, her dog Watson and her family are on board a posh ship called *The Masquerade*.

Without anyone knowing, an opera singer and mystery solver join the cruise unexpectedly. However, later on, they're found dead – drowned in blancmange!

My favourite part is when Dilly unmasks the killer. Dilly seems so professional when she does this, yet she's really only a 'rookie' mystery solver!

I'd give this book full marks of 5/5. It always left me wanting to read on.

Review
by Johnny,
aged nine



★ WRITE US A BOOK REVIEW! ★

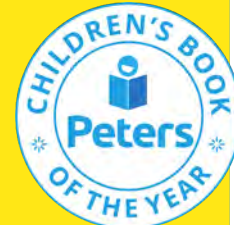
WHETHER it's fiction, non-fiction, a comic book or an audiobook, we'd love to hear about it! Simply send a review of 100–120 words, along with your name, age and, if you like, your photo (with your parents' permission) to bookreviews@firstnews.co.uk and we may pop it in the paper!

Recommended reads

in partnership
with Peters



Peters Children's Books of the Year!



TEACHERS and librarians across the country voted for their favourite book to be crowned Peters Children's Book of the Year – and the results are in! These winners were voted for with your reading enjoyment in mind. The winners are...

JOINT JUNIOR FICTION BOOK OF THE YEAR



***I Am Wolf* by Alastair Chisholm**

In a future where human crews drive giant mechanical animals, a young boy thrown from his wolf construct must learn to survive on the ground.

JOINT JUNIOR FICTION BOOK OF THE YEAR



***The Wrong Shoes* by Tom Percival**

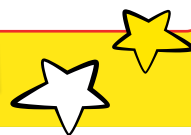
Will sticks out because of his 'wrong shoes'. But with the help of his friends, he might be able to see the way forward through home and school difficulties.

NON-FICTION BOOK OF THE YEAR AND PETERS CHILDREN'S BOOK OF THE YEAR

***Big Bad Wolf Investigates Fairy Tales* by Catherine Cawthorne and Sara Ogilvie**

The Big Bad Wolf has had enough of fairy tale nonsense.

It's time to set the record straight (and clear his name) with the best tool – science!





BIGGIE IN THE MIDDLE!

It's time to return to Wreathenwold for book two of Jordan Lees' *The Whisperwicks* trilogy

SOME stories are so big, they simply can't be told all in one go.

Take a look at some of our best-loved book series, like *Harry Potter*, *Skandar* or *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. Their stories, and the worlds that they're set in, are so deep and rich, they need to be split up into separate books.

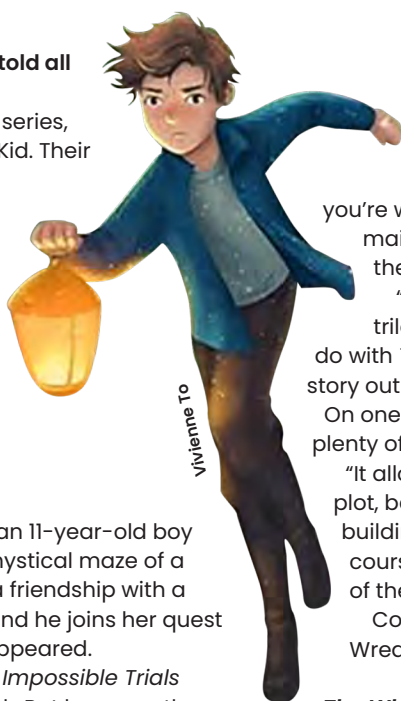
Imagine if all of the *Harry Potter* stories were all jammed together into one! There's no way that book would fit in your school bag.

The *Whisperwicks*, by Jordan Lees, is another example. It's a trilogy – a series of three books.

Step into Wreathenwold

In book one, *The Labyrinth of Lost and Found*, an 11-year-old boy named Benjamin is led into an impossible, mystical maze of a world, called Wreathenwold. There, he builds a friendship with a fierce and determined girl named Elizabella, and he joins her quest to find her brother, who has mysteriously disappeared.

Now, one year on, it's time for book two, *The Impossible Trials* – and Wreathenwold is calling Benjamin back. But how was the story to write?

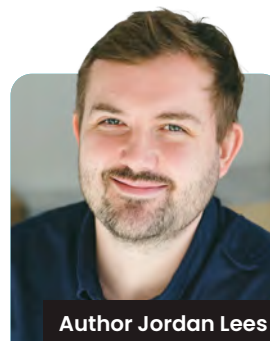


"Writing the second book in a trilogy is always a challenge," its author, Jordan Lees, tells *First News*. "It sometimes feels you're writing the 'middle' of the main story and just setting up the final book."

"The best second books in trilogies – and what I tried to do with *The Impossible Trials* – is tell their own exciting, fresh story outright, while still feeding into the wider trilogy arc." On one hand, it's a challenge, but on the other hand, there are plenty of good sides to writing a sequel that an author can enjoy. "It allows you to spend more time with characters and the plot, because you don't have to invest as much time world-building as you did in the first book," explains Lees. "Though, of course, you're always revealing cool new elements and ideas of the world."

Consider that your invitation to take your own step into Wreathenwold, and discover those cool new ideas yourself.

The Whisperwicks: The Impossible Trials by Jordan Lees is out on Thursday 27 March.



Author Jordan Lees

TOP TRILOGIES

THE *Whisperwicks* is the biggest trilogy on the books scene right now, but have you seen these ones, too?



The Wild Robot by Peter Brown



His Dark Materials by Philip Pullman



The Fowl Twins by Eoin Colfer

WHAT DO ALIENS REALLY LOOK LIKE?

