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FirstNews

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THE UK GROW



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RASHFORD TACKLES RACISM



Star turns his attention to **abuse on social media**

MANCHESTER United's Marcus Rashford has got the Government to take action on school meals, but can he get social media companies to deal with racists?

by Ian Eddy

Rashford and several other Premier League players have spoken out in the last week about abusive racist messages they were sent online. He said that it was "humanity and social media at its worst".

"Yes I'm a black man and I live every day proud that I am," he said. "No-one, or no one comment, is going to make me feel any different."

He said it would be irresponsible to share the messages. "I have beautiful

children of all colours following me and they don't need to read it. Beautiful colours that should only be celebrated."

Bournemouth's Junior Stanislas has also been sent racist messages. He told the BBC that it would help if social media accounts were verified, so people can't hide behind anonymous profiles.

Twitter and Instagram say there is "no place" on their platforms for racism, but many people think that they don't try hard enough to tackle abuse.

Hollie Varney from equality and

inclusion organisation Kick It Out told us: "We are always disappointed when footballers receive racist abuse on their social media channels – it's unacceptable. We will continue our work to make football a game where everyone feels they belong, regardless of their background. We have to learn to appreciate people's individuality, and it's important we treat everyone as equal. We want to see social media used in a positive way, for education and the power of good, not for hate."

SNOW JOKE



Was it fair to sack the man who kicked a snowman's head off? **Turn to p5 and take part in our poll!**

THE NEW *First*News DIGITAL EDITION IS HERE



**UPDATE
YOUR APP BY
14 FEBRUARY**

The First News digital team have been hard at work over the last few months creating a new and improved digital edition of the newspaper.

The NEW First News app will need to be installed by the 14 February to ensure you can continue to access the newspaper each week. The existing app will not be available after this date.

Previous issues of First News will still be available in the new app – **PLUS** the brand new search and bookmark features make it even easier to find the content you were looking for!

**You will need to re-install a new version of the app on all devices.
Here is a quick refresher on how to access the First News Digital Edition.**

How to start reading First News:

- 1** Search for the First News app on your device's App Store
- 2** Install onto your device
- 3** Open the app. Tap on an edition and enter your WebID to log in

FN



FOOTIE FUNDS

A football fan from Hertfordshire is using his art skills to help raise money for non-league clubs. Artist Sam Edwards has been painting football grounds for free and donating the pictures to the clubs so they can be sold on. He's so far painted Ware, Ullswater United and Ponte Colls (below) and many more. Sam said he decided to combine his two passions after hearing that clubs were struggling in the current pandemic.



DRIVE-IN TOUR



Billionaire Boy by David Walliams is set to go on a drive-in tour this year. The popular book has already been a hit in theatres, but the only difference this time is that instead of sitting in theatres, people will sit in their cars to enjoy the performance. The tour will take place this April and visit 15 different places across the UK.

HONEST HEADTEACHER

A London headteacher is thought to have made history by becoming the first to publicly announce his sexuality to pupils. Nicholas Hewlett, the head of St Dunstan's College in Catford, revealed he is happily married to another man during an online school assembly. He said he hoped by sharing the information, it would give his pupils the courage to be true to themselves too.

QUICK NEWS

TO READ YOURSELF AND SHARE WITH FRIENDS

PASS THE PIZZA!

It's National Pizza Day on 9 February! What better reason is there to tuck into your favourite pizza dish? What's your topping of choice? Let us know in our poll at first.news/polls.



EGYPTIAN TREASURES

A display of ancient Egyptian artefacts is set to tour America and Europe. *Ramses and the Pharaohs' Gold* will look at treasure from the ancient Egyptian royal dynasties. It will visit five cities, including Paris and London, from November 2021 to January 2025.

GREAT LOSS

Freddy, the world's tallest dog, has died aged eight. The Great Dane measured 226cm (7ft 5in) when he stood on his hind legs, scooping him a Guinness World Record in 2016.

