



First

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News

**NEWS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT
INTERVIEWS PUZZLES COMPETITIONS**

MY SHORT HAIR DOESN'T MEAN I'M A BOY

by editor in chief Nicky Cox MBE**A GIRLS' football match was stopped after players were accused of being boys – because they had short hair.**

The all-girls York Railway Institute AFC under-12s team was playing when 11-year-old Flo, who has a short haircut, scored a goal.

The other team's coach and parents asked if a boy had been brought on and wanted to see Flo's registration. The game was stopped because of the argument, leaving the girls on the team very upset.

Flo and her team-mate Camille, also 11, both have short hair and said that going to matches made them worry now.

Camille said: "We had an opposition that was quite mean about people with short hair playing football for a girls' team. They said: 'Why's there a boy on the pitch? You need to take them off because they're boys and it's cheating,' and our coach told them off."

That coach, Adam Cooper, said:

"We know how important it is for young people to engage in sport, girls as well as boys. It supports physical and mental health. So, this is about removing barriers, removing stereotyping and educating people."

"It does upset me"

Flo said: "I feel quite angry and sad when people think I am a boy. It does upset me because they are commenting on how I look, and I am a girl and I am just being me."

It's not the only time this has happened, so the club has launched a campaign to support the girls. The players have started wearing T-shirts with the slogan: "Girls can have short hair, get over it!" to encourage parents and coaches not to say "unkind things".

Flo says: "The campaign will help other girls because we are trying to let them know they are not alone – and also that words can really hurt."

Camille's mother, Aimée Little, says: "People don't realise that this level of discrimination exists in girls' sports."

**Flo (left) and Camille**

MEET THE TEAM



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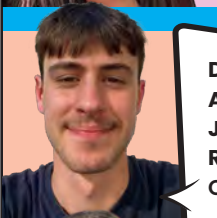
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HAVE YOU HEARD?

Snappy stories to get you talking!



SPREAD SOME KINDNESS THIS WEEK

This week is all about love and kindness as it's International Book Giving Day on 14 February and International Random Acts of Kindness Day on 17 February. What could you do as a kind act for others? Perhaps you could raise money for charity, send someone a card or bake something tasty for family or friends!



BGT IS BACK!

ITV has confirmed that *Britain's Got Talent* will be back on Saturday 22 February. Ant and Dec will return as hosts of the hit talent show, with Simon Cowell, Amanda Holden, Alesha Dixon and Bruno Tonioli all returning as judges. This series also has a brand-new guest judge, YouTuber KSI.



THEY SAID THAT!

"I will be signing an Executive Order next week ending the ridiculous Biden push for Paper Straws, which don't work. **BACK TO PLASTIC!**"

TRUMP TO BRING BACK PLASTIC STRAWS

US President Donald Trump has posted on social media that he's going to bring back plastic straws in government buildings in the US. The previous president, Joe Biden, introduced a campaign to reduce single-use plastics such as straws and cups in favour of paper ones, to help cut down on pollution.



SOUP-ER PUPILS RAISE £440 FOR CHARITY

School pupils have raised £440 for charity at Borough Market's annual Winter Soup Sale. The London event saw pupils sell warm soups made with veg they had grown at school. Money raised will be donated to Plan Zeroes, which provides spare food for charities near the market. The schools that took part were Bacon's College (Rotherhithe), Wapping High School (Tower Hamlets), St Gabriel's College (Lambeth) and City of London Academy (Southwark).

UK FOOD SUPPLY UNDER THREAT



The UK needs to act quickly to protect its food supply, says a report from the University of London. It warns that the UK isn't ready to handle food shortages that could happen because of bad weather, new trade taxes from America, and disruption to food supplies from other countries, including Europe, from where the UK gets a third of its food. Professor Tim Lang, who wrote the report, says the UK should grow more food at home and teach people how to prepare for food shortages. He also wants new laws to make sure the government can feed everyone if there's a crisis.



PEOPLE ARE HAPPIEST IN THE MORNING

Scientists have found that people generally feel happier and more positive in the mornings. A study of nearly 50,000 adults by University College London found that most people wake up "feeling best", but "feeling worst" by midnight. Experts think this might be due to body chemicals such as cortisol, a hormone that controls our mood and is at its highest levels when we wake up. The study also found that people are usually happier on Mondays and Fridays than on Sundays. Dr Feifei Bu, who led the study, suggests that mental health services might need to offer more help during night-time hours when people tend to feel lower.

FATBERG 1 ROCKSTAR 0



Rock music legend Bryan Adams was beaten by a fatberg last weekend. The Canadian, aged 65, was due to play his hits to fans in a packed-out concert at the RAC Arena in Perth, Australia, until a "large" blockage of "fat, grease and rags" was found in the sewer near the venue. It risked blocking the venue's toilets, so it was best for all involved to cancel the gig and try to reschedule. Ticket holders were offered a refund.



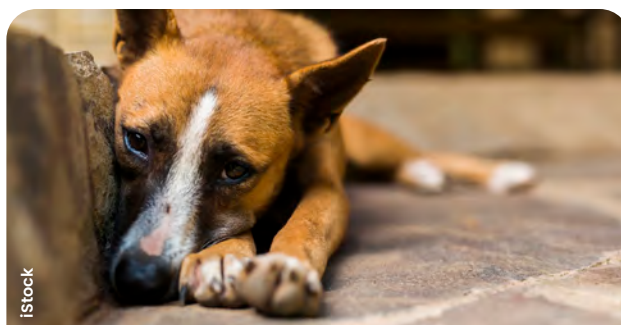
PLASTIC BUILDING UP IN HUMAN BRAINS

Scientists say microplastics are building up in human brains at an alarming rate. Researchers led by the University of New Mexico in the US took samples from human tissue between 1997 and 2024. The most common plastic they found was polyethylene – the stuff used in shopping bags and food packaging. While the health effects aren't fully known, scientists are concerned about how these particles might affect our brains in the future.



EARTHSHOT WINNERS MEET THE PRINCE

Five children who won a competition to help save the planet with their eco-friendly ideas met with Prince William at Windsor Castle last week. The winners, aged between eight and 12, beat nearly 2,000 other entries in the Prince's Earthshot contest. Their ideas included family forests, algae ponds to clean polluted water and special glasses that show carbon dioxide levels in the air. The winners also got to make bird feeders with the Prince and present their ideas to politicians in the House of Commons.



HUGE RISE IN ABANDONED PETS, SAYS RSPCA

The RSPCA has reported a massive 34% increase (a third) in abandoned pets this winter, with nearly 2,000 animals rescued in January alone. Animal rescue teams found shocking cases across the UK, including a starving dog, 11 kittens stuffed in one carrier and ten tarantulas left in bin bags. The charity says the rise is likely due to people struggling with winter costs and bills. It added that it is thankful to all those who report the upsetting incidents.



CHINA CELEBRATES HIGHEST-GROSSING FILM EVER!

An animated film about a boy who battles demons with his magical powers made a record eight billion yuan (£910 million) during China's Lunar New Year holiday week. *Ne Zha 2* is based on a Chinese mythological character. It will be shown in countries outside China from next week.

BOY SAVES THOUSANDS OF SWEET TUBS FROM LANDFILL

Six-year-old Teddy from Hampshire has saved more than 2,500 plastic sweet and chocolate tubs from landfill. Last year, Teddy collected 358 tubs from neighbours, but after writing to his school and putting up posters across the local area, he started to get hundreds of tub donations. He plans to take them all to a plastic reprocessing centre so they can be turned into lots of new objects. Teddy said his hero is David Attenborough and he hopes to make a small effort to protect the planet from plastic pollution.



● VALENTINE'S DAY 14 FEBRUARY

It's time to share the love as Friday marks Valentine's Day! People traditionally celebrate by exchanging cards and gifts.



● INTERNATIONAL CHILDHOOD CANCER DAY 15 FEBRUARY

The day aims to raise awareness and funds for young people with cancer and their families.



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



TOO FLASHY FOR FERRARI!?

FERRARI is considering banning people from getting crazy paint jobs on its cars, in order to protect the company's classy image.

The demand for customising cars is rising. It's especially popular with super-rich influencers and buyers from the Middle East, with drivers ordering shimmering gold wraps and videogame graphics to be added to their pricey vehicles.

However, Ferrari would prefer that owners stuck to traditional colours, like 'rosso corsa' – its famous shade of red.

In fact, it even keeps an eye on what drivers do to their Ferraris after they've bought them, and bans them from buying again if they do anything too zany!

"We have to pay attention because we have to defend the values and the identity of the brand," said Ferrari's chief executive, Benedetto Vigna. "We will not make a strange car, for sure."

He pointed out that wild paint jobs also lower the value of Ferraris and make them harder to trade and sell, because future owners might not be keen on the crazy colours and dodgy designs.

The company is thinking about cutting its colour choices down, and has already banned pink.

Would you give your Ferrari a crazy paint job?

Vote at first.news/polls

4/10

Once by far the most popular colour, today just four in ten Ferraris are ordered in the brand's traditional red



OK!

NOT OK!



Getty

NOT OK



School phone bans don't make a difference

THE world's first study into phone bans in schools has found that they don't seem to improve pupils' grades or behaviour.

Researchers from the University of Birmingham studied 1,227 pupils aged 12-15 at 30 different schools in England. Of those schools, ten allowed their pupils to use phones at break times, and 20 didn't.

However, there wasn't much difference between pupils' sleep, their wellbeing or their focus in lessons. The researchers also spoke to teachers and found that phone bans didn't trigger a boost in pupils' grades, either.

The lead researcher, Dr Victoria Goodyear, told the BBC that the point of the results wasn't to criticise school phone bans, but to show that they alone aren't enough to help children.

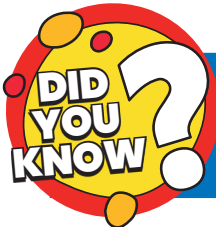
"We need to do more than just ban phones in schools," she explained. "Those bans aren't enough to tackle the

negative impacts [of phones]."

Joe Ryrie, from the group Smartphone Free Childhood, told the BBC that he found the results surprising, because teachers had told him that phone bans did have a positive effect on their pupils.

The study did, though, find a pattern that suggested children who use their phones more all the time often tend to have poorer sleep, mental health and grades, and are more disruptive in class.

The study was published in the scientific journal *The Lancet Regional Health Europe*.



JUST one UK child in every 20 aged 12-15 doesn't own their own phone, said Ofcom in 2024.

UK's nuclear power boost

THE UK is planning to build more nuclear power stations in England and Wales.

The government claims that this will create more jobs and help to deliver cleaner, cheaper energy to people's homes. It says that the UK is falling behind other countries in the race towards nuclear power, so it has "ripped up" old rules to make it easier and simpler for companies to get building.

The plan is also for mini nuclear power stations, called Small Modular Reactors, to be built in the UK, even though

none are in operation anywhere in the world yet.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer said: "This country hasn't built a nuclear power station in decades. We've been left behind... I'm putting an end to it."

However, Mike Childs, of environmental group Friends of the Earth, criticised the announcement. He said: "Nuclear power is extremely expensive and creates... radioactive waste that lasts for thousands of years." He thinks ministers should focus on wind and solar power projects, instead.

EDITOR'S COMMENT



Nicky Cox MBE

JUDGING and stereotyping people based on their appearance can lead to harmful consequences.

Incidents like when Flo was accused of being a boy in a girls' football match (front page) damage the confidence of young athletes, but also continue to spread old-fashioned opinions about what's normal for different genders.

By focusing on players' skills and character rather than what they look like, we can create a more supportive world that encourages all people to be themselves and take part in the things they love.

You are the best you, after all!



What would you spend it on?



Big lottery wins

SOMEONE in the UK, who's kept their identity secret for now, has landed an £83.5 million jackpot in the EuroMillions lottery draw. They matched all five numbers – 2, 11, 19, 30 and 49 – and the bonus Lucky Star numbers, 3 and 8. It's a huge amount of money, but it's a long way behind the record £195 million that someone won in 2022!



Samples have been taken to investigate the cause



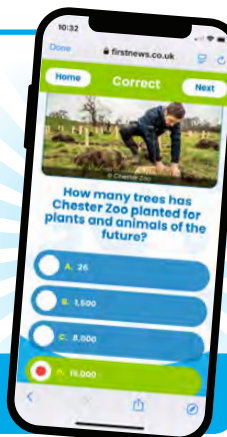
Rivers

A SECTION of river near Argentina's capital, Buenos Aires, mysteriously turned bright red last week. Locals suspect that it was caused by toxic waste, or by dye from nearby textile factories. One resident told *La Nación* newspaper: "Today, we have red water. [In the past] it's been grey, green, violet, bluish..."

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.





TRUMP WANTS TO "BUY AND OWN" GAZA



Israel president Mr Netanyahu (left) and Mr Trump

DONALD Trump wants the USA to "take over" Gaza, and turn it into a coastal resort for people from around the world.

His idea would mean moving out two million Palestinian people who live in Gaza, and re-homing them in new settlements in neighbouring countries, Egypt and Lebanon.

Mr Trump says the Palestinians would have no right to return. "No, they wouldn't, because they're going to have much better housing," he told Fox News. "I'm talking about building a permanent place for them."

The plan would also mean demolishing what structures are still standing in Gaza, and starting afresh. "[We'll] make it into an international, unbelievable place," he told reporters. "I think the potential [in Gaza] is unbelievable."

The world's reaction

Mr Trump outlined his plan while Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu was visiting him in Washington, DC.

Mr Netanyahu says Mr Trump's idea is "remarkable" and "creative", but it has been strongly criticised by others.

The United Nations (UN) says that forcing people out of their homeland is strictly against international law, and would be a form of "ethnic cleansing" (clearing an area of people who are of a certain ethnicity, race or religion).

Human rights group Amnesty said the plan was "outrageous", shameful and a "crime against humanity".

World leaders from the likes of Germany, Brazil, Russia and China have also rejected the idea, and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said that "Palestinians must be allowed home".

Much of Gaza lies in ruins at the moment after 16 months of fighting between Israel and Hamas, the terrorist group that controls Gaza. The UN thinks that two-thirds of its buildings have been damaged. A ceasefire (a pause in the fighting) has recently allowed Palestinians who had fled the violence to return to what's left of their homes.