Find the answers to all the best questions about extraterrestrial life at the Supervillain Academy: the magnificently morbid school for young villains in training.

OUT NOW

★ BASED ON REAL QUESTIONS FROM KIDS



A MAGICAL FAIRY TALE

WE'LL all be whistling while we work, thanks to Disney's new live-action remake of the classic *Snow White*. To celebrate the film arriving in cinemas just in time for the Easter holidays, we decided to find out a little more...

What's the story?

Snow White tells the tale of a young girl who is forced to flee to the forest to avoid her cruel stepmother, the Evil Queen. After stumbling upon a cottage, she soon befriends seven dwarfs and together they promise to save the kingdom.

Who's in the cast?

American actor and singer Rachel Zegler plays the lead role, while Israeli actress Gal Gadot is the Evil Queen (you might recognise her from playing Wonder Woman!). Rachel said on Instagram that she was "so unbelievably honoured, so unbelievably proud" to get the part of Snow White.

Are there any big songs?

Of course! The one we'll all be belting out is *Waiting On A Wish*, which is about as catchy as they come.

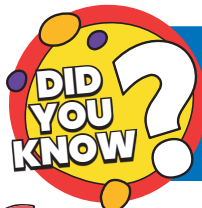
Why has the film been hitting the headlines?

The movie has sparked some debate in the run-up to its

release. Fans were upset with negative comments made by Rachel Zegler about Disney's original *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* animation. There have also been concerns about how the seven dwarfs are represented in the new version, because Disney used computer-generated characters.

Because of the controversy, the film's European premiere was held at a castle in Spain rather than London, where big premieres traditionally take place.

***Snow White* is in cinemas now.**



DISNEY'S animated version of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was first released all the way back in 1937!



Snow White with her love interest, Jonathan



The Evil Queen



Manuel Harlan

The Lightning Thief to go on tour

The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical is set to tour the UK this autumn! The show will visit Windsor, Newcastle, Milton Keynes, Liverpool, Brighton, Stoke-on-Trent, Coventry, Bradford, Wimbledon and Edinburgh. Most tickets go on sale this April.

Red Nose Day is here!

It's officially Red Nose Day today (21 March) and that means a whole night of celebs doing something funny for money on TV! This year, there'll be special sketches featuring

some of our favourite shows, including *Strictly Come Dancing* and *Gladiators*.

Catch all the action on BBC One, BBC Two and iPlayer from 7pm.



BBC/Comic Relief/
Hearst Magazines UK/
ITV Studios/Freemantle

Official trailer for *Lilo & Stitch* released

The official trailer for the live-action remake of *Lilo & Stitch* has landed! Fans see Stitch land on planet Earth and befriend a young Hawaiian girl called Lilo, becoming part of her family. But it's not all plain sailing! The movie is set to hit cinemas on 23 May 2025.



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Disney

Disney in Concert hits the road

Disney in Concert: The Sound of Magic is set to tour the UK next year! The show will be a celebration of Disney music, animation and movie memories. A live orchestra will perform tracks from the likes of *Frozen*, *Fantasia* (left) *The Lion King* and *Moana*. Tickets are on sale now.

GET OUT AND ABOUT OVER THE HOLIDAYS!



sustrans

halfords

WE know you want to get out and about more, and we're here to help make it happen!

Whether it's a ride to the park, stroll to the shops, wheel out among nature or scoot to see friends, charity Sustrans wants to make it easier for everyone to walk, wheel, scoot and cycle more.

To help, we've included some top tips for how to get active over the school holidays...

Exploring the National Cycle Network

The Children's Index surveyed 1,089 children (6-15) to find out what you think about walking and cycling!

The UK-wide **Children's Walking and Cycling Index**, published by the charity Sustrans and sponsored by Halfords, shows...

81%

of children want more traffic-free paths and quiet routes for walking and cycling.

51%

of children want to cycle more.

Many National Cycle Network paths include heritage trails – can you find one near you and find out more about your local area?

Make the most of a sunny day and seek out some of the best seaside routes for a family day out. Check out **coastal routes** at [Sustrans.org.uk](https://www.sustrans.org.uk).

DID YOU KNOW?

The National Cycle Network covers more than **12,000 miles** of the UK. How many can you explore?

Follow the
little red sign

Find the best **picnic spot** around your neighbourhood to walk, wheel, cycle or scoot to!

Can you spot **three different birds or creatures** on your walking, wheeling, scooting or cycling adventures to photograph or draw when you get home?

TOP TIPS

for walking, wheeling and cycling...

- **Make it fun:** Choose a fun destination, turn your journey into a treasure hunt or pick a route with interesting things along the way.
- **Take snacks and water:** You could also break up the journey with stops.
- **Plan ahead:** Use Sustrans' traffic-free guides to find a good traffic-free route.
- **Wear comfy clothing:** At this time of year, it's a good idea to take warm layers as well as sun protection.
- **Bring a friend along!**

TREASURE HUNT TRAILS

Can you find the following while you're out and about?

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> An interesting pebble | <input type="checkbox"/> A feather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A piece of artwork | <input type="checkbox"/> An animal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A National Cycle Network sign | <input type="checkbox"/> A funny tree |

The National Cycle Network consists of interconnected paths across the UK, available for anyone to walk, wheel, scoot or cycle on. Scan the QR code to find traffic-free routes near you.