RIP CAPTAIN TOM

Captain Sir Tom Moore has died with COVID-19 at the age of 100. The WW2 veteran raised more than £30 million for NHS Charities Together, and broke two Guinness World Records – becoming the oldest person to get a No1 single in the UK charts and raising the most money during a solo charity walk, lifting the spirits of the nation. In May, he was knighted by the Queen at Windsor. The Queen has sent a private message to his family.



READING DIVERSITY

A free collection of books by black authors will be given to primary schools in England. The *Happy Here* collection will feature works by Patrice Lawrence (below) and Clare Weze, among others. The charity BookTrust wants to offer more diverse reading for young people. *Happy Here* is set for release on 5 August 2021.

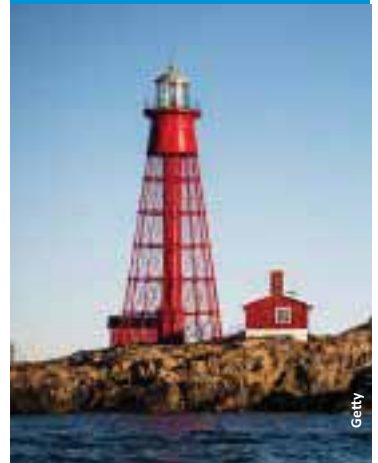


EMERGENCY SHOP

A family from Manchester travelled to do their food shopping in an ambulance, with the emergency blue lights on! The group drove to Asda in the second-hand ambulance, before going into the store. Police were alerted and the ambulance was immediately seized. The driver was also arrested.

FILM FEST FOR ONE

A Swedish nurse has won an unusual competition to watch an entire film festival on her own – on a remote island, in a lighthouse! Lisa Enroth beat thousands of film fans to the bonkers prize and is now enjoying a whole week of movies as part of the Gothenburg Film Festival. She's staying at the Pater Noster lighthouse on Hamneskär island, off the coast of Sweden, with no phone or computer. This year's festival is being streamed online, due to the pandemic. Lisa has been working on COVID-19 wards herself, so we hope she's enjoying her well-earned break!



TOP CATCHER



A gamer from Britain has managed to collect one million Pokémon on his phone. Twenty-year-old Alex Kelly from Dundee is one of only a few people in the world to reach the impressive number on the Pokémon GO app. He's now walked more than 17,000 miles on his quest to catch the virtual monsters.

NEW MCB LEADER

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) has elected its first female leader. Zara Mohammed is now the new secretary general of the organisation, which aims to empower Muslim communities. The 29-year-old said she hopes her new role will inspire more young people and women to become leaders.

GET FIRST NEWS DELIVERED TO YOUR HOME EVERY WEEK!

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FirstNews is even better in print!

We hope you enjoy your free digital download of **First News**! Why not consider getting a copy sent by post to your home every week? It's a great break away from electronic devices and a good opportunity to share what you are reading with the rest of the family. And, of course, you can do all the puzzles in the paper!

While stuck at home in lockdown, this is a great opportunity to benefit from free delivery to your home. The newspaper supply chain has been given key-worker status and we remain committed to delivering print copies of **First News** into homes across the UK every week.



Here's what our fans have to say!

“ To everyone at First News, thank you so much! I love it. I tell all my friends about it and they love it too. You do a fantastic job and it makes me understand the news much better. Every week I can't wait for it to come through the door. ”

Sienna, age 10

“ I read First News, it is great! I keep randomly telling my family and friends facts and they say: 'Where did you learn that?' and I say: 'First News'! ”

Popjam user

“ My kids race to the door when First News is delivered on Friday. Thank you for delivering something to pull them away from screens. We get some good conversations and the whole family have taken to the puzzles. ”

Jo, parent and teacher

“ I love First News. It promotes brilliant conversation with my children at home, as well as encouraging them to read. Thank you! ”

Tracey, parent



To order, visit www.firstnews.co.uk or call 0330 333 0186



THE Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is looking at bringing an end to its controversial policy that allows the mass culling of badgers. DEFRA has suggested that by the end of 2022, it won't give farmers new licences to kill badgers.

Since 2012, the Government has backed farmers in culling badgers, with the aim of stopping the spread of bovine tuberculosis (bTB).