Palestinians themselves have reacted in horror at Trump's idea, and Hamas has said that the land is "not for sale".

● Gaza sits between Israel and the Mediterranean Sea. It's a long strip of land about three times the size of Manchester. Year-round, its monthly top temperatures sit between 18°C and 30°C.



Pupils spreading fake news in class

Get 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! Just go to first.news/fake-news



A STUDY has found that your classmates might be spreading fake news from social media apps around school for fun, because they don't see the harm in it.

Researchers spoke to 2,300 pupils in England aged 11-18. Of those, over a third said that they didn't trust the government at all, and are more likely to trust social media influencers.

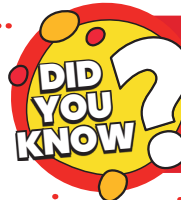
However, videos on apps like TikTok are affecting the way that children see the world. For example, teachers say that the

woman-hating influencer Andrew Tate has appeared in some pupils' school work, because they've mistaken him for an okay source of information.

It's left teachers worried about their pupils' ability to tell fact from fiction, and how this may affect the way they treat other people.

Girls, younger siblings and children from poorer families are most at risk.

The research was funded by a social justice charity called the Pears Foundation.



AN AI service generated by ChatGPT was held in a church in Germany in 2023. Some liked it, but one said: "There was no heart and no soul."

Doctor treats pet cat at human hospital

A DOCTOR in Italy is being investigated after sneaking his pet cat into his hospital for urgent treatment.

Athena the cat broke bones and damaged organs after falling from a six-storey roof, so her owner, Gianluca Fanelli, rushed her to the Umberto Parini Hospital where he works, 50 miles north of Turin.

Dr Fanelli said that Athena was "between life and death", but he managed to save her life by taking her to a spare operating table and draining liquid from her lungs, so that she could breathe.

However, the hospital's boss wasn't impressed by Dr Fanelli's actions. He took the matter to the police, because pets aren't allowed in his hospital, and he didn't like the idea of spending public funds to rescue an animal.

Dr Fanelli has said sorry and offered to repay any costs to the hospital, but said that saving lives was his "mission". His wife defended him, saying: "My husband saved a life. Period."

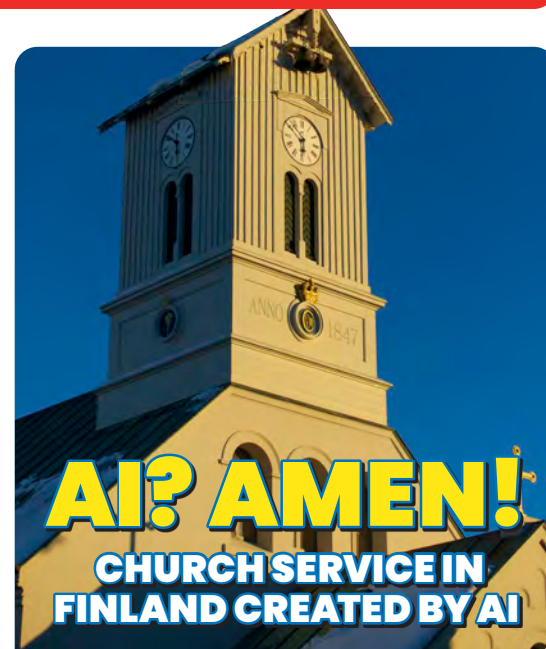


It was front page news in Italy

THEY SAID THAT!

"If I hadn't done all I could and my cat had died, I would never have forgiven myself, particularly since my children adore her"

— Dr Fanelli



AI? AMEN! CHURCH SERVICE IN FINLAND CREATED BY AI

A CHURCH in Finland is going to host a religious service with the vicar's talk, the prayers and some of the hymns created entirely by AI!

It's happening on 4 March (Shrove Tuesday) at St Paul's Church in Finland's capital, Helsinki.

Petja Kopperoinen, a priest at the church, came up with the idea. "I suggested it as a joke at first, but then we decided to take it seriously," he said.

Visitors on the day won't be greeted by a bunch of robots; there will be humans there to hold things together. A choir director will lead the singing, and representatives of the church will be there to discuss the service afterwards.

Kopperoinen also says that the AI has refused to perform blessings. "It said that these require a human. I agree – AI can say the words, but they would be meaningless," he said.

The church says the service won't permanently replace traditional, human-led services, but Kopperoinen thinks it will get people talking. "AI is becoming part of everyday work life. This is about exploring its role, not replacing people", he said.



Experts say the snakes are especially venomous to small animals

A MAN had a slithery surprise when 102 venomous snakes were found in his garden!

David Stein from Sydney, Australia, called in reptile catchers when he spotted six red-bellied black snakes lurking in a pile of garden mulch. "My wife googled and found that snakes [group] like that when they're ready to give birth," he said.

To their shock, the catchers then began finding "baby after baby" in the mulch. The final count was five adults and 97 babies.

A remote area was chosen for the snakes' release – safely away from the house!



Angus, UK



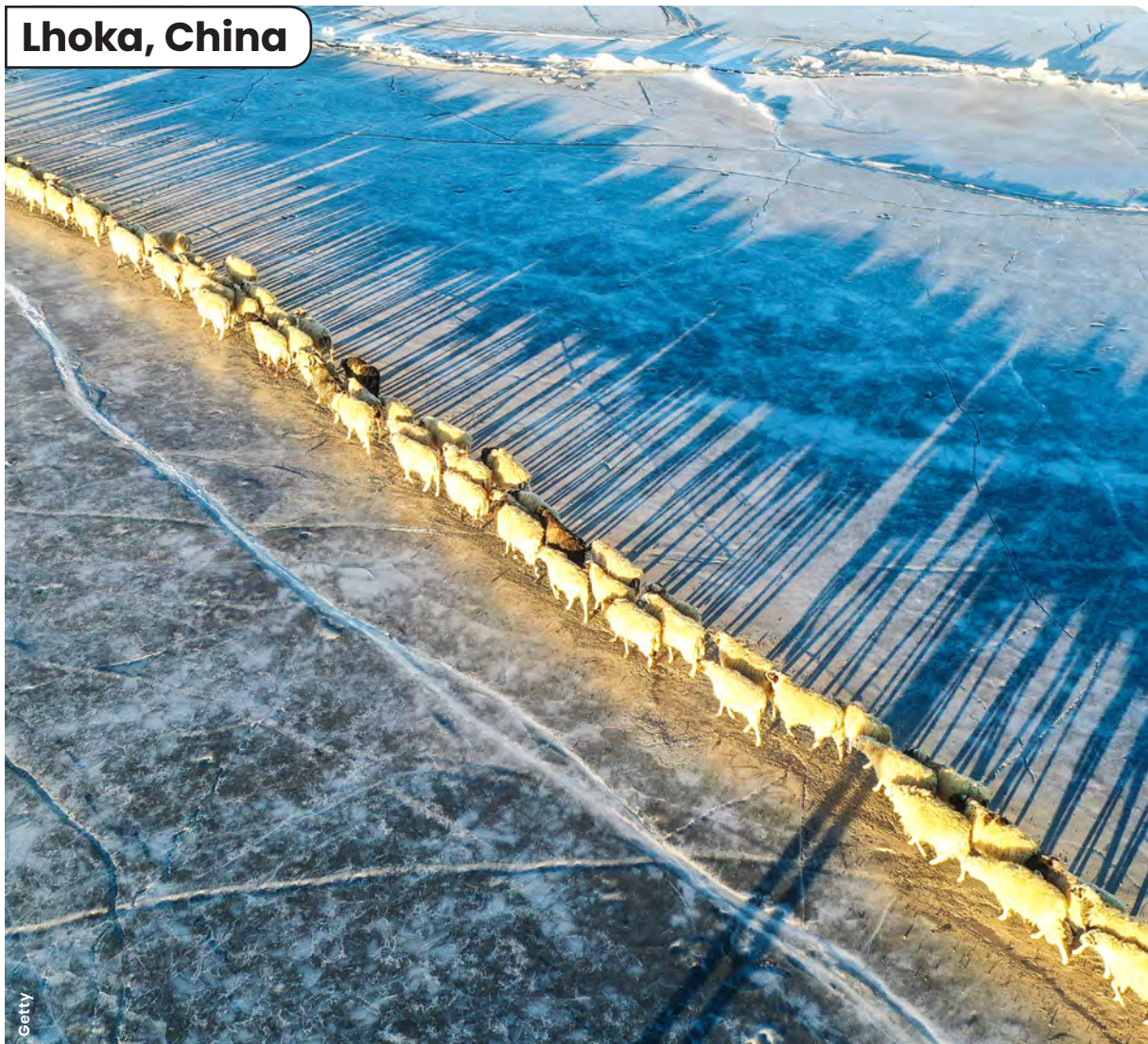
PRINCE William is shown how to make a 'tree hugger' during a trip to Scotland. The garden nesting boxes are designed and built by members of the Carnoustie and Monifeth Men's Shed in Angus. The Prince of Wales met with the group of volunteer crafters, as well as with young farmers, to talk about support for mental health.

Colorado, USA



SNOWBOARD star Dane Menzies of New Zealand goes head over heels during the Toyota US Grand Prix.

Lhoka, China



SHEEP form an orderly line as they cross the frozen Puma Yumco. They're making their way to an island in the middle of the lake that has enough grass in winter.

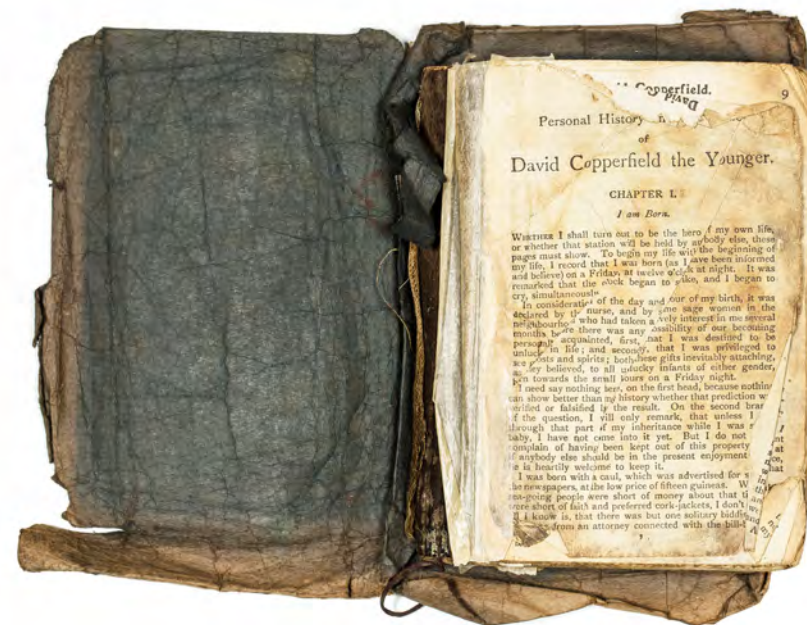


London, UK



All pics: Charles Dickens Museum, London

THE Charles Dickens Museum is officially 100 years old! In 1925, the English novelist's first family home at 48-49 Doughty Street escaped demolition and was turned into a museum. This image shows people celebrating its opening on 9 June 1925 – the 55th anniversary of the death of Dickens. Some of Dickens' greatest treasures are on display there in a new exhibition. These include the binoculars he used to watch boats and dolphins on a trip to America, and the stained copy of *David Copperfield* taken to Antarctica on Captain Scott's famous 1910 expedition. Dickens in Doughty Street: 100 Years of the Charles Dickens Museum runs until 29 June.



BirdsEye
is on the lookout for the
best words
on a plate



WIN
£1,000
Worth of
book vouchers



Make meals more fun with Alphabites

To celebrate 40 years of Alphabites, Birds Eye are teaming up with primary school teacher and TikTok influencer, Kit Brown, to find the nation's most creative words on a plate!

Do you have fun, clever, or inspiring words that you would like to share? We want to see how you or your child uses Alphabites to create the best "words on a plate!"

One lucky winner will receive £1,000 worth of book vouchers to glow-up their local school's library bookshelves with brand new books!

Plus, 10 runners-up will receive £50 book vouchers each.

enter now

www.alphabiteschallenge.co.uk

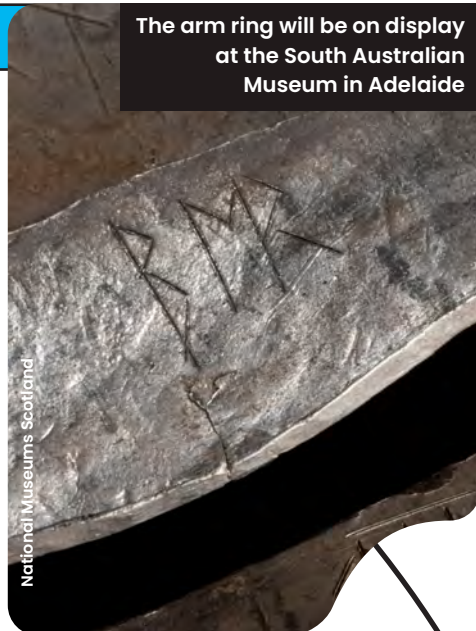
Full T&Cs - <https://www.birdseye.co.uk/our-brands/alphabites-challenge-terms-and-conditions>



GALLOWAY

Viking-age mystery solved

Mysterious carvings on treasure buried more than 1,000 years ago have been translated. The Galloway Hoard was discovered in 2014 by metal detectorists in Balmaghie. Containing over 5kg of silver, gold and other materials dating to around 900 ACE, it's the richest collection of Viking-age objects ever found in Britain or Ireland. Now, we have a better idea of who might have owned it, thanks to work by National Museums Scotland. Written in runes (letters in an ancient alphabet), carvings on an arm ring seem to translate as "this is the community's wealth/property", suggesting that the treasure belonged to the whole community.