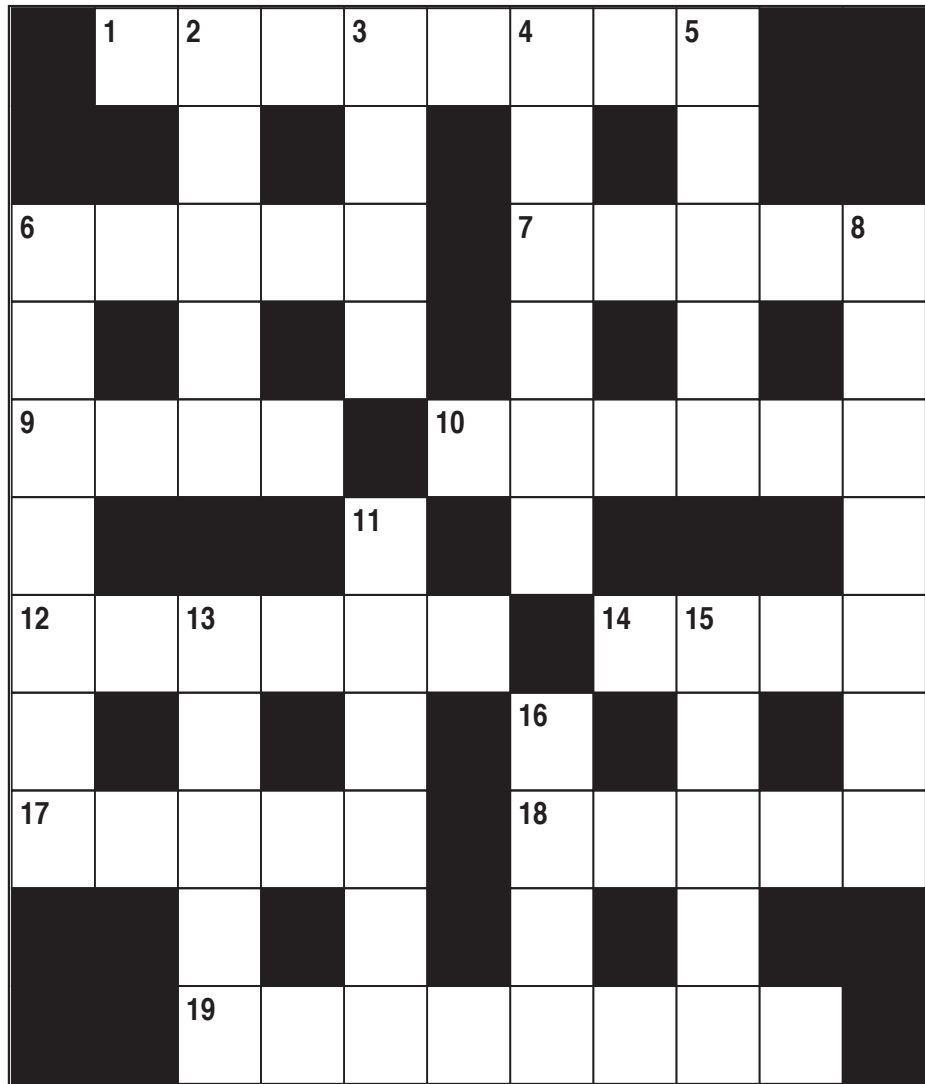


This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.



CROSSWORD

CAN you solve our crossword puzzle using the clues below?



ACROSS

- 1 Tiny piece of wood (8)
- 6 Large stringed instrument (5)
- 7 The period between sunset and sunrise (5)
- 9 Animals kept at home (4)
- 10 Middle (6)
- 12 Breathe in (6)
- 14 Molten rock from a volcano (4)
- 17 Titles (5)
- 18 Push gently (5)
- 19 Opposite of southern (8)

DOWN

- 2 Someone who flies a plane (5)
- 3 Hero (4)
- 4 Channel _____ : way of getting from London to Paris (6)
- 5 Correct (5)
- 6 Words printed next to a picture (7)
- 8 Aged between 13 and 19 (7)
- 11 Nearer (6)
- 13 Our species (5)
- 15 Type of snake (5)
- 16 A unit of length (4)

Sudoku

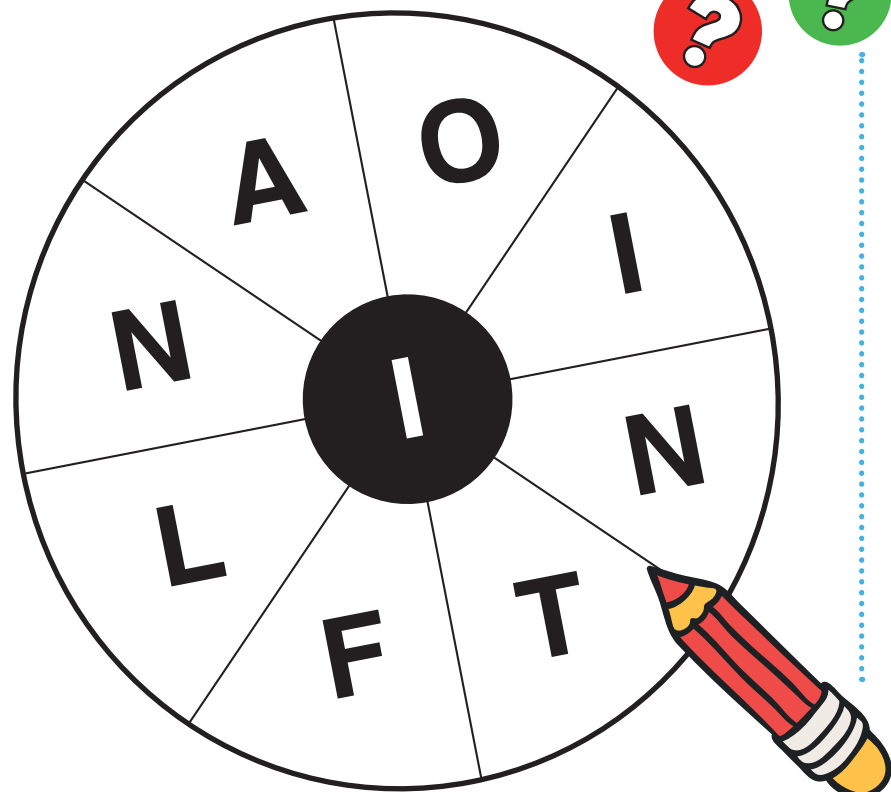
CAN you complete our sudoku puzzle, filling in the numbers one to nine?