Environmental science expert Professor Robbie McDonald, from the University of Exeter, told *First News*: "There is strong scientific evidence that badgers are involved in maintaining bovine tuberculosis, which is a serious disease for cattle and can affect people."

But the National Farmers' Union has said that it wants culls to continue, saying they are "clearly delivering successful results".

However, the effectiveness of culls has been questioned by many scientists. Lord Krebs, who led the largest study

so far of culls, said in 2019 that "all the recent scientific evidence points to a central role of cattle-to-cattle transmission, and focusing on killing badgers is probably a distraction from the main story."

Professor McDonald said: "Evaluating whether [badger culling] works is hard and takes time. It is especially hard knowing if and when to stop, and what might replace it."

The Government aims to vaccinate cattle and badgers to stop the spread of bTB, but a vaccine for cows is still five years away, and badger vaccination is difficult.

Professor McDonald says that "capacity to carry out vaccination is limited and needs to be expanded."

SAFER INTERNET DAY



ON 9 February, it's Safer Internet Day in the UK. This year the day's theme is "An internet we trust: exploring reliability in the online world".

Safer Internet Day is an annual event dedicated to celebrating the information and opportunities available online, while also teaching young people about some of the dangers that can be found on the internet.

This year, the day is focused on how we can decide what to trust online, and teaching young people to spot and speak out against harmful and misleading online content.

To get involved, and find advice, games, quizzes, films and more on how you can stay safe online, head to www.saferinternet.org.uk.

DOGS USED TO BE SIBERIAN WOLVES

NEW scientific research published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* suggests that all modern-day pet dogs originated from wolves in Ice Age Siberia!

Scientists from Europe and the US looked at DNA samples and examined archaeological evidence.

They found that every dog in the world (including pugs, poodles, dachshunds and Chihuahuas!) is thought to be related to grey wolves from eastern Siberia, which were domesticated (tamed) around 21,000BC.

They believe that during the last Ice Age, around 21,000 to 17,000BC, wolves were forced to rely on human camps for scraps of food, since their usual prey of creatures like reindeer and bison was in decline.

It was then that the wolves began to be domesticated and by 13,000BC were much more like pooches as we know them today.

Humans and dogs crossed from Siberia into the Americas on a strip of land that is now covered by the waters of the Bering Strait.





A MURAL showing 16 outstanding diverse women has been saved, after city councillors stepped in to stop it being removed. The mural includes singer-songwriter Nina Simone, American activist Rosa Parks and artist Frida Kahlo.



BIG waves break in Porthleven harbour, as the Met Office extended the severe weather warning for Devon and Cornwall.



THE London Eye is illuminated with the colour purple, along with many other iconic buildings, for a “national moment” on Holocaust Memorial Day.



THE “wolf moon” rises behind the Brooklyn Bridge. January’s full moon is named after the howling of wolves, hungry due to the lack of food in midwinter.



A RECENT heavy snowstorm inspired dozens of residents to build crazy snow sculptures, including this shark. After the storm, people were quick to start sculpting giant octopuses, penguins, owls and even a car.



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STAR-SPOTTING!



It's time to get starry-eyed

LOOK to the skies and spot some stars, because this year's Star Count is here.

CPRE, the countryside charity, is calling on the public to help it count stars in the night sky this month. It wants to see what effect the light from buildings and streetlights is having on our view of our galaxy, the Milky Way.

To take part, all you have to do is pick a clear night between 6 and 14 February, look up at the constellation of Orion and see how many stars you can spot. You can do this from your garden, a balcony or a bedroom window.

Once you've made your count, send your

results to the charity and it'll get busy adding them to a big map of the UK. If it finds areas where people can only spy a few stars and lots of light pollution, it will work with local councils to tackle the problem.

Light pollution doesn't just hinder our magical views of the sky, but it can also affect wildlife and its natural patterns.

Check out how you can join the Star Count, as well as lots of top tips, at www.cpre.org.uk.

SNOW JOKE FOR BINMAN



Should the binman have been sacked? Let us know at first.news/polls

A BINMAN in Herefordshire has lost his job, after kicking the head off a child's snowman.

Nineteen-year-old Callum Woodhouse was caught on a CCTV camera kicking the snowman, while he waited for a bin to empty into his truck.