The arm ring will be on display at the South Australian Museum in Adelaide

National Museums Scotland



Cambridge Festival

CAMBRIDGE

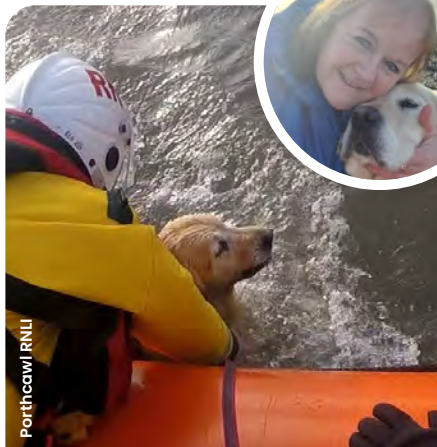
Festival of family fun

Exciting experiments and amazing authors are coming to town for this year's Cambridge Festival. A 17-day programme of (mostly) free events is set to engage families and inspire creativity. Highlights include a performance by Michael Rosen, who'll be reading out some of the nation's most beloved stories, and explosive chemical demonstrations by Dr Peter Wothers. There'll also be plenty of hands-on activities, such as escape rooms and robot building. Cambridge Festival 2025 runs from 19 March to 4 April. The full programme is due to be announced on 17 February, with bookings opening on the same day.

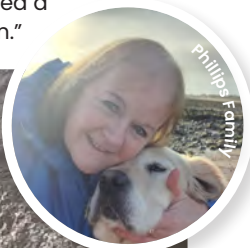
PORTHCAWL

Rescue dog rescued

A spooked rescue dog was saved by a lifeboat crew after getting stranded at sea. Seren, a three-year-old golden retriever, had been with her new family for only five weeks. She had darted out of owner Andrea's car on Newton Beach after being startled, and ran into the sea. Andrea phoned the Coastguard, who called out Porthcawl RNLI. They launched and found an exhausted Seren swimming 300m from the shore. She was taken on board, shaken but unharmed. Andrea said: "I can't thank the volunteer RNLI crew enough for saving Seren. They turned a nightmare into a dream."

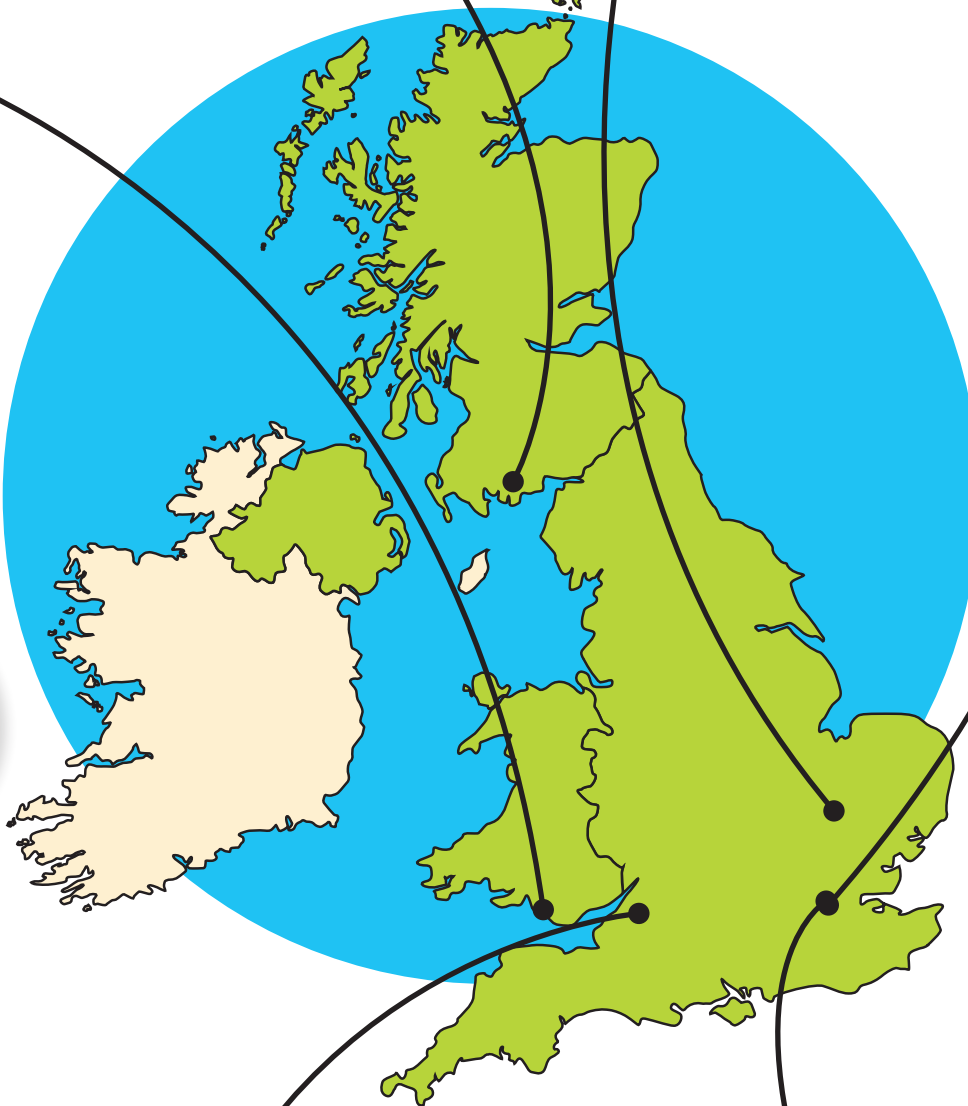


Reunited: Andrea and Seren (inset)



Phillips Family

Porthcawl RNLI



David Aaron davidaron.com

See the fully painted inner sarcophagus of Princess Sopedet-em-haawt

LONDON

Trip down the Nile

Are you ready to uncover secrets of the Nile? Making Egypt is a new exhibition at Young V&A that explores how ancient Egyptians went about their lives, and how they inspired creativity through unique art and design. Artefacts including tools and jewellery spanning more than 5,500 years will be on display to take visitors back in time. Modern-day toys and games, such as *Minecraft* and LEGO (see p19), will bring to life the building blocks of ancient Egyptian architecture, too. Making Egypt runs at Young V&A from 15 February to 2 November.

BATH

Road closed for toads

A road has been closed for six weeks to allow thousands of small animals to make the journey to a breeding lake. Crossing Charlcombe Lane used to be dangerous for toads, frogs and newts. Before the closure of the road in 2003, 62% of amphibians (three in five) attempting to cross were killed by traffic. Volunteers keep them safe now by patrolling the area and picking up the animals in buckets to transport them safely. Last year, 3,200 amphibians were helped across the half-mile (0.8km) stretch of road. Only 6% (one in 20) of the toads were killed.



istock



London Transport Museum

Meet the musicians!

LONDON

Join the jazz train

Talented young musicians from the capital's leading music schools are performing most Fridays for visitors at the London Transport Museum. Running from today (14 February) until October, the Transported by Culture: Music programme will see classical and jazz stars give special performances in the iconic museum. The museum is bringing more art, culture and design into its programming, inspired by the vibrant theatres of the West End. In turn, the performances give the rising musicians some vital real-world performance experience. The live music, on selected Friday afternoons, is free as part of the museum entrance fee.



ZOMBIE SPIDERS IN THE UK

SCIENTISTS have identified a new species of zombie-spider fungus after it was discovered during filming for the BBC's *Winterwatch* series in Northern Ireland.

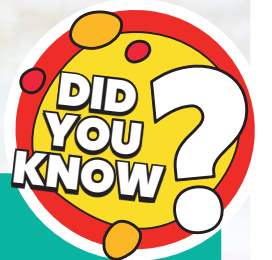
There are many types of fungus that turn insects such as ants and spiders into zombies, as they release substances that trick the insects' brains into carrying out strange behaviours. The most well-known examples are in ants, where the fungus makes the ant climb high into plants and cling onto a leaf. There, the fungus grows out of the ant, before shedding its spores all over the ground below, where it can be picked up by more ants and repeat the cycle.

Most examples are found in tropical regions, but the discovery in a gunpowder store in Castle Espie in County Down led researchers to investigate. A caving expert called Tim Fogg went on the hunt and found more examples on two species of spider in caves in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The spiders had all left their lairs to die in exposed places, such as the walls and roofs of caves.

Researchers writing in *Fungal Systematics and Evolution* say that these fungi in the UK haven't been studied very much, but that they can have a large impact on populations. That's why they recommend carrying out more research so that we can learn more about their effects and how they 'take over' a spider's brain.



THIS new species of fungus has been named *Gibellula attenboroughii* in honour of Sir David Attenborough, who helped set up the BBC's Natural History Unit after he was named as the controller of BBC2 in 1965 (above).



A ZOMBIE fungus that infects humans has been the subject of a popular sci-fi videogame and TV series, but thankfully experts say that the human body is too warm for most fungi to grow on. Our nervous systems are also much more complicated than those of insects, so you don't need to worry about becoming a zombie!

A spider that has been infected with the zombie fungus and climbed up onto the roof of a cave to die

Fossil helps to quack the case

THE discovery of a fossilised skull in Antarctica has helped to settle a decades-old mystery that has baffled researchers.

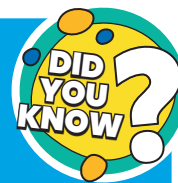
The skull belongs to the oldest known modern bird species, *Vegavis iaai*, which has been named after Vega, the Antarctic island where it was discovered.

The 69-million-year-old fossil is the most complete one ever found of this species. Before now, it was only known from small pieces of bone.

Scientists writing in *Nature* say that the new find has helped to confirm that the creature was definitely an ancestor of modern birds. It has a lot of features similar to ducks, but also had powerful jaw muscles that suggest it dived underwater to feed, like birds such as grebes and loons.

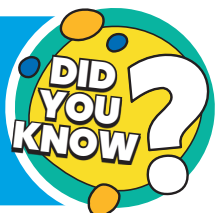
Fossils from the same time from other parts of the world are nothing like this one, and the researchers say that "something very different was happening in the far south of Antarctica".

ALTHOUGH Antarctica now is a cold and barren place, it was warm and covered in greenery 66 million years ago when the dinosaurs were wiped out.



The unusual bird has some features similar to ducks and some that are more like diving birds

THE skull was discovered way back in 2011, but it was surrounded by such hard rock that scientists had to spend hundreds of hours chipping it out!



This report is from the Science Museum Group

SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

IF you're setting a timer, you're probably relying on an alarm that will ring when time has run out. But what if you could use your nose instead?

Chinese incense clocks, like the one pictured here, have been used for more than 1,000 years. They measure time by burning powdered incense along a pre-measured path, with each stencil representing a different amount of time. The more complex the path, the longer the incense will burn; some clocks could even burn for several days at a time.

When time would run out, the incense would stop burning, and you'd be able to know time is up by smell alone. Some users also used different perfumes of incense at different parts of the path, allowing them to tell the time with just a sniff.



Who knew you could tell the time with your nose?



BADGER ADMIRES 'BANKSY'

A PERFECTLY-timed photograph of a badger glancing up at Banksy-style street art has won the Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice Award.

British photographer Ian Wood captured the magical moment, titled *No Access*, in St Leonards-on-Sea, where a Eurasian badger seems to admire the graffiti version of itself under a streetlight.

Mr Wood had seen badgers out looking for food scraps. Explaining how the shot came about, he said: "I thought it'd be fun to put the graffiti there and see if I could get a badger walking underneath it," he told the BBC.

American crayfish threaten UK waters

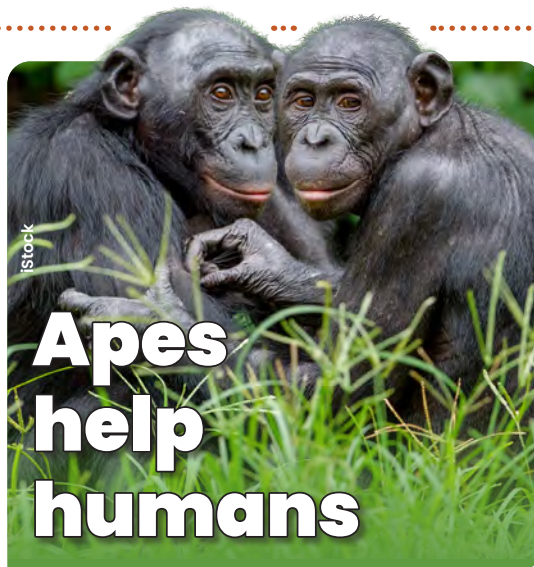
AN aggressive American crayfish that can walk on land is causing serious concerns across the UK and other countries in Europe.

The red swamp crayfish has been spotted in 16 places in England, including London's Hampstead Heath ponds.

These tiny invaders, only 9cm (3.5in) long, can dig deep holes in riverbanks, and spread deadly diseases to UK crayfish. They'll eat almost anything in their path, from plants to small animals.

The North American native species is incredibly tough, can survive in different water conditions and even move across land.

Natural predators like birds, eels and foxes are helping to control their numbers, but scientists are racing to find ways to stop these unwanted guests from spreading further across British waters.



Apes help humans

SCIENTISTS at an American university have shown that bonobos know when someone is missing vital information, and will help them out.

Three bonobos took part in experiments where treats were hidden under cups. The researchers found that when a human hadn't seen where a treat had been placed, the apes would quickly point to the right cup. The bonobo could have the treat if the human could find it.

The team says it means that apes, like humans, can understand what others know – an ability scientists previously thought only humans had.

The work by researchers at Johns Hopkins University was published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.



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...

PANGOLIN



HABITAT:

A variety of habitats including tropical forests and grasslands of Asia and Africa.

FUN FACT:

They have long, sticky tongues that are longer than their bodies, which they use to Hoover up their favourite snack of ants and termites.

SPECIAL SUPERPOWER:

Pangolins are the only mammals with scales covering their bodies from head to tail, which protects them from most predators.

CONSERVATION STATUS:

All eight species of pangolin are protected under international law. The International Union for Conservation of Nature lists three of them as critically endangered.



Aneeshwar's pangolin 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.





SPOT THE DAFFODIL!

THIS spring the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) needs your help to map the country's most popular plant – the daffodil.

The gardening charity's team of plant scientists want to know which types of daffodils are popular where, so that they can understand if our warming world is encouraging them to flower earlier.

