

# The Stretham Scoop

Friday 16th January 2026



*A bi-weekly round up of what's happening in our school!*

## Mr Sweeney's shout out:



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! That Christmas holiday seemed to go rather quickly, didn't it? I hope that you had a fantastic break, whatever you were doing, and that you are slowly getting back into routine. I have found it pretty tricky not having cheese and party food every day...! January can be a difficult month, the return to work/school, the dark mornings and evenings, and the 31 days that feel like many more. If you need any support or are finding the return to school a struggle, please do talk to your child's class teacher or come and find me; we will support however we can.

I cannot believe that we are already two weeks into term. Time is already rapidly flying by! Before the children's return, the staff had INSET training ran by Tim Taylor focussing on story telling in the classroom. I've already seen a lot of this in action as I've been in classrooms the past fortnight and am looking forward to seeing this develop as the weeks progress.

Assemblies since our return have been exploring 'taking a risk.' Whether that be in our learning, in an area of life outside of school or just plucking up the courage to ask someone new to play with us, we know that taking a risk and keeping on going can be challenging. There will be a challenge set to the children in the coming weeks focussing on this, so watch this space!

### OPAL Update:

The OPAL Rangers have now had their first training session with Mrs Burling, Mrs Jeffrey and Mrs Everest. In the photos on this page, we can see our super OPAL Rangers supporting the OPAL play team by helping to set out the OPAL play areas at lunchtime and by supporting other pupils to tidy up the OPAL play areas at the end of lunch. We can all identify our OPAL Rangers by their blue Hi-Vis jackets which were purchased by our lovely PSA. Both the OPAL Rangers and the OPAL Play Team are so grateful to the PSA for their support.

We have now made several requests and reminders about the importance of every child having the correct outdoor clothing in school each and every day to allow for their full participation in our OPAL lunchtime play. Please ensure your child has a named set of wellies and waterproof trousers (or puddle suit/ salopettes) which stays on their peg and a warm, waterproof jacket which travels back and forth between home and school every day.

### A World Book Day Request:

Are there any parents/ grandparents/ family members in our community who would be willing to come in to school on World Book Day to becoming storytellers? It would only be for a small nugget of time on the day of our school celebration - this would be Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March, This is an initial, informal enquiry to see if enough individuals/ families put themselves forward to help.

### 2026 - The Year of Reading:

2026 has been designated as the National Year of Reading. Many 'Reading for Pleasure' initiatives will be set up by various agencies including our government and independent reading charities over the course of 2026. At Stretham, we aim to participate in as many of these initiatives as possible over the year to enrich all our children's lives through reading.

The first of these initiatives is the 2026 Reading Challenge led by the Book Trust. Look out for a calendar of reading challenges (a colourful A5 sized poster) that will be stapled into your child's blue reading record book. There is one challenge per month for you to tick off and enjoy completing with your child. Your child could complete them independently or with you as a family, especially if you have more than one child at the school. We will also be completing each of the challenges at school, in assemblies and in our classes, so we can make the most of reading for pleasure together. Keep an eye out for more challenges this year!

A huge **welcome** to Mrs Egan, who has joined us in Kite class. She has already settled brilliantly and we are pleased she has joined our community! Don't forget Rock Kidz next Wednesday, we're looking forward to a school full of rock stars!

Have a fantastic weekend, whatever you are doing; more long runs in the rain for me!

Thank you for your continued support, as always.

Mr Sweeney and the Stretham Team

*'Achieving Potential Together As a School Family.'*

*- Compassionate - Curious - Courageous - Resilient - Inclusive*



## Safeguarding @ Stretham:

### Staying Safe Online With New Devices After Christmas:

- **Always set a password** If your child's new device has a password protection feature, use it! It'll help keep their private information safe and will deny others access to their device without permission. Your children's passwords should be something memorable to them – but something which other people can't guess (it's also a good idea for parents to write it down in case it gets forgotten!)
- **Keep numbers and devices private** Make sure your child understands that they should never share their phone number with someone they don't know or accept a friend request from them. They should also appreciate that it's a good idea to mainly keep their device out of sight, never lend it to a stranger and never put it down somewhere that other people could steal it or take it to use without asking.
- **Pay attention to age ratings** One of the first things children want to do with any device is play games and explore apps. Before they download or install a new console game, check its age rating. Many popular games and apps have content that is not suitable for younger ages. The safest long-term solution is to adjust the device's settings so they can only download and use games appropriate for their age.
- **Discourage device dependency** Of course, children who've just got a new device will naturally want to spend as much time on it as possible but, whether they're zapping bad guys, watching videos or connecting with friends, it's easy for them to get attached very quickly. Gently remind them that having family time, going outdoors and getting some exercise are still fun too and the device will still be there when they get back.
- **Limit screen time** Using a device for too long, especially just before bed, can interfere with a child's sleep quality and reduce their concentration and overall enthusiasm. It might be helpful to agree on certain times of day when they don't use their device. Most devices' settings let you specify a screen-time limit, helping your child stay fresh and focused in order to perform well at school.
- **Only pair with known Bluetooth devices** Your child may want to connect to another device via Bluetooth so they can listen to music wirelessly or share pictures and videos with nearby friends. But, if they use Bluetooth to link with a device they don't know, they're at risk of a stranger being able to see their personal information or having someone transmit a virus to their device.
- **Turn location settings off** It's safest to disable the device's location services (if it's a portable device) so your child doesn't inadvertently make other people aware of where they are. You can usually do this via the device's privacy control settings. Turning location settings off not only means your child's whereabouts can't be tracked by others, it also significantly extends battery life.
- **Stay aware of the surroundings** It's quite common to see adults not looking where they're going while engrossed in their phone. Children are even more easily distracted. In some cases, children have been hit by cars or cyclists because they were staring at their device and lost track of where they were. Remind your children that screens and walking don't mix. If they need to use their device, they should stop in a safe place first.
- **Be there if they need to talk** Even when you've made a device as secure as you can, there's still a possibility of your child seeing something that bothers them or someone they don't know attempting to contact them. If this happens, listen to their concerns, empathise and reassure them. Once they've explained what happened, you can decide if you should take further action like blocking or reporting another user.



### Key Diary Dates:

Rock Kidz UK in school - Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026

Film Night - Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Tempest Photography - class photos - 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026

World Book Day - 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Bikeability Level 1 (Year 3 and Year 4) - 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026

A very happy birthday to...

Leo, Rex, Max, Isobel, Aaron, Ashton, Savannah, George, Heathermarie, Ellie, Tiffany, Grace, Florence P, Romari, Danile, Zack, Ted, Spencer, Taimur

We hope you have a wonderful day!



### Letters Sent Home:

Reminder - school dinner account payments

Letter from Mr Sweeney - Tiddlywinks

Film Night - 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Topic Overviews

Start up dates for clubs

EIFA Newsletter

### Attendance update:

Well done to the following classes with the highest attendance figures this week which are above the 95% threshold:

Hedgehog - 96.7%  
Rabbit - 96.6%  
Robin - 96.5%  
Kestrel - 96.4%

Please ensure that you make the office aware of any absences by **9am**, at the latest, each morning. You can do this via email, the telephone or via our Studybugs app. We now have a dedicated absence line, which is sent directly to the office email too. Please use the method of communication that is most convenient for you.

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