Mr Woodhouse was later told by Herefordshire Council's waste contractor that he would not be returning to work for them.

But thousands of people disagreed with the decision to sack him. Many said it seemed unfair and that the snowman would have melted away anyway. Others feel the company made the right decision and it was mean-spirited of him. What do you think?

EDITOR'S COMMENT



LAST year's Black Lives Matter protests helped to highlight the racism that many people still sadly have to put up with.

Unfortunately, anonymous social media accounts allow people to send racist abuse, while the social media companies aren't much help when it comes to tracking down those responsible. The good news is that most people think this kind of abuse is totally unacceptable, and the country has shown that it is united in making racism a thing of the past.

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GOOD WEEK FOR...

JIGSAWS

IT turns out many of us have been enjoying jigsaws during life in lockdown. A whopping £100m was made from the sale of jigsaws in the UK in 2020, an increase of 38% from 2019. The best-selling jigsaws were those that have 1,000 pieces.



BAD WEEK FOR...

NAUGHTY CLIMBERS

TWO men who attempted to climb Ben Nevis were fined for breaking lockdown rules when they got stuck and had to be rescued by helicopter. The pair had travelled all the way from Glasgow, and police told the men that their trip definitely wasn't essential.



WORLD'S FIRST ELECTRIC AIRPORT

THE world's first airport for electric aircraft is being built in Coventry in the UK.

Air-One will launch later this year and become the hub for electric vehicles, including flying cars (eVTOLs), air taxis and delivery drones.

The project is being run by urban-Air Port, after it won the Government's Future Flight Challenge. The aim of the challenge was to develop greener ways to fly. It's hoped this new airport will be able to tackle both congestion and air pollution.

There are plans to develop more than 200 similar sites in the next five years.



EDINBURGH

● Boy runs in memory of dad

A nine-year-old boy has raised £10,000 for a charity that helped his family after his dad died in a car crash. Rory Logg was just three when his dad Richard died on Boxing Day in 2014. Rory has been doing regular runs around his local area in memory of his dad and to raise money for Child Bereavement UK. Mum Lorraine said: "When I knew Richard was going to die, I called Child Bereavement UK and they sent me all the information on how to tell young children that a parent has died. They have helped me so much over the years."



Lorraine Logg/Just Giving

Rory (left) says his brother Thomas wants to join him on the fundraising runs next year

DERBYSHIRE

● Mountain hares at risk

A conservation group has said that the last group of mountain hares in England could be at risk due to global warming. Around 2,500 mountain hares live in the Peak District. Nida Al-Fulaij, from the People's Trust for Endangered Species, said: "The Peak District's colder climate is ideal for mountain hares, who have adapted perfectly. But, with the onset of warmer and more erratic weather, these hares could be in trouble. We can't let them die out."



Getty

CUMBRIA

● School theft shock

A school manager stole more than £100,000 worth of supplies to fund his gambling addiction. Wayne Collins, who worked at St Benedict's Catholic High School in Whitehaven, was responsible for ordering school supplies. Mary Lowrey, the school's business director, said Mr Collins had "stolen from the school and from the hard-working children that attend".

DEVON



HMCg_ACl0/Twitter

Rescuers climb down the cliff

● Cliff fall escape

A woman rescued after falling more than 30m (100ft) down a cliff was miraculously uninjured. Coastguards from Beer and Lyme Regis found the woman on a ledge about halfway down the 70m-tall (230ft) cliff. She had lost her shoes in the fall and was treated for shock, but suffered no physical injuries.

WILTSHIRE

● 'Wonder Woman' gets award

A six-year-old girl with a muscle-wasting disease has been given a Points of Light award that recognises "outstanding individuals making a difference where they live". Carmela Chillery-Watson dressed as Wonder Woman and walked 30km in 30 days for Muscular Dystrophy UK. Her charity walks raised more than £54,000 and even had a donation from Gal Gadot, who plays Wonder Woman in the films. Upon receiving her award, Carmela said: "This is awesome news, I can't believe it, it's so amazing."



carmelachillerywatson/Instagram

GREATER LONDON

● Homeless figures up

The number of people who live on the streets in London has gone up by 23% in recent months. Figures from the Greater London Authority show that in the last three months of 2020, 412 people were living on the streets, compared to 336 three months before. Jon Sparkes, from charity Crisis, said the "statistics paint a worrying picture of homelessness across our capital".