9		5				3		2
	4	2				8	7	
		3	5	4	2	6		
			4	2	6			
	5			9			2	
			7	1	5			
		7	1	6	9	5		
	6	4				1	9	
3		1				2		7

COMPETITIONS: To enter, email us at win@firstnews.co.uk putting 'competition name' (e.g. Holiday), in the subject box or visit firstnews.comps. *First News* competitions are only open to those aged 15 and under and residents of the UK & Republic of Ireland, except employees of *First News*, First Group Enterprises Ltd, Reach plc and any associated companies and their families. Winners will be selected at random from all those with the correct answer. No purchase necessary. *First News* will not enter into any correspondence. All winners will be notified accordingly. If you are a winner, your details will be securely passed on to the person who is providing the prize so they can post it out to you. If you are contacted but don't reply within 28 days, we may offer the prize to another entrant. No cash alternative for any prizes will be offered. The winner may be required to partake in media activity relating to the competition. Your personal data will be held for a maximum of 12 months after the competition and then destroyed. It will not be used for any other purpose unless you have given us permission. If you would like your data deleted before this, please do get in touch with us. You have the right to complain to the ICO if you believe there is a problem with the way your data has been handled.

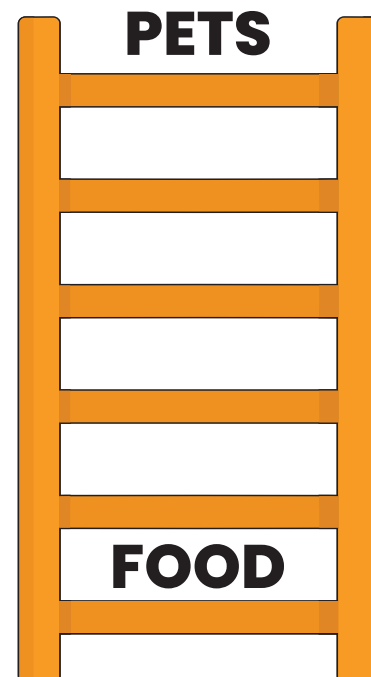
Word wheel

SEE how many words of three or more letters you can make, using the middle letter in each one. And can you find the word that uses all the letters?



Word ladder

SEE if you can get from the top of the ladder to the bottom by changing one letter at a time to make a new word.



ISSUE 978 ANSWERS:

Word wheel: automated.

Word ladder: tiny, tint, lint, line, like, lake.

D	R	A	M	A	T	I	C	O
I	R		U	H	N			
F	R	O	G	G	R	A	P	E
F	M		S	R		P		
E	R	A	S	E	L	L	A	M
R		W			I		C	
E	S	S	A	Y	P	E	A	C
N		L	S		T		S	
T	A	B	L	E	T	I	T	C
L		O		A		I		I
L		W	O	R	L	D	C	U

7	5	4	9	2	3	6	8	1
6	2	3	1	4	8	7	9	5
8	1	9	5	6	7	4	2	3
1	3	7	2	9	4	5	6	8
9	8	5	6	7	1	2	3	4
4	6	2	8	3	5	1	7	9
2	9	8	4	5	6	3	1	7
3	4	1	7	8	2	9	5	6
5	7	6	3	1	9	8	4	2



Enjoying the puzzles?
See the *First News* app for more fun, quizzes and games! This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.



IS IT FAKE OR FACT?

CAN you tell if a story is the real deal or made up? Every week, we'll be challenging you to see if you can sniff out the news from the nonsense! See what you think of this story, then turn the page upside down to see if you were right.

STOP FLUSHING CLOTHES!



AIR India has asked passengers to stop flushing clothes down its plane toilets. The airline has urged people to use the loos for normal reasons only! The appeal came after a recent flight from Chicago to Delhi had to turn back because eight of its 12 toilets became clogged by clothes, rags and bags.

Check out more on spotting fake news at:

• first.news/fakeorfact • first.news/spotfakenews

Or get yourself a free copy of our updated 28-page special edition, all about making sense of the news, how to spot bias, fake news and much more! Go to first.news/fake-news



This story is TRUE. Air India said the flight from Chicago had to turn back when "eight out of 12 lavatories in the aircraft became unserviceable, causing discomfort to all on board".

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE!



EGGCITING EASTER PULL-OUT!

BOOKS SPECIAL



DON'T MISS IT!



CRONGTON

DAILY NEWS

FirstNews

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Level up your news game with more fun on the app!