What do daffodils mean?

Daffodils have held various meanings and significance over time – as well as being the national flower of Wales.

In Roman times they were known to be planted at the graves of fallen soldiers, while in Judaism they're celebrated for their resemblance to the six-pointed star of David (an important religious symbol). In the Victorian era, when many flowers were given different meanings, the flower stood for 'resilience' (strength in difficult times) – no doubt because of its flowering in the winter months before many others.

In the modern day the daffodil is of huge importance to medicine, with the bulb known to contain a chemical called galantamine that can help treat people with Alzheimer's disease, a common cause of dementia that can affect people's memory.

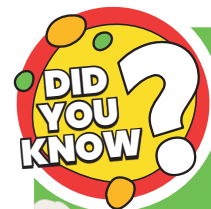
Flowers under threat

Only 100 years ago, daffodils were facing a serious threat of extinction due to eelworm, which steadily infected the bulbs. A scientist at the RHS developed a hot water treatment for the parasite that saved the daffodil industry and is still used today as a precaution. So, for now, the plant remains popular in pots, beds and borders, and as cut flowers in the home.

How can I take part in daffodil mapping?

To take part in the Daffodil Diaries mapping research you will need to ask an adult to visit the RHS website and log basic information about a daffodil you've found flowering in a garden, public park or other space. This includes daffodil height, colour and location, and you'll also be guided through identifying its type. Like Kálmán, you might be a daffodil expert before long!

For more information about Daffodil Diaries, visit rhs.org.uk/daffodildiaries.



VICTORIAN nurseryman Peter Barr was known as the Daffodil King. He collected a huge variety of daffodils from around the world at his nursery (a place to keep plants) in Tooting, South London. Although it's now shut, rare varieties of daffodil are still known to spring from the ground there.



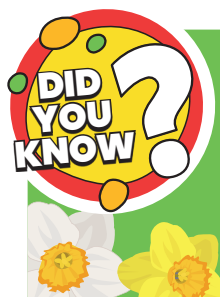
A bulb with masses of eelworms at its base

"For me, daffodils herald the arrival of spring, and their different shapes and colours highlight the brilliance of gardeners from the past, who worked relentlessly to breed new varieties."

– Kálmán Könyves, who works for the RHS as a horticultural taxonomist (someone who identifies and names plants)



All pics: © RHS



ALTHOUGH daffodils are often yellow with a trumpet-like middle, there are known to be almost 32,000 different varieties around the world, 400 of which can be found in the UK. And perhaps more surprisingly, they can be red, pink, orange, white and even green.



WOOD YOU BELIEVE IT?

istock

BEAVERS in the Czech Republic have saved local officials millions, after building their dams in the exact location where a dam project was due to begin.

Officials were seeking building permits to create a dam in a protected landscape area of Brdy, but were beaten to the job when a colony of beavers stepped in and did it for them – for free and without getting permission!

The project was set to cost authorities 30 million crown (about £1m) and needed lots of people's approval. But the beavers chose to build natural dams in the exact area needed, in just a few days, without a single human needing to get involved.

Environmentalists say that the beavers have managed to create a wetland and pools that will help local wildlife such as rare stone crayfish and frogs to thrive.

Baby shark mystery

A MYSTERIOUS baby shark has been born at a US aquarium, despite its mother having no contact with male sharks for more than three years!

Staff at Shreveport Aquarium in Louisiana discovered the baby swell shark, Yoko, which hatched from an egg.

Experts have two explanations. One is that it could be 'parthenogenesis', where females have babies that are identical copies of the mother. The other is a delayed process after mating, but scientists don't know that much about either option. Blood tests will be done when Yoko is bigger to solve this underwater mystery.



shreveport.aquarium

Sleepy seal surprise



A GREY seal caused chaos after sneaking into a hotel room in Vlissingen in the Netherlands and taking a nap on the floor.

After hotel staff were told about the unexpected guest, animal rescue experts were called to assist.

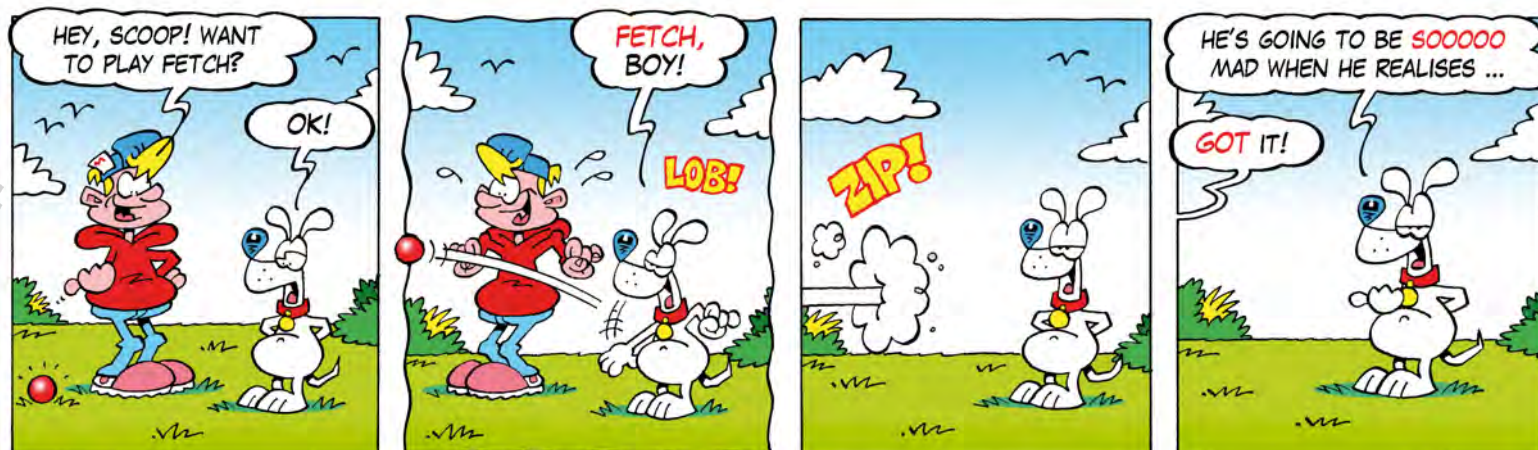
The grumpy seal, unhappy about being woken up, was carefully moved into a seal basket.

Rescuers later released the tired marine mammal at a peaceful spot on the beach.



Paper Boy!

Written and illustrated by Paul Palmer



If you have any concerns, you can contact Childline for support on 0800 1111 or childline.org.uk.



THE HIDDEN COST OF SCAMS

TUESDAY 11 February marked Safer Internet Day, the UK's biggest celebration of online safety. Set up by the UK Safer Internet Centre, the day saw thousands of organisations promote the safe, responsible and positive use of digital technology for children and young people. This year, the focus was on protecting yourself and others from scams online.

LOGIN

WHAT IS A SCAM?

An online scam is a trick designed to get hold of personal information or money. It can happen on any online platform. For example, scammers can create fake profiles and adverts that look like they are from well-known brands, which trick people into giving away personal details about themselves or buying fake products.

MORE THAN JUST MONEY

According to research conducted by Vodafone, nearly one million British children aged 11-16 have been scammed online in the last year. In fact, nearly half (49%) of the young people who took part in the study said they'd been targeted by more spam content in the last 12 months than ever before.

While scams can lead to financial loss (roughly £103 per young person), they can cause a bigger impact on mental health.

HOW DOES BEING SCAMMED MAKE YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL?

- Young people report feeling angry and disappointed at themselves.
- Many say they can't stop worrying after being scammed, and some even stop doing the things they love online, like playing games or watching videos.
- Parents have noticed long-lasting effects, with their children becoming anxious and sad after being scammed.
- Teachers have also seen changes in their students' behaviour and overall wellbeing.

The fear of being scammed online also impacts people who haven't experienced them directly. For one in ten young people, being scammed is their biggest online safety concern, while over three-quarters said this fear causes them worry when they go online.



HOW CAN WE HELP?

SAFETY FIRST

Many of the scams that target young people take advantage of the way online platforms are designed. Vodafone supports calls to protect children from scammers by making the internet safe by design. This means creating platforms that are built to keep young people safe from the start.

CREATING A POP-UP HUB FOR FAMILIES

Vodafone's study also found that most parents want more support and guidance in speaking to their children about online safety.

So, as part of its ongoing commitment in this area and with the help of the NSPCC, Vodafone will be opening a 'Phish 'N' Tips' shop in Central London to offer families free, expert advice on how to spot online scams and deal with them.

While talking about online scams can be tough, the Phish 'N' Tips shop will provide parents and young people with a relaxed, non-judgemental space to drop in and talk, all while enjoying delicious complimentary fish and chips. For families unable to come down, Vodafone will be releasing helpful bitesize videos online.

FURTHER SUPPORT

Vodafone wants everyone to get the most out of tech and enjoy happy and safe digital lives. For further expert advice, resources and support to help you to make the right digital choices, visit vodafone.co.uk/digitalparenting.

And, if you or someone you know has been scammed online, you should report it to Action Fraud or call 0300 123 2040 (in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or report it to Police Scotland by calling 101 (in Scotland).

DON'T MISS IT!

The Vodafone Phish 'N' Tips Shop will be open on Thursday 20 February from 11am to 5:30pm at 12 Tottenham St, London W1T 4RE



USA

Cristiano Ronaldo statue unveiled in New York

Football – or ‘soccer’ – may not be the USA’s biggest sport, but you have to go a long way to find someone who doesn’t know who Cristiano Ronaldo is! The legend of the game turned 40 last week, and to celebrate his big birthday, fans flocked to see a 12ft (3.6m) statue of him unveiled in New York’s famous Times Square. The team behind the statue says that it’s a tribute to Ronaldo, “not just as a sportsman, but as a cultural icon who has inspired billions around the globe.” Its painted in the green and red colours of his national team, Portugal. The ex-Man United and Real Madrid hero currently plays for Al Nassr in Saudi Arabia.



‘CR7’ has over 900 goals in his career



ITALY

€10 maximum price



Half a million visitors paid the fee in 2024, raising £2 million

Venice doubles its entry fee

Just ahead of Valentine’s Day, one of the most romantic cities in the world, Venice, announced that it’s doubling its entry fee this year for last-minute day-trippers. On 29 dates last year, a €5 (£4.20) fee was charged to day-trippers, to try to reduce overcrowding. This year, it’s €10 (£8.40), set to be charged on 54 dates. It’s for visitors who aren’t staying overnight, and visit Venice between 8:30am and 4pm. If they book four or more days in advance, it’s half price. Simone Venturini, the city’s tourism councillor, says the fee works, and helps to give the “unique” city “the respect it merits.”



EL SALVADOR

El Salvador offers to help hold US prisoners



La Esperanza prison

El Salvador has offered to house “dangerous American criminals” in one of its jails, as well as foreign criminals who are being deported (expelled) from the USA. President Nayib Bukele said he’d put them in La Esperanza prison, which holds a lot of El Salvador’s gang members, in exchange for a “relatively low” fee. The offer was made to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, during Mr Rubio’s trip through

Central America. “No country’s ever made an offer of friendship such as this,” said Mr Rubio afterwards. US President Donald Trump says he’d send dangerous US criminals to prisons in other countries “in a heartbeat”, if it was legal. However, Leti Volpp, a law professor at the University of California, says that the US is “absolutely prohibited” from deporting its own citizens, whether they’re in jail or not.



BERMUDA

Cat whisked away to new job in Bermuda

A retired cat, who used to hunt mice in the Foreign Office in London, has got a new job on the island paradise of Bermuda! Palmerston, a black and white puss, was a rescue cat when he got his mouse-hunting job in 2016. He was loved by staff and was adopted by a diplomat called Andrew Murdoch. Now, Mr Murdoch has been appointed as the Governor of Bermuda, so Palmerston has come out of retirement to work with him in the tiny Atlantic territory. On his joke social media account, Palmerston posted that he’d been lured out of retirement by the “purr-fect” role of “feline relations consultant” – and that he’s been “busy meeting very welcoming Bermudians.” Good luck, Palmerston!