Getty

BERKSHIRE



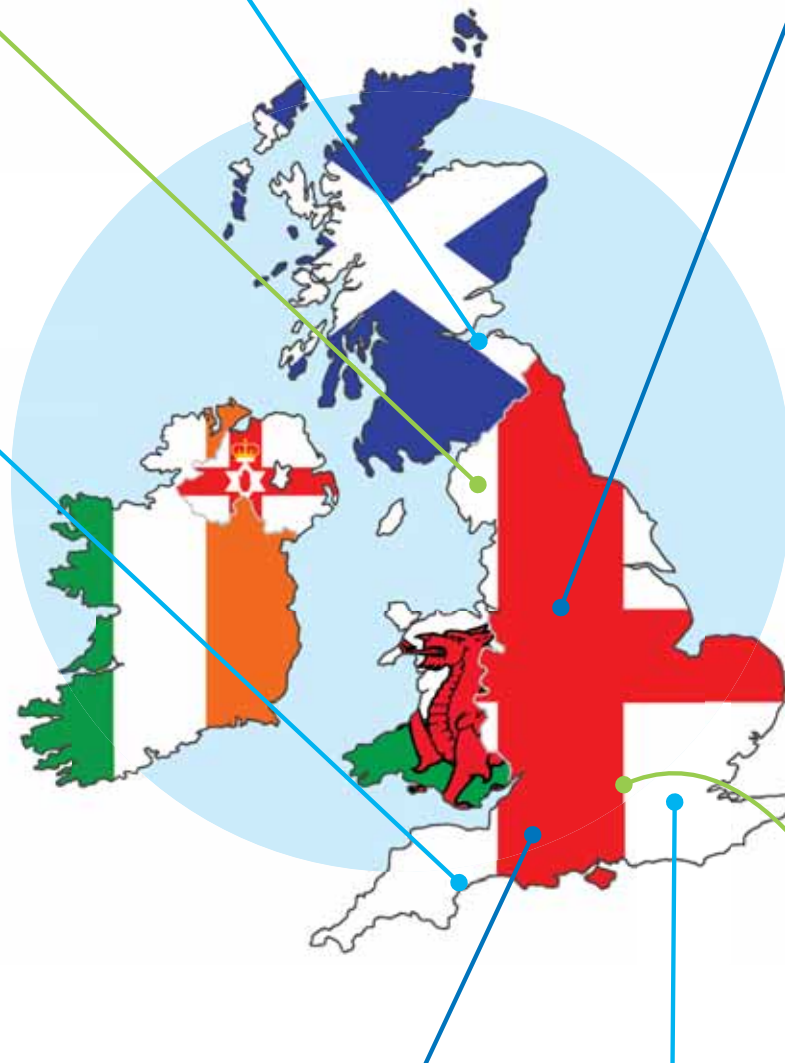
RawSinghVA/Twitter

● Nobel nomination

A charity in Maidenhead has been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. Khalsa Aid, founded in 1999 by Ravinder Singh (above), is based upon the Sikh principle: "Recognise the whole human race as one." Its work has involved helping refugees and people affected by natural disasters across the world. In the UK, Khalsa Aid has provided aid to flood-damaged areas and given meals to hospitals fighting COVID-19. Ravinder said the nomination was "very, very uplifting" and a great acknowledgment of the "dedication and compassion" of the charity's volunteers.



Khalsa_Aid/Twitter



BLUE LIGHTNING SEEN FROM SPACE



European Space Agency

BLUE jets of lightning have been spotted by scientists on board the International Space Station (ISS).

Whereas we're used to seeing white forked lightning here on Earth, it's a whole different story above the thunderclouds! Blue jets, as they are called, are bursts of lightning that shoot up from the top of clouds into the Earth's atmosphere.

Scientists on the ISS say they saw five flashes of blue light, each lasting around a fifth of a second. Four flashes came with pulses of light called elves. These are like rings of energy that start small and expand out into a much bigger circle.