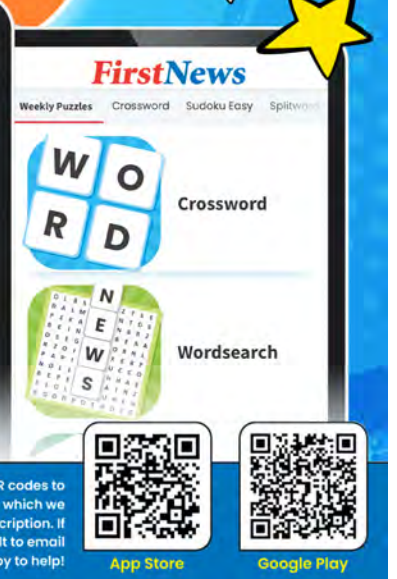
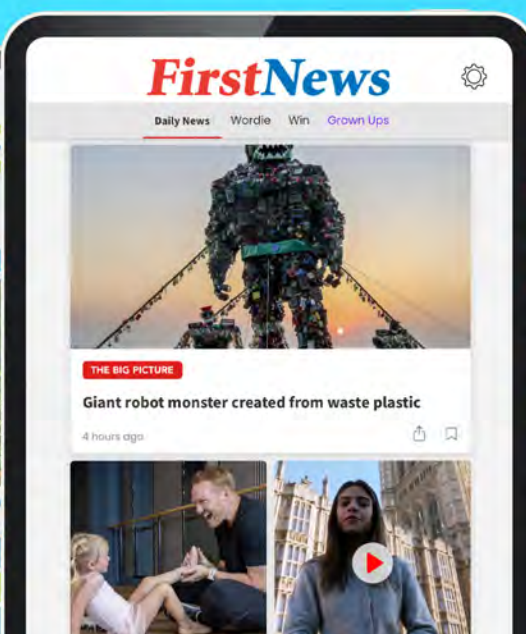
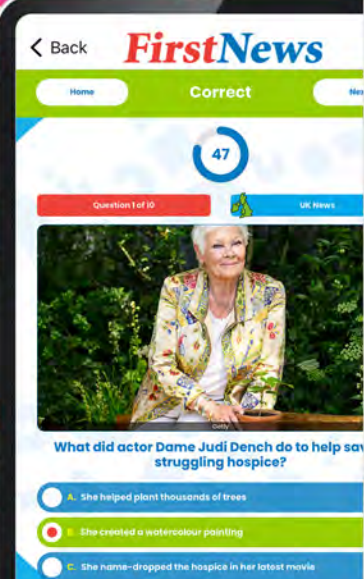
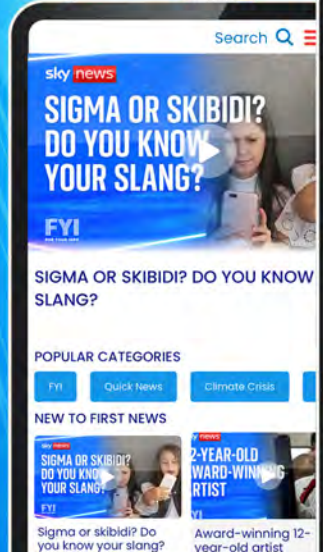
AWESOME PUZZLES

VIDEOS

WATCH SKY FYI

PLAY FUN GAMES

LISTEN TO ARTICLES



Get an adult to scan one of these QR codes to download the app. They'll need the Web ID which we emailed to the person who paid for your subscription. If they can't find it please ask an adult to email info@firstnews.co.uk and we will be happy to help!



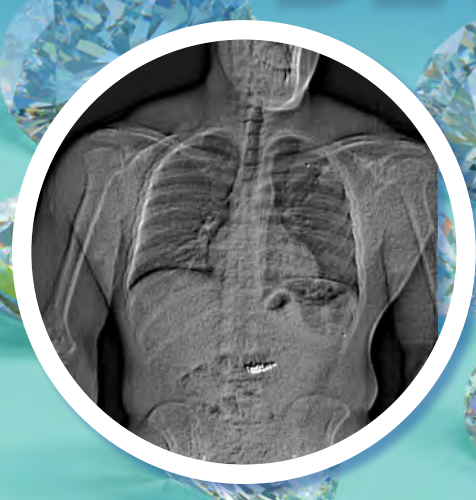
App Store



Google Play



EXPENSIVE TASTE: MAN SWALLOWS DIAMONDS!



You could say he had
breakfast at Tiffany's!

A MAN in Florida, USA, is accused of swallowing two pairs of diamond earrings worth \$769,500 (£597,000) while being arrested.

Police say Jaythan Gilder, 32, pretended to be representing a sports star at the luxury jewellery store Tiffany & Co, before grabbing the goods and running away.

When officers caught him, they witnessed him swallowing what they believed to be the jewels. X-ray images later revealed what could be two pairs of earrings in his stomach.

Officers supervised him until he pooped them out and they could recover the items. Now, he'll have to stomach the consequences.

Hawk targets tall men!

A ROGUE Harris's hawk has spread fear in a Hertfordshire village by repeatedly attacking tall men aged between 40 and 60 years old!

The bizarre incidents have left around 20 residents with head injuries over two weeks.

The bird is normally found in South America, but has been swooping down unexpectedly on unsuspecting villagers in Flamstead.

Locals have even started wearing protective headgear, while experts try to safely catch the feathered rascal.



istock

Doctors warn of sticky situation



DOCTORS in Colorado, USA, are warning patients after seeing more cases of people mistakenly putting glue in their eyes instead of eye drops.

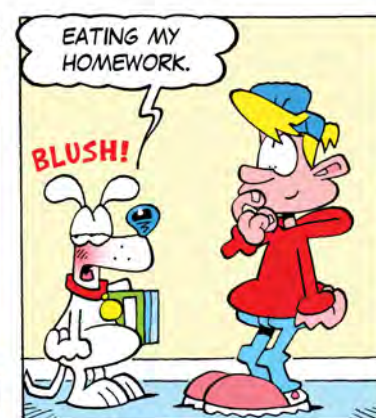
Medical experts say patients are confusing nail and lash glue with eye medication because the bottles look similar.