The Foreign Office says Palmerston “will attend only the meetings he deems important”



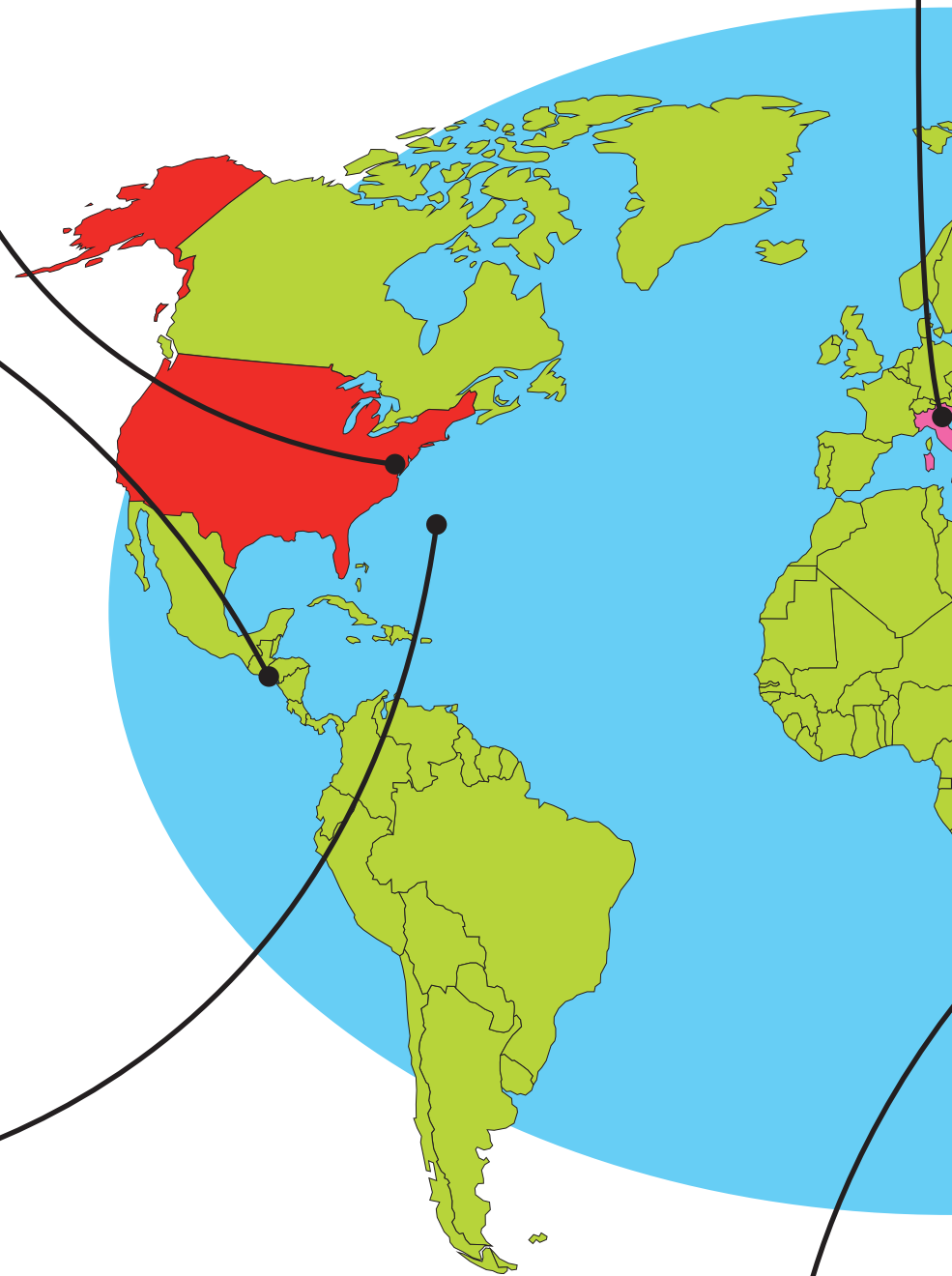
INDIA

Ed Sheeran busted for busking

Many people would be thrilled to bump into pop star Ed Sheeran singing and strumming his guitar on a random street. However, when that happened in the city of Bengaluru last weekend, a policeman brought it to a sudden stop, saying that he wasn’t allowed to perform there! In a viral clip, Sheeran is heard telling fans: “We had permission to do this. This policeman is shutting it down.” Officials said that Sheeran’s request to perform on Church Street had been rejected to prevent the shopping area becoming overcrowded. Politician PC Mohan said: “Even global stars must follow local rules – no permit, no performance!”



Sheeran is on a concert tour in India





SOUTH KOREA

Airports to get bird detectors

All airports in South Korea have been ordered to install bird detection cameras in order to prevent flying accidents. In December, South Korea suffered its worst-ever air disaster when 179 people were killed on board a Boeing 737-800 that crash-landed. The cause is still unknown, but the pilot had told air traffic control workers that the plane had struck a bird, and investigators have found feathers and blood stains on both engines. Korean airline Air Busan has also banned portable chargers from overhead bins after one overheated, caught light and destroyed one of its planes on 28 January.



Bird detectors will be compulsory in 2026



JAPAN



A record 129cm of snow fell in 12 hours in Obihiro, Hokkaido

Cities buried under thick snowfall

The most powerful cold weather in years dumped heavy snow across large parts of Japan last week, shutting schools, burying cars and stopping trains and flights. Hokkaido – the most northerly of Japan's main islands – was the hardest-hit by the country's chilliest temperatures this winter, which fell below -10°C. Residents

were told to fit snow tyres to their cars, and to avoid leaving home altogether, if they could. It followed an unusually warm January – organisers of a snow festival in Sapporo even had to import enough snow to fill 2,500 trucks, just so that the festival, with its 200 ice and snow sculptures, could go ahead.



AUSTRALIA

Jail for Nazi salutes under new hate crime laws

Australia has announced new anti-hate laws that mean people who perform Nazi salutes in public will automatically go to jail. The Nazis ran Germany between 1933 and 1945, and were behind the Holocaust, in which six million Jewish people across Europe were murdered. Since the start of the war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas, there has been a spike in attacks on Jewish properties in Australia. The new laws also aim to tackle attacks against people for things like their race, religion or nationality, or if they are part of the LGBTQ+ community.



The Nazi salute is also illegal in other countries, including Germany and Austria



NEW ZEALAND

Hardest Geezer's next epic challenge!

British extreme runner Russ Cook has announced his next crazy challenge – to run the entire length of New Zealand! That's both its North Island and South Island. The 27-year-old will cross mountains, forests and cities on his way along the 1,864 mile (3,000km) Te Araroa trail next month. Last year, he completed a 352-day run across the whole continent of Africa, from north to south, raising £1 million for charity. Russ said: "Luckily a lovely British diet of sausage rolls and roast dinner really sorted me out... we're ready to go again!"



Russ is from Worthing in West Sussex



SRI LANKA

Monkey cuts power to an entire country

Sri Lankan officials have blamed a monkey for causing a nationwide power cut across the island. Its energy minister, Kumara Jayakody, said that a monkey had got into a power station near the city of Colombo and come into contact with a transformer, shutting down power at 11am on Sunday 9 February. There are 22 million people in Sri Lanka, and between two and three million toque macaques. They're coming into contact more frequently, with humans straying into forests and monkeys raiding villages for food.



Monkey numbers are booming



WHY DO SO MANY CHILDREN FEEL LONELY?



LONELINESS is something we all experience from time to time, but sometimes it can be tricky to cope with those feelings. This week on *FYI*, the team look at the problem of loneliness and get advice from scientist and content creator Big Manny.



THE NHS says that in 2023, 5.5% (about 1 in 20) children aged 11 to 16 said they often or always felt lonely.

Getty



WATCH THE VIDEO

Hear Big Manny's advice about loneliness by getting a responsible adult to scan the QR code below.



EXPERIENCING LONELINESS

Children's charity the NSPCC says that loneliness is one of the main reasons why children contact Childline about their mental health, and it's especially a problem at this time of year, during the dark winter months. This isn't surprising, as there are so many reasons why somebody might feel lonely. Being bullied, starting at a new school or seeing others

having fun on social media and feeling like you are missing out are just a few. It's really common to feel lonely at some point in your life but, for some people, loneliness goes on for a very long time, which can be really hard. So, it's really important to look out for those around you who you think might be experiencing loneliness.



Big Manny is an ambassador for Childline

BIG MANNY'S TOP TIPS TO HELP YOU COMBAT LONELINESS

1 Do things that make you feel **positive**

Try your best to take part in activities you enjoy, like playing sport, listening to music, reading a book or drawing. Small, positive actions can have a massive impact on your mood.



2 Take care of yourself

Taking care of your body can have a really positive effect on your mental health. This includes things like eating well, staying hydrated and getting enough sleep.



3 Find ways to **socialise**

Prioritising socialising can help to reduce feelings of loneliness. You could join a club, connect with peers at school or reach out to a trusted friend.



4 Make a **schedule** for yourself

Homework, exams, social groups, family – sometimes it's all a bit much to juggle. But what you can do is put aside a specific amount of time for each activity, to prioritise what's important. For example, you could spend an hour and a half studying and two to three hours with family and friends. If you get the important tasks out of the way first, you can enjoy your leisure time without feeling guilty. It's hard to have a good time with homework and revision on your mind, so get that done first.



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.

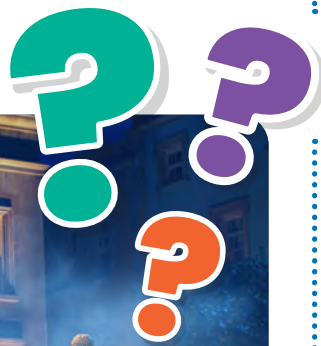


FYI is a weekly news show from Sky Kids that helps you stay up to date with what's going on in the world. You can watch loads of cool videos from them by heading to first.news/fyi or on the *First News* app.



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 article, then turn the page upside down to see if you were right.



AARDMAN MAKES BAFTA PROMISE

AARDMAN Animations has promised that if it wins Best Animated Film for *Wallace and Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl* at this week's BAFTAs, it'll make a brand-new film introducing a sister for Gromit! The BBC announced the latest film as the most-watched animation on British TV since records began!



Aardman Animations Ltd 2024

Check out more on spotting fake news at:

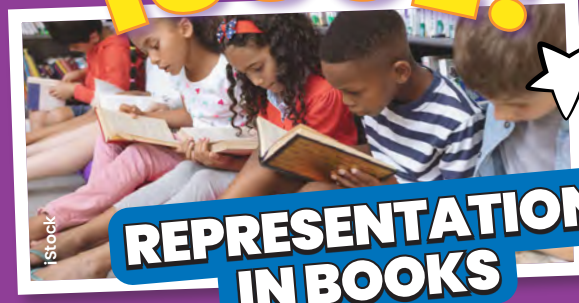
- first.news/takeorfact • first.news/spotfakenews

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 **FAKE**. The recent film has been nominated for Best Animated Film at the BAFTAs, but Aardman hasn't said it will make a new film if it wins. This shows how misquoting people can easily lead to the spread of false information. However, the most-watched record part is true!

IN NEXT WEEK'S **ISSUE!**



REPRESENTATION IN BOOKS



THE SWIMATHON CHALLENGE



DON'T MISS IT!

NEW DISNEY PIXAR SERIES!

FirstNews WEEKLY NEWS QUIZ!

Leaderboards

Rank	Name	Score
1	Tommyc	790
2	Lychee	553
3	Ems	535
4	Nina	399
5	EESHIE	393

Question 1 of 10 **SPORT**

Which sport was recently featured in the headlines for Winter Olympics?

FirstNews WEEKLY NEWS QUIZ!

YOUR BRAIN VS THE NEWS!

Think you've got what it takes?



CAPTAIN CHAOS!

WANT the lowdown on Marvel's latest big-screen adventure? The cast and crew of *Captain America: Brave New World* speak to Adam Tanswell for this epic *First News* scoop...

THE STORY

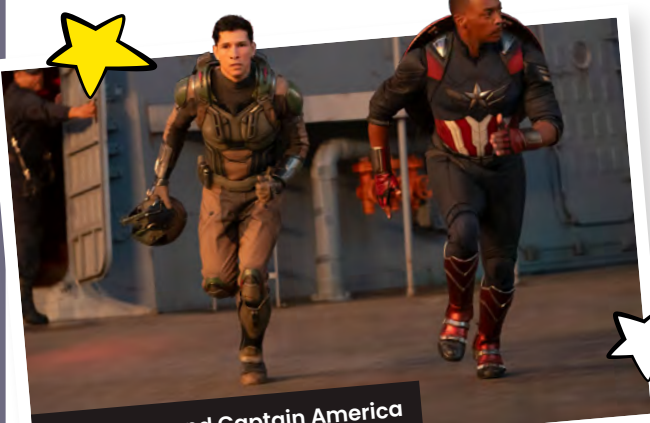
Captain America: Brave New World is a superhero story filled with crazy action, spectacular stunts and some top-secret gadgets from the high-tech world of Wakanda.

STEP BACK IN TIME

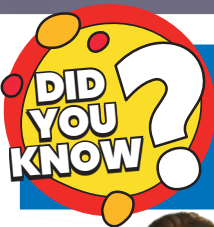
Here's the back story. At the end of *Avengers: Endgame*, Steve Rogers (played by Chris Evans) passed on Captain America's shield to Sam Wilson (played by Anthony Mackie). Before this, Sam helped the Avengers as the winged Falcon. In this new movie, he's now taken on the iconic title of Captain America.

MARVEL MAN

Anthony Mackie has appeared in many Marvel movies, but this one is extra special. "Sam has Wakandan technology in his wings," explains director Julius Onah. "He can absorb energy and emit it. There's a lot of really cool stuff, which gives him the opportunity to be surprising as our new Captain America. This is a film about heart, but it's also about his amazing skill set and tools."



The Falcon and Captain America



ANTHONY Mackie is a bit of a joker when the cameras stop rolling. He sets up jokes every couple of hours, says Danny, who plays the Falcon.



Prime Minister Ozaki, Captain America/Sam Wilson and President Thaddeus Ross

HULKING AROUND

Harrison Ford joins the cast as President Thaddeus Ross. He's also going to be seen as the monstrous Red Hulk! "I was looking forward to having a piece of the action," says Ford.

THE NEW CREW

Now that Sam Wilson is Captain America, a new character has stepped in to take over the role of the winged Falcon. That character's name is Joaquín Torres and he's played by Danny Ramirez. "It's an absolute honour to be entrusted to take over any mantle, let alone the Falcon," he reveals.

Captain America: Brave New World is in cinemas now, rated 12A.

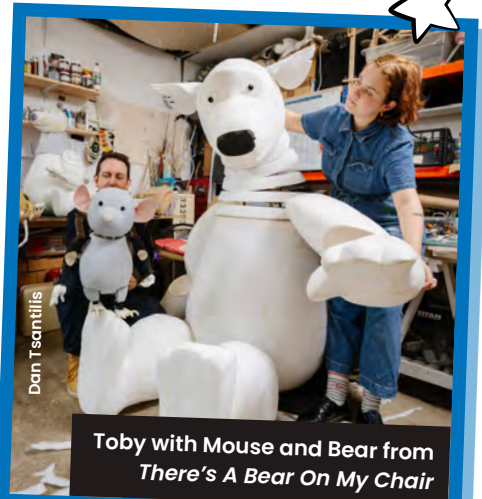


PUPPETEER TOBY OLIÉ

TO celebrate the Imagine Children's Festival at the Southbank Centre this half-term, puppeteer Toby Olié shares more about his exciting job and role in the show *There's A Bear On My Chair*.

How did you get into puppetry?

I made my first puppet at the age of six, inspired by an arts and crafts book I found in my school's library. This led to a childhood making things from leftover cardboard, cartons and toilet tubes. Puppetry felt like a combination of the two subjects I enjoyed most at school: art and drama. I then went on to study puppetry at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.



Toby with Mouse and Bear from *There's A Bear On My Chair*

What's been your favourite puppet ever to create?