The amazing phenomena was seen during a thunderstorm that was happening above Nauru, a tiny island northeast of Australia.

Although the jets were spotted on 26 February 2019, the information surrounding it was only published last month in the science journal *Nature*.



Getty

THE VACCINE DEBATE

SHOULD we send coronavirus vaccines to other countries who need them, before vaccinating younger adults here?

That's the question some in the UK are asking, after it was predicted that the UK will end up with lots more jabs than we need – after buying around 5.5 doses per person.

Trade Secretary Liz Truss has said that Britain cannot simply become a "vaccinated island", while COVID-19 rages in other nations in the world.

"We're only going to solve this issue once everybody in the world is vaccinated," she explained, but said that it was "too early" to suggest what might be done with the extra vaccines.

The debate began after the European Union suggested that it could block millions of COVID-19 vaccine doses from entering the UK – before the EU quickly turned its back on the idea.

What do you think? Should the UK vaccinate all Brits before helping other countries out? Let us know your thoughts in our poll at first.news/polls.

DINO DISCOVERY



Sally Wilder

A FOUR-YEAR-OLD girl has discovered a dinosaur fossil in Wales, in what has been described as a spectacular find.

Lily Wilder was walking with her dad Richard along Bendricks Bay in Barry when she found the fossil.

Lily's mum Sally said: "It was Lily and Richard who discovered the footprint. Lily saw it as they were walking along, and said: 'Daddy, look'. When Richard came home and showed me the photograph, I thought it looked amazing."

The fossil was removed from the beach and taken to National Museum Cardiff, where it will be studied and protected for

future generations to enjoy.

Bendricks Bay is known as a good place to find dino prints, but this is one of the best examples found in the UK.

It's not known what dinosaur species the footprint belongs to, but it is believed to be around 220 million years old.



National Museum Wales

KIDS' MENTAL HEALTH REPORT

A REPORT by the Children's Commissioner for England says we need a "rocket boost" for children's mental health funding.

Anne Longfield's report has found that, although children's mental health services have improved in the last four years, they are "still unable to provide the help hundreds of thousands of children require".

With lockdowns and school closures affecting children over the last year, she says: "As an absolute

minimum, all schools should be provided with an NHS-funded counsellor, either in school or online.

"We have seen how the NHS has risen to the scale of the COVID-19 crisis for adults. We owe children... a mental health service that provides the help and support they need."



Getty

USA



Plastic Bagman

A man in Brooklyn, New York, has made headlines as the city's newest superhero: Plastic Bagman! Equipped with his 'snatchinator' grabbing device, Plastic Bagman has been spotted plucking plastic bags that have been caught in trees. He's even set up a website so that citizens can summon him, should they need a plastic bag removed from a tree in their area. He's also uploaded tutorials to his Instagram account, showing how people can make their own snatchinator.

BRAZIL



Rapper goes viral

Leandro Aparecido Ferreira, also known as MC Fioti, has become famous in Brazil after producing a song about the power of the coronavirus vaccine. MC Fioti remixed his own song about bottoms to instead praise doctors. A new music video for the updated track was shot at the vaccine-producing Butantã Institute in São Paulo, and lots of the staff members and scientists at the facility appear as dancing extras.

MYANMAR



Military seizes control

Myanmar's military has taken control of the country, and arrested the country's newly re-elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other members of her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD). Phone lines and the internet were cut off, and in Yangon, the former capital city, military trucks were parked outside the city hall. The army, led by General Min Aung Hlaing, agreed to hand power to a civilian government a decade ago. Aung San Suu Kyi said the military was trying to take over again, and urged citizens to protest. The NLD won a landslide victory of 396 out of 476 seats in the November election, while the military-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party won just 33 seats. US President Joe Biden's government said that it opposed "any attempt to change the outcome of recent elections."