While the mix-ups don't usually cause lasting damage, the results can be painful and may need medical treatment to remove the glue.

Doctors advise keeping eye drops away from similar-looking bottles to prevent accidents.



Written and illustrated by Paul Palmer





London Transport Museum

Covent Garden | Kids go free

MAYOR OF LONDON



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

ltmuseum.co.uk
Registered charity number 1123122



HELLO! I'm Milly, the leader of the *First News FYI News Club*.

Recently, you might have noticed some signs that spring is on the way – days are getting longer, the sun has been out more and flowers are starting to bloom. One of my favourite parts of spring is hearing beautiful birdsong, especially in the mornings! And from the poll below, it sounds like birdsong makes you happy too!

Don't forget to vote in our weekly polls. It's a great way to have your say on important issues. Just follow the link below.

THIS WEEK'S POLL!

We asked 4,505 of you:

Does hearing birdsong make you happier?

22%
of you
said NO

78%
of you
said YES



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Cast your vote in our polls at
first.news/polls

HAPPY TO BE IN SCHOOL

IT'S nearly Red Nose Day, which many of you probably celebrate at school, but do you know why we wear a Red Nose once a year? It's to help people across the world who are facing big challenges, like Peticious, who has written to tell you her story.

by Peticious from Zambia

I left school when I was 13 as my family couldn't afford to pay for me to go. I felt bad when I saw my friends go to school while I stayed home.

Then I heard about School Club Zambia from a relative. The group supports your schooling and gives you entrepreneurship skills [skills to help you with setting up your own business].

With the support of School Club Zambia, I went back to school. It felt really good to be in class and to be learning again.

I wanted to go back to school because I want to be a journalist. One day I want to read the news to the nation.

This project is important because it's helping me, and other children like me, get the chance to go to school. Everyone deserves the chance to be educated.

I am very happy to be back in school.



A RECENT UNESCO report found that 251 million children around the world don't go to school. In the UK, every child is lucky enough to get an education, but in other countries many families can't afford to send their children to school.



Peticious

● RED NOSE DAY 21 MARCH

A fundraising event arranged by the charity Comic Relief, which is working towards a vision of a just world, free from poverty.



Celebrating World Book Day



Chloe (left) talking to Philippa

CHLOE'S Girlguiding group in Hull had a World Book Day visit from author Philippa Leathley and got a first look at the Bookworm badge, one of 72 new interest badges that Girlguiding is launching this summer.

by Chloe, aged 11

I love to read, so I was really excited when my Guide leader told us we had the opportunity to meet an author as part of World Book Day. That author was Philippa Leathley, who wrote *Inkbound: Meticulous Jones and the Skull Tattoo*.

The evening started with Philippa giving us a presentation on what it takes to become an author. She also showed us the different tattoos you can have in the world of *Inkbound*.

After that, we had a look at the dictionary of fates, which tells you what each tattoo means. She then read us part of the book.

The best part of the night was receiving a signed copy of *Inkbound* and learning about new characters.

While we were at the event, we were given a sneak peek of the new Girlguiding Bookworm badge. I really like it – it's so cute!



The Bookworm badge encourages you to make a book nook to kick back, relax and read in!



NEWS CLUB SHOUT-OUT!

THIS WEEK WE'RE GIVING SHOUT-OUTS TO... Amlwch Primary School, Hope Academy, Beecroft Garden Primary School, Great Oaks School and Kellett Kowloon Bay Preparatory School!



Top marks for *The Tempest*



Imogen and Kitty

THE Royal Shakespeare Company recently visited St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School for a performance of *The Tempest*. Junior journalists Imogen and Kitty tell you what it was like.

by Imogen and Kitty

Hi, we are Imogen and Kitty, Year 6 pupils from St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School in Hartlepool. Recently, the Royal Shakespeare Company visited our school to perform *The Tempest*. It was a magical and exhilarating experience!

The day began with the company setting up scenery in our school hall. The set was linked to the story; it included vines hanging down from palm trees and an island in the middle of the stage covered in different shades of fabric, which created a magical island presence. We tried to contain our excitement as we quickly finished our packed lunches in our classrooms before heading to the hall for the performance. The hustle and bustle slowly increased with a buzz of anticipation as we waited for the performance to start. It began with a tempest (a terrible storm). The actors' faces were filled with fear, dread and foreboding – it was very dramatic!

Imogen's favourite part was when two of the characters, Miranda and Ferdinand, were playing cards because they loved each other, despite Prospero trying to prevent their relationship. Kitty's favourite part was the actors improvising and making funny noises. Her favourite characters were Stephano and Trinculo because they brought humour to the stage – they were extremely entertaining!

Super Sydnie Christmas

FAITH recently went to watch *Britain's Got Talent* winner Sydnie Christmas perform in London on her tour. Here's how she got on!

by Faith

When we arrived at the Aldwych Theatre, we found that there was a rather long queue to get in. There were even signs hung up to say that the tickets were sold out for the Sydnie Christmas concert, showing how eager people were to see her perform.

Inside, the people sat in the audience were of all ages, from children to the elderly, which just goes to show that Sydnie's music is enjoyed by everyone! The stage was a simple yet elegant setup with a light and carefree atmosphere. This peaceful silence was broken when the icon, Sydnie Christmas herself, appeared on stage and the crowd erupted into wolf whistles and applause.