Each puppet is so unique, I always find it hard to pick one! Here are three that were particularly challenging to create, and so very exciting to watch coming to life on stage: Ursula the sea witch from Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, The Elephantom, and Haku the dragon from *Spirited Away*.

Tell us about the puppets for *There's A Bear On My Chair*.

It felt important to me that fans of the books should feel like the characters have stepped off the page into a 3D reality! The puppeteers are some of the best in the UK, and the puppets are adorable and funny.

The Imagine Children's Festival runs from 18-23 February. Visit southbankcentre.co.uk to see what's on!



Music and movies celebrated!

This week is a big one for awards shows! First up there are the BAFTAs on 16 February, honouring the best movies and actors from the past year. Then there are the MOBOs on 18 February, celebrating black music and culture. Central Cee (pictured) has been nominated for three awards, while Raye has two nominations.



Getty

Red Nose Day is coming!

Have you signed up to take part in Red Nose Day yet? *Strictly Come Dancing* presenter Claudia Winkleman is getting in the spirit by donning one of this year's charity-tees from TK Maxx. The new T-shirts feature designs from the likes of Aardman and Rankin. Check out this Disney Pixar one!



Comic Relief





GAME OFF!



The series began in 2004 with *Football Manager 2005*, following on from the *Championship Manager* games released in the '90s

FOOTBALL Manager 25 has been cancelled after being delayed twice, its makers have announced.

One of the biggest decisions every year for fans of the long-running series is deciding which team to manage first in the new game.

Do you start further down the footballing pyramid and climb your way up the ladder, or take over a club already dominating their league? What tactics will help guide you to glory, and which young stars will you unearth?

Well, the answers to these all questions will have to wait until later this year at least.

Sports Interactive (SI), the maker of *Football Manager*, has confirmed that after a series of delays, the release of *FM 25* will not go ahead.

In a blog post, SI said the company had made the "difficult decision" to cancel the 2025 edition as it was "too far away from the standards you deserve".

Focus will instead shift to the 2026



edition of the game, with the next release usually due in November.

Players who pre-ordered *FM 25* will receive refunds.

What went wrong?

FM 25 was set to be the start of a new era for Sports Interactive. The developer had promised an exciting range of updates, including improved visuals, a new interface and the introduction of women's football.

However, last November, the game was pushed back to March 2025. Fans were disappointed but understanding, and continued to play previous editions of the game while they waited.

Despite months of hard work from staff at SI to polish the game, they decided that time was against them.

SI told fans that it didn't want to release the game after March "as it would be too late in the football season" to do so. It also apologised, saying "we know this will come as a huge disappointment".



Madden predicts Super Bowl

EA Sports' annual Super Bowl simulation took place before the real thing last weekend, but did it get the prediction for the big game correct?

Every year since 2004, EA has simulated the biggest game in American football on its videogame, *Madden NFL*.

It has had mixed fortunes with its predictions in recent years, after accurately predicting the winners four years in a row at the beginning of the tradition.

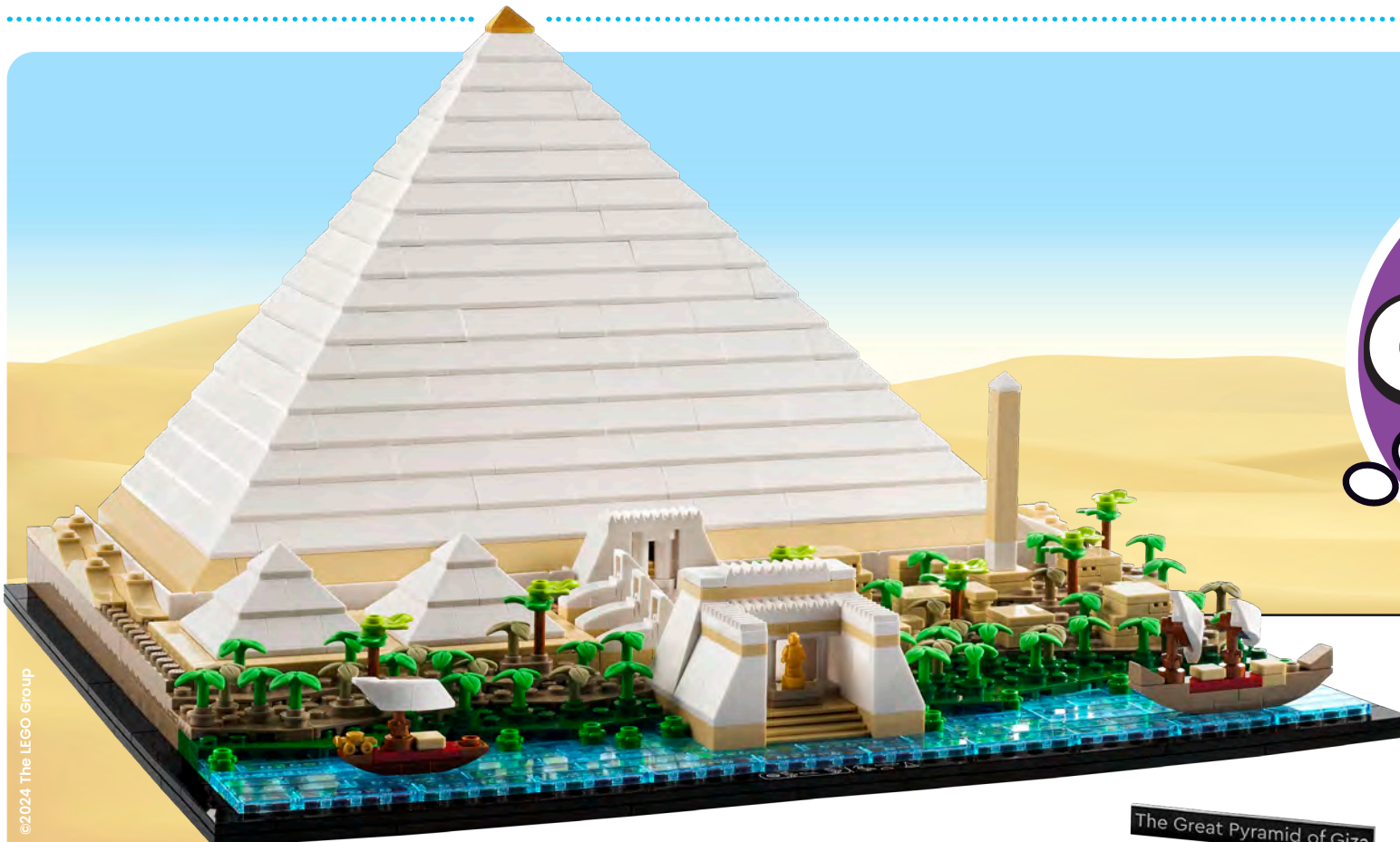
For 2025's Super Bowl LIX (59), EA's game predicted that the Philadelphia Eagles would beat the Kansas City Chiefs 23-21 in a close back-and-forth game.

While that wasn't the exact score, EA did get the result correct! The Eagles beat the Chiefs much more convincingly, winning 40-22.

Find out more about the match on p28.



The game wasn't as close as *Madden NFL* said it would be



It may not be life-size, but this LEGO Great Pyramid of Giza is just as impressive as the real thing!

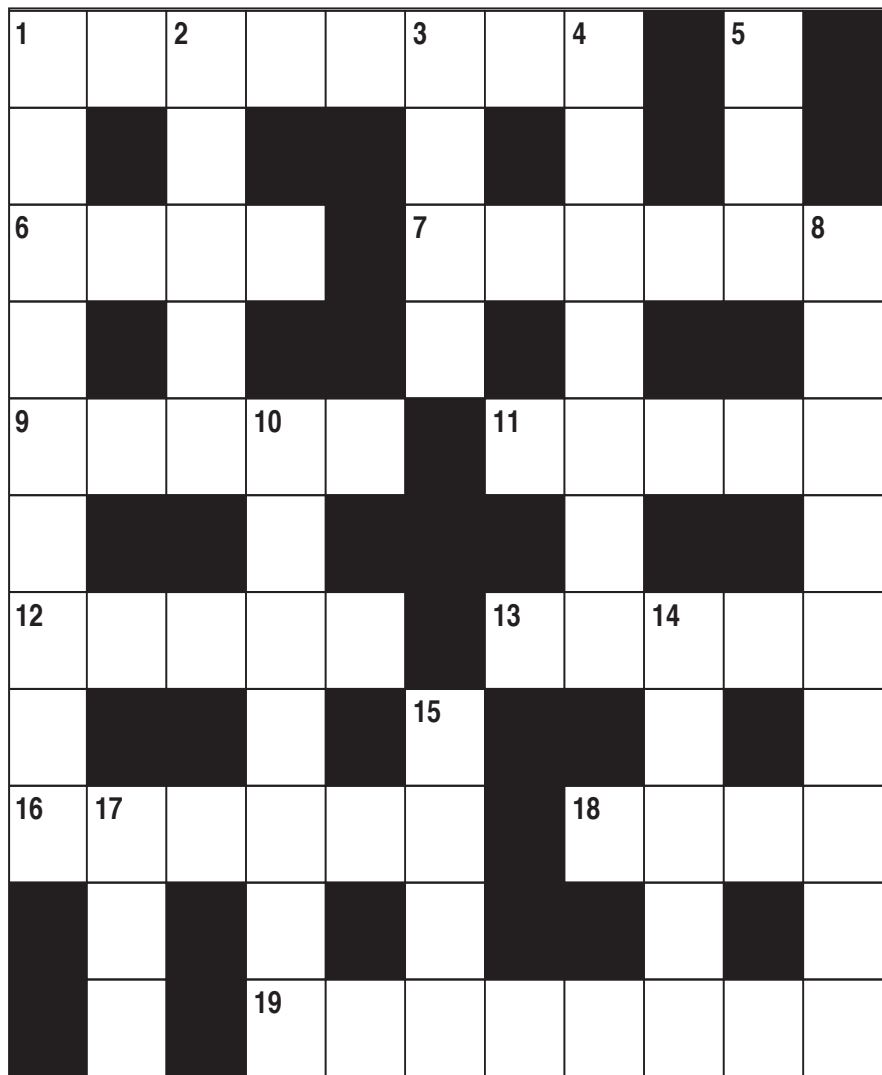
The model brings to life the building blocks of ancient Egyptian architecture at a new exhibition in London. Find out more on p8.

The Great Pyramid of Giza



CROSSWORD

CAN you solve our crossword puzzle using the clues below?



ACROSS

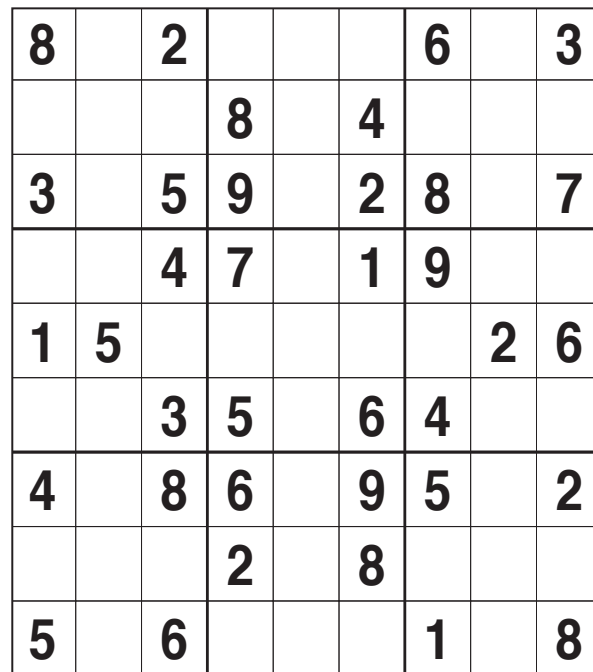
- 1 Place (8)
- 6 Nobleman (4)
- 7 Edible bulbs with several layers (6)
- 9 Goes up; increases (5)
- 11 Country where you'd find Beijing (5)
- 12 Live; be real (5)
- 13 Part of a tree (5)
- 16 Made the sound of a lion (6)
- 18 Very large (4)
- 19 Birds that are often found near the coast (8)

DOWN

- 1 White animal (5,4)
- 2 Kinds (5)
- 3 A person who is looked up to (4)
- 4 Not one or the other (7)
- 5 Star that gives us heat and light (3)
- 8 Handheld fireworks (9)
- 10 Makes certain (7)
- 14 Standard; regular (5)
- 15 Creative thought (4)
- 17 Nocturnal bird of prey (3)

Sudoku

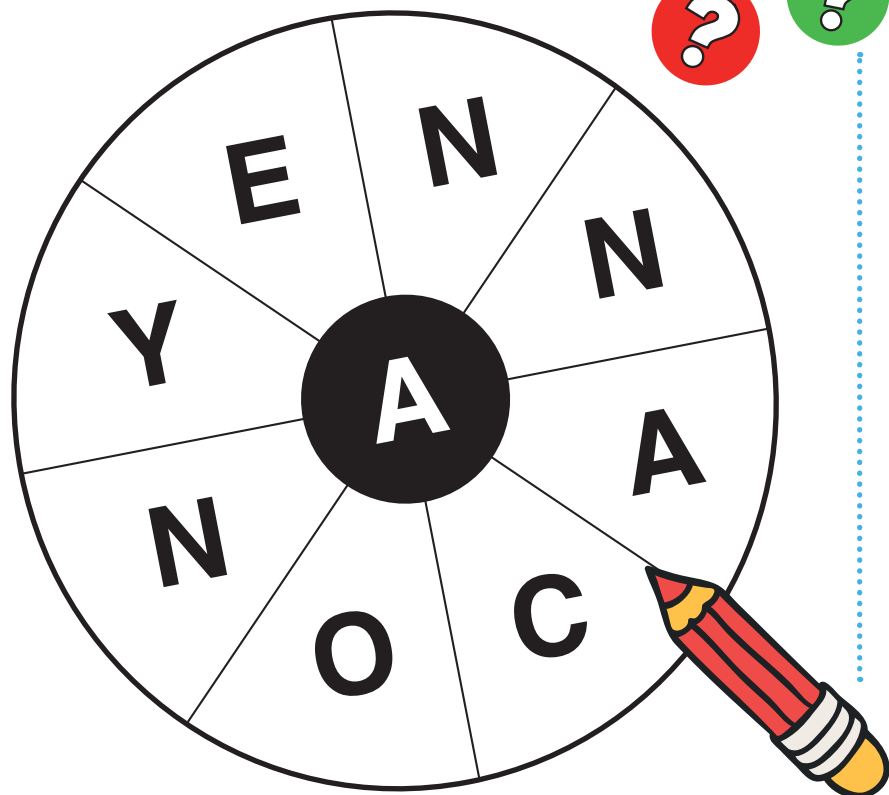
CAN you complete our sudoku puzzle, filling in the numbers one to nine?