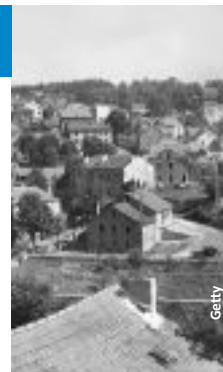


FRANCE



Villagers get a share of millions

An Austrian man who fled the Nazis with his family during World War 2 has left his €2 million (£1.46m) fortune to the French village that saved him. Eric Schwam and his family arrived in the village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon in 1943 and were hidden in a school for the rest of the war, then stayed until 1950. The mayor has said that Eric Schwam asked that the money be spent on educational schemes. About 2,500 Jews were taken in and protected during the war by residents of the village.



ESTONIA



Women at the top

Estonia has become the only country in the world with both a female prime minister and a female president. Prime Minister Kaja Kallas, the country's first female government leader, has formed a coalition between her Reform Party and the Centre Party, and has placed several women in key positions in her new cabinet.



TAIWAN



Troubled waters

Both the US and Australia have said that they are "monitoring the situation" in Taiwan and the surrounding South China Sea after China warned that a declaration of independence by Taiwan would "mean war". The Chinese government says that Taiwan is a part of China, while the island's president, Tsai Ing-wen, has repeatedly said that Taiwan is an independent country, but hasn't formally declared independence.

OUR WORLD



NAME: SOPHIE
LIVES: SOUTHAMPTON

To find out more, go to
www.comicrelief.com/rednoseday



SOPHIE was just six weeks old when she was diagnosed as profoundly deaf.

The diagnosis was overwhelming for her parents, who felt unsure about Sophie's future.

Sophie's specialist recommended The Elizabeth Foundation, which receives funding from Comic Relief to support deaf children and their families.

Sophie has since received cochlear implants and, with the help of The Elizabeth Foundation, she has learnt to listen, communicate and interact with others.

Sophie's mum has noticed a real difference and "cannot imagine Sophie's life without the sessions".





CORONAVIRUS

DON'T HELP THE VIRUS SPREAD

If you have to leave home then you must stay two metres apart from people you do not live with.

Remember to keep washing your hands regularly.

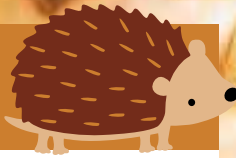
If you're aged 11 and above then you must wear a face mask in public indoor settings such as shops.

Find out more at gov.uk/coronavirus

STAY HOME ► PROTECT THE NHS ► SAVE LIVES

NEST PROTECTION

A GROUP of MPs are calling for hedgehogs to get greater protection in order to help save the species.



The MPs want hedgehog nests to be protected in the same way that badger nests and bat nests are. Former Transport Secretary Chris Grayling wants to add the protection to the Environment Bill in a bid to help safeguard the mammals. This would mean that any developers would have to legally check for hedgehog nesting sites before starting any construction work.

Experts believe there are around one million wild hedgehogs living in the UK. In the 1950s there were around 30 million, which shows just how dramatically their numbers have fallen.



iStock



RSPCA

SUPPORT SISTER

A BLIND guinea pig and her sister, who acts as her guide pig, have found a special new home together.

Ami and Yuki are being cared for by RSPCA Danaher Animal Home in Essex after their owner could no longer care for them. Ami is completely blind but manages to get around with the help of her sister.

RSPCA supervisor Craig Horsler said: "Ami is always the first to emerge when she hears the rustle of a bag of treats, but waits for Yuki to seek them out so

she can follow her lead! It's adorable to watch!"

Both guinea pigs are friendly and happy to be handled, and thankfully the RSPCA has now found them a forever home together.

Guinea pigs can make wonderful family pets. If you'd like to learn more about them, the RSPCA has loads of useful info at www.rspca.org.uk.

ON THE MOVE

iStock

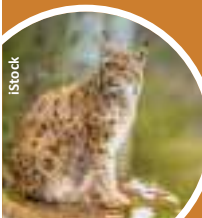
SCIENTISTS have found that a critically endangered species of shark can now be found 2,000km (1,243 miles) away from its usual home.

A team of scientists led by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) have confirmed that the short-tail nurse shark is now living in the waters around Mozambique. Using data collected from underwater cameras, photographs of sharks caught by anglers and a shark caught as far back as 1967, scientists have officially extended the area where the sharks are expected to be found. Experts are now calling for the critically endangered shark to be given legal protection in Mozambique. A full report is in the journal *Marine Biodiversity*.