Despite the fact that it was a live show, no auto-tune was used whatsoever. There was only the drastic yet melodic changes in her voice as she sang. The set was alive with colour and motion, changing with each song. An entire band accompanied Sydnie and, upon close listening, we found inspiring lyrics hidden in the music. Though Sydnie was not singing her own songs, she still managed to make other artists' songs (old and new) her own. She'd sometimes finish a song then share a snippet of her life – she even dedicated an entire medley to one of her friends. After talking about her childhood, we were stunned to realise that she had brought along pupils from her performing school, Mary Underwood.

Throughout the show, Sydnie said many times how grateful she was for us to be there listening to her, how thankful she was for the support her friends gave along the way and how appreciative she was for the opportunity that not many people get – and that she had been able to fulfil a childhood dream.



Faith



Sydnie Christmas performing

**WANT TO
FEATURE ON
THESE PAGES?**

FirstNews

FYI

**NEWS
CLUB**

sky kids

If you want to be a junior journalist for *First News* and go to cool press events or write about a topic that you're passionate about, get in touch by asking a trusted adult to email us at yournews@firstnews.co.uk.

Or, get your teacher to sign up to the *First News* FYI News Club at first.news/fynewsclub.



THE MYSTERY LIVES OF HENRY'S WIVES

MARCH is Women's History Month. Its aim is to shine a spotlight on the massive contributions that women have made to events throughout history.

However, knowing about the lives of women who lived centuries ago isn't always easy! In unequal societies of the past, men hogged the limelight and dominated positions of power and influence.

As a result, it's often the case that their achievements are more celebrated, while women are left in the shadows.

You'd think that being a queen would be a pretty big deal, but, as top Tudor historian Suzannah Lipscomb explains, there's a lot we don't know about the lives of Henry VIII's six wives. And uncovering their secrets is a puzzle...

by Suzannah Lipscomb

BEING a historian is like being a detective – a detective who investigates the past. But, just like detectives, we don't always have the evidence we would like to have.

When we're exploring the lives of people who lived before the internet, before photography – even before newspapers – we largely rely on handwritten documents from the time.

These were all written for a purpose: a foreign diplomat might write about a visit to the English court; someone else might note the London gossip for a friend living out of town; or the document might be the record of a new law. The information had to be important enough to be written down in the first place, and it had to seem important enough in later years to be kept. Eventually, these documents ended up in what became known as archives – a collection of these records.

● Not important enough?

In the 16th century, when Henry VIII and his queens lived, power was largely in the hands of men. This means that many of the documents that made it into the archives tell the story of how those men got and held onto power.

They say far less about women. This means that we don't have all the evidence we would like to have when it comes to women's lives – even women as famous as Henry VIII's queens.

For example, it only became the law that churches had to record births and deaths in 1538. As all Henry's queens were born before then, we don't know the exact date that five out of six of them were born. We don't have official records of their birthdays. This is because the birth of a girl was simply not thought important enough to write down on any piece of paper worth keeping. For two of Henry VIII's queens, we're not even sure which year they were born.

Women's History Month

All pics: Getty

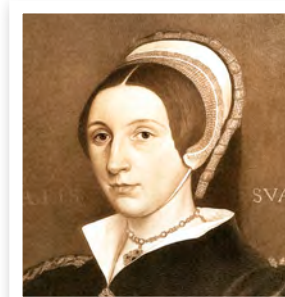
● Anne Boleyn

The best guess is that Anne Boleyn was born in 1501. We can calculate that because we know her brother's birthday (the births of boys were generally recorded), we know when her younger sister got married, and we have a letter that Anne wrote in 1513 in which she has quite adult handwriting.

If you don't think that's very good evidence to figure out her birthday, you'd be right!

● Katherine Howard

Historians know that Katherine Howard was born between 1518 and 1527. Her birthday matters a lot. She married Henry VIII in 1540, when he was 49. Was she 22 years old or was she just 13? To figure out her birthday precisely, we must bear in mind the age of her mother, that Katherine was the fifth of six children, and when she was mentioned in someone's will (meaning that she must have been born by the time the will was written). Our best guess is that she was born around 1523 or 1524, making her 16 or 17 years old when she married the king – but we don't know for sure.



We don't know much about the births of Anne Boleyn and Katherine Howard – but they both met their end here, at the Tower of London

● Diary-free

The other thing that we lack when it comes to Henry VIII's queens is information about their feelings. Mostly, the documents tell us what other people said about them.

None of the queens left diaries giving us their thoughts. Even their surviving letters are quite formal. So much of what we really want to know about their lives (what was it like to be married to Henry VIII?), we just can't know. Like detectives, we can, however, piece together clues.

● Still to be solved

But I haven't yet told you the most exciting thing about being a historian. Just as a detective might use DNA to figure out that one person is innocent of a murder, and another guilty, sometimes we find new evidence that changes what we know about the facts.

It is still possible to discover new information about Henry VIII's queens. Maybe one day, you'll be the person to find it.



Henry VIII and his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves

A few things we do know...



Clever Katherine of Aragon spoke four languages – Spanish, English, French and Latin!



Snap! Anne of Cleves is known to have been a keen card game player.



Henry's last wife, Katherine Parr, was the first English queen to write and publish her own books.



This article is an extract from Suzannah Lipscomb's foreword in a new book, **Six Queens**, by Lydia Monks.

It's a cool, illustrated guide to everything we **do** know about the queens of Henry VIII, from childhoods and schooling to brave voyages across the sea!

Six Queens by Lydia Monks is out now.

FirstNews Quiz

THE answers to all these questions can be found in the pages of this issue. Why not set yourself, or your friends and family, a time challenge to see who can get the highest score in the quickest time? See how well you did by checking the answers at the bottom.