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.

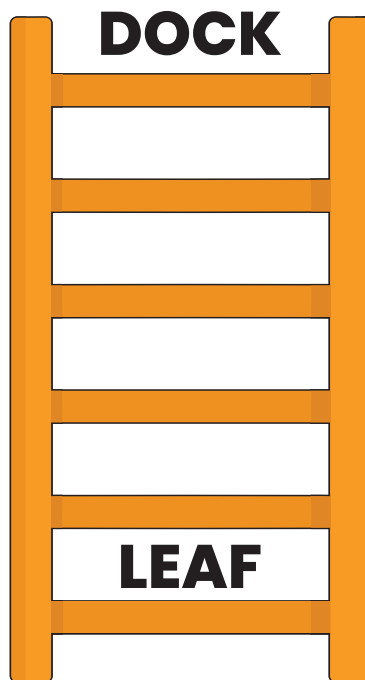
Word wheel

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?



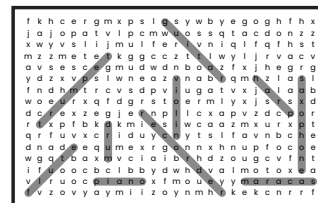
Word ladder

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 973 ANSWERS:

- Word wheel: performer.
- Word ladder: camp, came, dame, dare, dire, fire.
- Spot the difference: 1) Balloon is blue 2) White sticker on front of book 3) Equation missing off board 4) Test tubes missing 5) Boy's top has changed colour 6) Shorter table leg 7) Equation added to board 8) Boy's eyes have changed colour 9) Potion changed colour 10) Petri dish added on table.

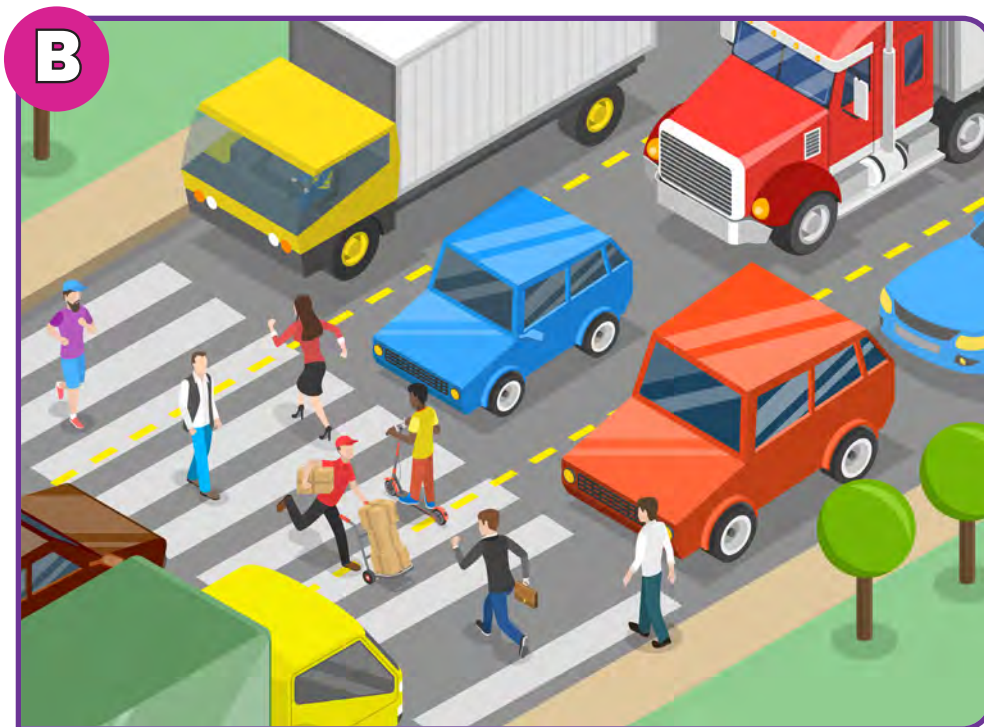
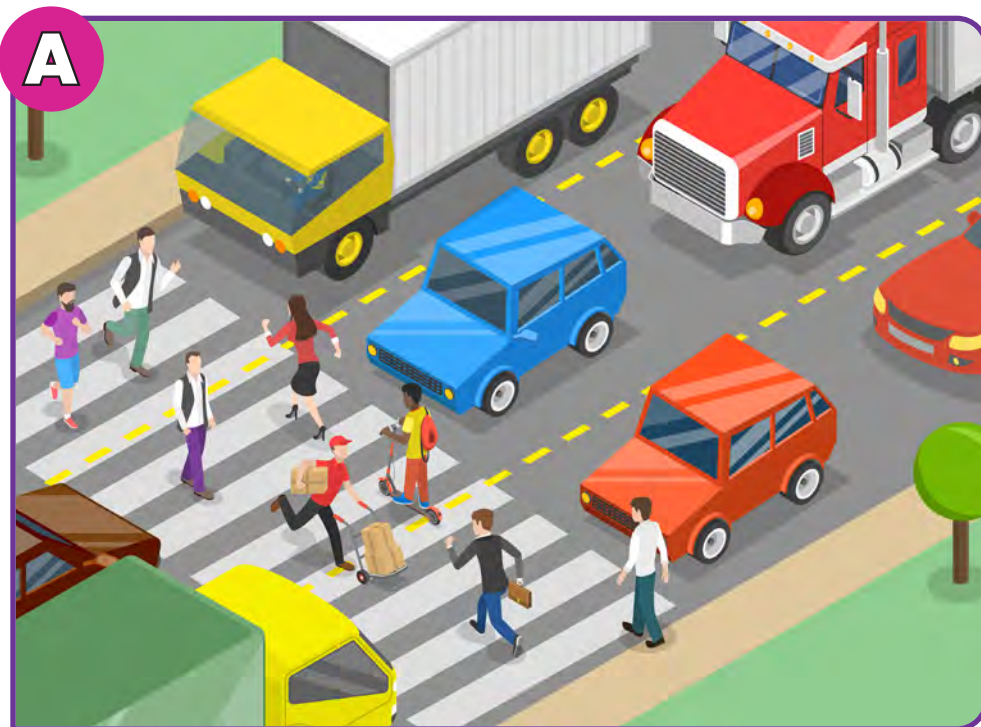


Enjoying the puzzles? See the *First News* app for more fun, quizzes and games! This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

CAN you spot the ten changes we've made to this busy road scene?



WWF

Advertisement feature



Get your daily dose of nature at school

CONNECTING with nature has been proven time and time again to work wonders for our wellbeing.

At school, nature connections can help boost our mood, improve our focus and help us to feel less stressed and anxious. But busy school lives mean that making time for nature can be tricky...

We think everyone deserves time in nature. So we're excited to launch our **daily dose of nature** classroom pack!

Packed with activities

Use WWF's FREE daily dose of nature poster and stickers in your classroom to get some quick and simple daily doses of nature and record how much time you can spend connecting with

our amazing natural world throughout the spring and summer months.

You can also find lots of simple nature activities in our teacher activity guide, watch our mindful classroom videos, check out our nature reading list and teachers can share our nature and wellbeing explainer video with their colleagues at staff meetings.

It's time for us all to get our daily dose of nature because when we restore nature, nature restores us!

Download your FREE pack today!

This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.



Register your school at [wwf.org.uk/prescription-for-nature/schools-pack](https://www.wwf.org.uk/prescription-for-nature/schools-pack) today!



LUCY EDWARDS

THE inspiring blind **YouTube star** told us all about *Ella Jones vs the Sun Stealer* – the first story in her brand-new book series!



● **Hi Lucy! Can you tell us what your book, *Ella Jones vs the Sun Stealer*, is all about?**

Ella (who is blind) is our main hero character. A god of old has cursed humanity and taken away the light, and it's the mission of Ella, her guide dog Miss Maisy, her best friend and her sister to save humanity and help everyone see again. Ella is confident and independent, but her skills really come out, because the light has gone and all of her friends and family are suddenly like: "We need you!"

● **Why is it important to have blind heroes in books?**

Ella's really important because she's a normal girl with normal thoughts and feelings. The only real representation of blindness when I was younger was the Marvel character, Daredevil. I'm not shading Daredevil, but he's a superhero! I didn't have a role model. When I lost my sight at 17, I was scared – all the representations of blind people were old. I didn't relate to that, and my mental health suffered. Now, if someone goes blind tomorrow, we've got so many people on social media to say: "Oh my gosh, you can be blind and independent!"

● **You began to lose your sight aged 11, just as you began secondary school. How hard was that?**

Yeah, hard. I hated using my long white cane – it was the thing that made me different. I'd put it in my bag, but my disability instructor, Terry, would be saying: "Luce, you need to use it, you're banging into stuff!" I'd rather have bruises on my legs, and rather squint at the whiteboard than have a teaching assistant in my class, so I'd come home with headaches. I hid it really well, but I didn't want to. When I came out as blind at 17 and got my cane out, my best friend, Connie, held my hand, and I had supportive friends.

● **We must ask about your guide dog, Miss Molly!** What can I say?! She's ¾ retriever, ¼ Labrador, she's fluffy, golden, sassy... she's media trained, too. Her first little gig was on Channel 4 before she even got to me. She has a sparkly harness that my sister decorated... that's her, really – she's adorable!

● **How hard was it to learn Braille?** I hated it at school! My teacher taught it to me using different grains of rice. They'd say: "What's that?", and I was like: "Ahh! Quinoa?" But my advice would be, learn it at school when your brain is a sponge. It's harder to pick up when you're older. Only one in ten blind people are reading Braille.

● **You've been an influencer, a radio DJ, a model and now a children's author – so disability needn't be a barrier to achieve great things! What would you like to do next?** I'm creating my own beauty brand! We got funding from Estée Lauder and TikTok. We're hoping to launch it soon!

Ella Jones vs the Sun Stealer by Lucy Edwards is out now.

WOW!

Lucy's new book is also available in Braille, for blind readers



Illustration: Yas Inamura

AN amazing act of kindness inspired a child refugee to become an author!

As a small girl in the 1990s, Mevan Babakar fled the Gulf War with her family. For years, they travelled by foot, car, boat, train and plane, through Turkey, Azerbaijan and Russia.

Eventually, they arrived at a refugee camp in the Netherlands. There, a kind man named Egbert who worked in the camp gifted her a red bicycle, and it brought her such joy that the memory stayed with her.

More than 20 years later, Mevan retraced her family's steps back to the Netherlands – and, with the

help of social media, she tracked Egbert down and reunited with him! He and his generosity inspired Mevan to write *The Bicycle*, a picture book for young children.

"It's taught me about the miraculous power of kindness," says Mevan, who finally settled here in the UK. "One small and generous act made me feel noticed. We're all very powerful in the way that we choose to treat one another. Even in the darkest of times there will always be shining acts of kindness."

What's the kindest thing someone's ever done for you? Have a think. It may just have the makings of a good book!



How a **bike** became a **book**

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



Relationship reads

WE love our readers, and we hope you love this issue of *First News* – which is out on Valentine's Day! To celebrate, these books are to do with navigating relationships (with friends, or more-than-friends...).

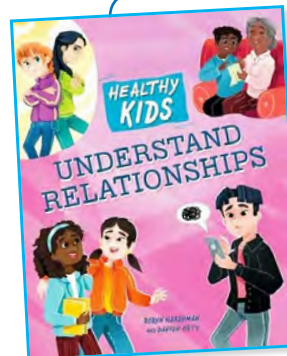
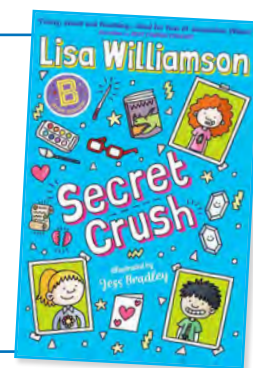


The Secret of Golden Island by Natasha Farrant

Yakov and Skylar are convinced that winning a competition to own Golden Island will solve their life problems. Will their friendship help them to beat the odds stacked against them?

Secret Crush by Lisa Williamson, illustrated by Jess Bradley

When Teddy joins Astrid's school, she's super-excited for a new friend. But her world turns upside down when she develops a crush on him!



Healthy Kids: Understand Relationships by Robyn Hardyman, illustrated by Davide Ortu

From dealing with peer pressure to learning to make up after falling out, navigate all the relationships in your life with this book's helpful hints.

Friendship Survival Guide by Caroline Young

This friendly guide will help you understand the ups and downs of all kinds of friendships, and how you can be a good friend yourself.



The Mega-Complicated Crushes of Lottie Brooks by Katie Kirby

Lottie's family holiday in France cruelly separates her from mega-crush Daniel. But then she meets French boy and brand-new crush, Antoine...

READY FOR THE GAMES TO BEGIN?



KIT AND HIS TEAM ARE BACK FOR A NEW NAIL-BITING CHALLENGE PACKED WITH MAZES, PUZZLES, MONSTERS, TREASURE AND MOST OF ALL ADVENTURE! BUT CAN THEY MAKE IT IN THE BIG LEAGUES...



This QR code should be scanned by a responsible adult.

»» DON'T MISS LEVEL 1 ««



**nosy
CROW**



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

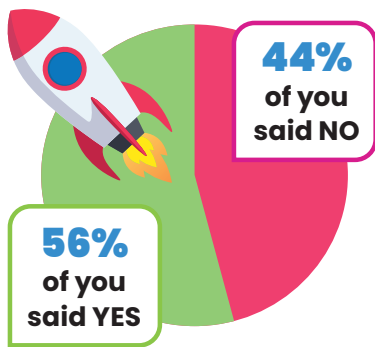
There have been some great reports on Your News so far this year, including lots of girls who want to get other girls into their sports, like Amelie in this issue.

Don't forget that I'm always on the lookout for new reports. So if you have anything you want to report on, make sure to write in and let us know. You can find out how to do that by looking at the top right of these pages!

THIS WEEK'S POLL!

We asked 3,427 of you:

Would you take a ticket to space on a billionaire's rocket?



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

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



SAILING IS FOR GIRLS, TOO!

Amelie in action



Meeting Olympic gold medallist Ellie Aldridge

AMELIE loves sailing, and she wants to show other girls that you can do it as well!

by Amelie

Have you ever been sailing? If not, give it a try – it's great fun! I am a 14-year-old dinghy sailor from Devon and I spend a lot of my time on boats, racing and training. The main boat I sail is a Topper, but there are several different types of boats to try. Sailing is great as it's so sociable, amazing for your health and gives you so much freedom, especially as a kid.

Girls often think that sailing is a sport for boys, but it's not! There are lots of amazing female sailors. One of the most inspirational moments for me during my time sailing has been meeting several of the female Olympians from 2024. I even got to hold Ellie Aldridge's gold medal!

If you want to give sailing a go, there are lots of clubs that offer courses and trial sessions. I hope you try it, and maybe one day, enjoy it as much as me!

Our Sustainable Cities project

ALBA and Bea have been learning how we can use artificial intelligence (AI) to improve the sustainability of cities. They tell you all about it!

by Alba and Bea



Alba and Bea

The AI Sustainable Cities project is a new Globeducate initiative that explores how AI, local climate conditions and sustainability can work together in cities. The project uses AI satellite data and smart technology to help us learn about city planning, managing the environment and being more sustainable. It has, so far, provided us with an exciting way to learn how AI and sustainability can be used hand-in-hand in real-life situations.

We recently did a fascinating presentation to some of our younger prep school pupils to teach them about sustainable cities. We also

talked to them about how to use a terrarium (a sealed transparent globe-shaped container where plants are grown) and helped them to set up their own tropical closed terrarium. By building and maintaining a terrarium, the children will be able to directly monitor the ecosystem (an environment made up of all the living and non-living things there) of the plants within it. It's so clever! The children loved doing the project and getting involved. They are watching it grow and monitoring it weekly!



The tropical terrarium



NEWS CLUB SHOUT-OUT!

THIS WEEK WE'RE GIVING SHOUT-OUTS TO... Witham St Hughs Academy, Primrose Hill Primary School, Fairchildes Primary School, Robert Gordon's College and Morriston Comprehensive School!





MEETING THE QUEEN



Mulberry Schools Trust

PUPILS at Mulberry Academy London Dock recently had a special visit from Her Majesty Queen Camilla!

The Queen cut a ribbon to mark the official opening of the school. She also had a tour of the building and learnt from pupils about their science and engineering projects, saw their artistic creations and was given a special performance from the Mulberry Schools Trust Choir.

Pupils at Mulberry Academy London Dock meet the Queen

Going to the *Angel of Dreams* book launch

A COUPLE of weeks ago in *First News*, we featured a new book called *The Angel of Dreams*. News Club member Luella headed to the book launch to interview its author, Chloe Westley.

by Luella

I met author and mental health advocate Chloe Westley at the launch of her brand-new book, *The Angel of Dreams*. Here's what she had to say!

Luella: What is *The Angel of Dreams* about?

Chloe: It's a story about a teenage girl who faces bullying and struggles with self-confidence at school. One night, she dreams of a videogame-like universe where she confronts challenges to discover her inner courage. It's a tale of self-discovery and embracing who you are!

Luella: What inspired you to write the book?

Chloe: I have always been a daydreamer, and as a child I always made up stories. I wanted to write about a cool teenage girl on a heroic journey. Once I started, I couldn't stop! My own experiences with bullying and trying to fit in inspired me, and so did many of the books I read as a kid.

Luella: Why did you choose to write a book about mental health and bullying in the fantasy genre?

Chloe: I love fantasy. Sometimes I visualise my emotions as images. For example, if I imagine anxiety as a monster, which helps me to deal with it. In my book, sadness is represented as



Chloe speaking to Luella

a dark forest. I think fantasy can take a life experience and show you what it looks like as an image. I also love dragons and I am interested in dreams. What are dreams and where do we go in our dreams?

Luella: Which authors did you like when you were young?

Chloe: I loved *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, and *The Lord of the Rings* by JRR Tolkien.

The Angel of Dreams by Chloe Westley is out now!



FirstNews
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NEWS CLUB
sky kids

FEATURE
IN YOUR
NEWS

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

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.

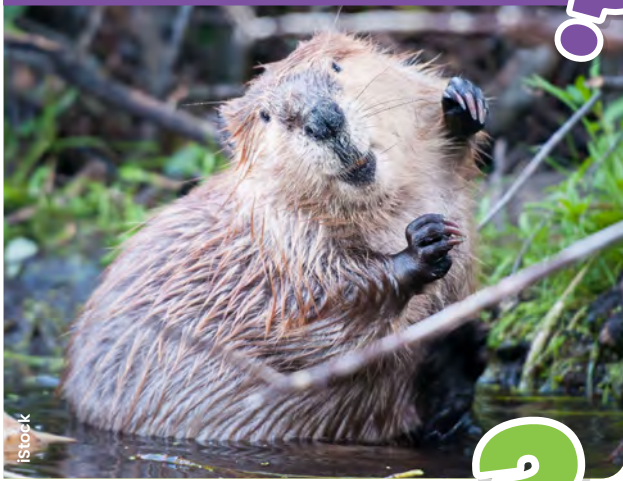
1 Who says that he'll bring back plastic straws?



2 Who has had a 12ft (3.6m) statue of them unveiled in New York's famous Times Square?



3 Beavers in the Czech Republic have saved local officials millions by building what?



4 Which country has ordered all its airports to install bird detectors?



5 What's the name of the awards that celebrate black music and culture?



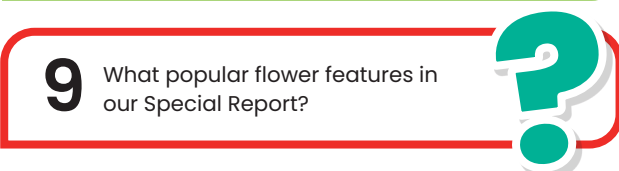
6 Which company could ban people from getting crazy paint jobs on its cars?



7 The Charles Dickens Museum is celebrating how many years since it opened?



8 What animal was blamed for causing a nationwide power cut across Sri Lanka?



10 What animal features in the winning photo of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year People's Choice Award?



11 Who has the *Gibellula attenboroughii* fungus been named after?

12 Young musicians are performing for visitors at which London museum?



13 What's the name of the UK government cat who now has a new job in Bermuda?

14 Which football videogame has been cancelled for this year?

15 Which major American football match did the Philadelphia Eagles win?

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 Cristiano Ronaldo
 - 3 Dams
 - 4 South Korea
 - 5 The MOBOS
 - 6 Ferrari
 - 7 100 years
 - 8 A monkey
 - 9 The daffodil
 - 10 A badger
 - 11 Sir David Attenborough
 - 12 London Transport Museum
 - 13 Palmerston
 - 14 Football Manager
 - 15 The Super Bowl

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All pics: Getty

JAPANESE speed skaters Katsuhiko Kuratsubo, Wataru Morishige and Kazuya Yamada make a colourful dash for the line in the men's team sprint final at the Asian Winter Games in Harbin, China.



NORWAY'S Sigrid Ytterhus Haugset makes a break to escape the peloton during the Féminas Gran Premio Tuawa one-day race in Spain.



SWISS ski jumper Yanick Wasser looks like he's sailing above the clouds in Lake Placid, New York, but it's just a crafty camera trick, using snow on the ground to mimic a cloud.



WE love a good mascot here at *First News*, but we're pretty sure this is the first one we've seen dressed in armour and riding an actual horse. Monty was celebrating because his team, Mexican football club Monterrey, have just signed Spain legend Sergio Ramos.



SPEAKING of mascots, there aren't many better than Wigan's Crusty the Pie, seen here before his team's FA Cup defeat to Fulham. Crusty was created by Cayden, eight, and Neve, nine, as part of a schools competition. They chose him because "everyone in Wigan loves pies!"



OUR final mascot of the week is the surreal (and slightly disturbing) Stanford Tree, which is technically the mascot for Stanford University's band rather than its sports teams, but regularly branches out to leave the band and cheer on the university's sports stars.

FOOTBALL'S GROWING CARBON FOOTPRINT



THE report praises Forest Green Rovers for leading the way on sustainability in football. All food served at the club is plant-based, and fans are encouraged to walk, cycle or use public transport.

A NEW report about the carbon footprint of football says that the game's annual emissions are the same as a country the size of Austria.

The investigation by Scientists for Global Responsibility and the New Weather Institute is called *Dirty Tackle*, and says that football "is not even close to doing its fair share to prevent" global warming.

It says that some of the main problems are:

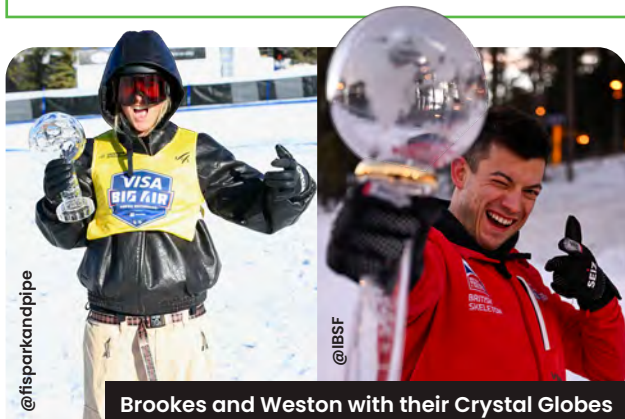
- sponsorship deals with companies that are responsible for large amounts of pollution, such as Emirates, Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways.
- the construction of new stadiums, particularly for

international tournaments such as the World Cup.

- large numbers of fans travelling to matches by car. For the Premier League, half of the emissions come from travel.
- an increasing number of international games in competitions like the World Cup and Champions League, which leads to an increase in air travel.

"As the climate crisis rapidly worsens, it is time for the football sector to step up and take responsibility"

– the report's conclusion



Brookes and Weston with their Crystal Globes

Just days after turning 18, British snowboarder Mia Brookes won her second Snowboard Big Air Crystal Globe in a row. Even though she pulled out of the last event, she finished level on points with Japan's Mari Fukada. But since Brookes had won two World Cup events to Fukada's one, she bagged the overall title. "It's really special when you've worked so hard over the season," said Brookes. There was more success for Team GB thanks to a British one-two in the final standings of the Skeleton World Cup, as Matt Weston retained his title, followed closely behind by Marcus Wyatt.

"To have British athletes ranked number one and two in the world when we don't even have an ice track in the UK is amazing really"

– Matt Weston



Saquon Barkley escapes the Chiefs' defence

A lot of the talk before the Super Bowl was whether the Kansas City Chiefs could become the first team in history to win the NFL championship game three years in a row. But the Philadelphia Eagles' superb defence helped them to win comfortably. The 40-22 victory saw Eagles running back Saquon Barkley finish the season on 2,504 rushing yards, taking the record from Terrell Davis. He also broke Davis' record for most scrimmage yards in a season, which had stood since 1998. "All of the numbers and stats are cool, but the best thing is being able to hold that Lombardi Trophy," Barkley said.



Italy celebrate their win against Wales

The Six Nations was a tough watch again for Wales fans, as Italy helped to extend Wales' record losing streak to 14 games in a row. The 22-15 defeat saw Wales slip down to 12th in the world rankings – their lowest ever position. The result forced Wales head coach Warren Gatland to quit his job in the middle of the tournament.

Queen's Park pulled off one of the biggest shocks ever in the Scottish Cup, beating Rangers 1-0 at Ibrox. It's the first time since 1882 that they've beaten Rangers in the competition, and the first time ever that Rangers have lost a home Scottish Cup match to a lower division team.



The last time Queen's Park got to the quarter-finals was in 1983

Braydon's on the ball



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

The biggest 'cupset' of the weekend came at Home Park, as the Championship's bottom side Plymouth defeated high-flying Liverpool in the FA Cup. Liverpool played a second-string team, but were still expected to have enough on the field to advance, but Plymouth had other ideas and battled for a memorable victory. Ryan Hardie scored the all-important goal from the penalty spot, which came after Harvey Elliott handled the ball in the box. The Pilgrims were rewarded with a trip to Man City at the Etihad in the fifth round.

Ryan Hardie knocks Liverpool out of the FA Cup



City survived a scare when they fell behind to an outrageous goal at Leyton Orient. Jamie Donley tried his luck from 50 yards to chip City keeper Stefan Ortega, and the ball bounced off the bar and onto Ortega, before finding the net. It goes down as an own goal, but all credit to Donley for the strike. City came back in the second half, with Kevin De Bruyne's winner taking City through.

Birmingham and Newcastle provided another entertaining game with plenty of goals, which ended 3-2 to the Magpies. League One leaders Birmingham were in it throughout, and one of the Newcastle goals from Joe Willock was very much the topic of dispute. The midfielder's strike cancelled out Ethan Laird's 40-second opening goal, but was it over the line? I'm not so sure myself, but without VAR and goal-line technology it was left to the linesman, who flagged for a goal.

In the pick of the other ties, Man United left it late to squeeze past Leicester, Villa beat Spurs at Villa Park, and Bournemouth continued their incredible season by beating Everton at Goodison. Brighton also came from behind to beat Chelsea, with pressure now building on Blues manager Enzo Maresca. It feels like Chelsea have really hit the wall since Christmas, and time is something that any manager at Stamford Bridge rarely gets.

The fifth round draw gave us plenty of all-Premier League ties, including Man United against Fulham, and Newcastle against Brighton.

Braydon's Team of The Week: Plymouth! What more can I say?

Braydon's Player of The Week: Ryan Hardie, the Plymouth hero from the spot.

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