1 Whose golf course was vandalised in Ireland?

2 Which festival that celebrates the arrival of spring is also known as the Festival of Colours?



3 What is the name of this TV presenter?



4 What is airline Virgin Atlantic bringing to the UK?

5 What forced people in Naples to sleep in the streets on Thursday 13 March?

6 Bomb experts were called out to a beach in Dorset, but what did the discovery turn out to be?



7 What does BSL stand for?



8 What colour did the Chicago River turn for St Patrick's Day?

9 A wildlife reserve in Cumbria has recorded its highest ever number of what animals?

10 How many wives did Henry VIII have?



11 What will some famous landmarks do at 8:30pm on 22 March to show support for WWF's Earth Hour?

12 Which supermarket will give away food for free to help reduce food waste?

13 Disney has released a new live-action remake of which classic film?



14 Who won the League Cup final – Liverpool or Newcastle?

15 Which country came out on top in the Six Nations?

If you enjoyed this, why not check out our Quiz that you can play online as an individual or with your family? You can find it at firstnews.co.uk/quiz and on the **First News** app!



Answers:
1 Donald Trump 2 Holl 3 George Webster
4 An air taxi 5 An earthquake 6 A saucapan
7 British Sign language 8 Green 9 Grey seals 10 Six
11 Switch off their lights 12 Tesco 13 Snow White
14 Newcastle 15 France

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SNOW QUEEN!

BRITAIN'S young snowboard star Mia Brookes has claimed the overall World Cup Snowboard Park & Pipe crown, just two months after turning 18.

Across eight World Cup events in slopestyle and big air, she finished on the podium seven times and won three.

The sport's governing body, the FIS, said it had been one of the "greatest seasons in history" and that Brookes "has simply been on another level".

She finished the season on 500 points, 35 clear of her Japanese rival Mari Fukada.

ALTHOUGH snowboarding became an Olympic sport in 1998, slopestyle wasn't added as a discipline until 2014, then big air was added to the Olympic programme in 2018.

Mia Brookes celebrates a win in Laax, Switzerland, earlier in the season. Inset: competing at that same event

Getty

Braydon's on the ball

THE FYI presenter takes us through his pick of the week's top footie action.

Newcastle ended their 70-year wait for a domestic trophy with a fully deserved victory over Liverpool to secure the League Cup at a packed Wembley on Sunday. The Toon Army painted London black and white all weekend and celebrated in style following their commanding win. They dominated the game from the outset and really could have won by a bigger margin.

Centre Stage and at the heart of everything was their hero and boyhood Newcastle supporter Dan Burn, who was called up by new England boss Thomas Tuchel on Friday. The 32-year-old crowned the finest week of his career with a goal and a man-of-the-match performance.



Dan Burn opens the scoring

For Liverpool it ended a very disappointing week, after being knocked out of the Champions League by PSG and seeing their dreams of a treble or double dissolve. While the Reds will be more than happy to win the league, it does seem like a disappointment for them to be now left with just that after so much early-season optimism.

Another team celebrating a trophy are Chelsea, who took the Women's League Cup back home by edging past Man City 2-1 in the final at Pride Park. Sonia Bompastor's side kept their bid for a historic quadruple alive through a goal from Mayra Ramírez and an unlucky own goal from City's Yui Hasegawa. Chelsea and City now have to face each other another three times in just over a week, with two games in the Champions League and the other in the WSL. If Chelsea can navigate those games successfully then they'll be in a great position for more silverware, but I expect City to have a big say in them.

In the Premier League, Arsenal took the points in a London derby, beating Chelsea 1-0, and Forest continued their push for a Champions League place with a 4-2 win at Ipswich. Man City and Brighton shared a 2-2 draw at the Etihad, while Brentford came from a goal down to beat Bournemouth at the Vitality Stadium. The bottom three of Southampton, Leicester and Ipswich all lost again and they now look certain for the drop back into the Championship in May.

Braydon's Team of The Week: Newcastle United, celebrating cup success. Well done to them!

Braydon's Player of The Week: Dan Burn, man of the match and a towering header in the final.

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Newcastle pulled off a surprise 2-1 win over league leaders Liverpool to win the League Cup final (see Braydon's column). It was the club's first trophy since they won the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup in 1969, and their first domestic trophy since they lifted the FA Cup in 1955 – which was so long ago that it was shown on TV in black and white! The most surprising statistic was that Mo Salah didn't have a shot and created no chances in 90 minutes for the first time in his Liverpool career.

The state of the pitch for the Women's League Cup final was heavily criticised, with some players saying it wouldn't have been acceptable for a men's final. "It's a shame," said Chelsea boss Sonia Bompastor.



Parts of the Pride Park pitch were covered in sand

BULGARIAN football club Arda Kardzhali were left red-faced after holding a minute's silence for former player Petko Ganchev before their match on Sunday – as they soon found out that he's very much alive! "We wish Petko Ganchev many more years of good health," the club said.



A total of 108 tries were scored this year, smashing the previous record of 91

A 35-16 win over Scotland made France the deserved winners of the Six Nations, after scoring a record 30 tries across their five games, beating a record set by England in 2001. Wales had a tournament to forget, winning the wooden spoon for finishing bottom of the table for a second year in a row. Their 68-14 loss to England was their heaviest ever defeat in Cardiff and their biggest loss ever in the Six Nations.



Lando Norris started the F1 season with a fantastic win in the Australian Grand Prix, beating defending champion Max Verstappen to the chequered flag. George Russell took third place, but Lewis Hamilton had a disappointing debut for Ferrari, finishing back in tenth place.