LYNX RETURN

A NEW study has been launched to see whether the public supports the idea of reintroducing lynx back into the wild in Scotland.

A group of conservationists are investigating whether farmers and landowners would agree to a trial project in one area of Scotland. Previous plans to reintroduce the predators have not been successful and have faced opposition from farmers, who are worried about their livestock. Lynx are the largest native cat in Europe but were wiped out from Britain more than 500 years ago.



iStock

SQUARE POO MYSTERY SOLVED!

Wombats, part of the marsupial family, are native to Australia

SCIENTISTS have puzzled over why wombats have cube-shaped poo for years.

Now, they seem to have cracked it.

A team of researchers in Australia has worked out the square shape forms in the mammal's intestines, not as it plops out of its bum.

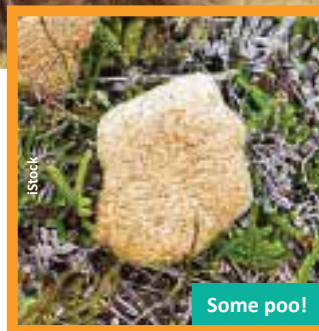
Previously, some experts thought the poo became a cube as it was squeezed through bones in the wombat's pelvis.

Another slightly bonkers theory was that the creatures moulded their poo into square shapes after depositing them. But the new research suggests the dung passes through two sets of muscles in the intestines – one that is stiff, and one that is more flexible. The changes in muscle thickness are what is moulding the poo into cubes.

So that explains how they become cubes, but it still leaves the question 'why'.

Dr Scott Carver of the University of Tasmania, who led the new research, thinks it might be because wombats communicate with each other using their poo smells, and that the cube shape helps stop it from rolling away.

The study was published in the journal *Soft Matter*.



Some poo!

CLIMATE IS AN EMERGENCY, SAY MAJORITY



Deforestation of the Amazon in Brazil

THE largest opinion poll about climate change ever carried out has found that two out of three people think it is now a global emergency.

The United Nations Development Programme ran a huge survey with the University of Oxford called the People's Climate Vote. Citizens in 50 countries were surveyed – including over half a million people under the age of 18.

They were asked if climate change was a global emergency and whether they supported 18 climate policies across six action areas: economy, energy, transport, food and farms, nature and protecting people. Results show a clear majority of people want their governments to take bold and urgent action.

For example, in eight of the ten countries with the highest emissions, majorities supported more renewable energy. More than half of those surveyed want forests and land to be conserved.

Under-18s were more likely to say climate change was an emergency, while more women and girls in the US, UK, Australia and Canada were more concerned about global warming than boys and men.

A total of 81% of people in the UK thought there was a climate emergency.



DOGS LEARN WORDS

DOGS are able to learn the names of new objects.

That's the conclusion of a new study from Hungary, which found that, through play, man's best friend is able to quickly remember the names of different things.

The scientists carried out tests on two dogs: a border collie and a Yorkshire terrier.

In the first experiment, the dogs were presented with a new object in the middle of seven toys they already recognised. The owners instructed the dog to fetch one of the items by its name. In the second test, the dogs played with a new toy while the owner repeatedly said the toy's name.

Both dogs were able to pick out the toys by name – including the new toy, whose name they hadn't heard before. They seemed to know what the new toy was by a process of elimination, which means they excluded the items they already knew by name and then worked out only the new toy was left.

CLOWNING AROUND HELPS

A NEW review of several scientific studies has found that clowns help children and young people in hospital feel better.

A total of 24 studies from ten countries, involving children and adolescents aged 2 to 18, were included. Each study looked at the use of hospital clowns and standard care, compared to standard care alone.

The findings suggest clowns can ease both anxiety and pain that children feel when they're in hospital for a major procedure or long-term treatment. In some cases, symptoms of illness ended earlier when children played with clowns.

But not everyone agrees: a tiny percentage of people have a fear of clowns, called coulrophobia.



SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

This report is from the Science Museum in London

DID you know the first home videogame console, the Magnavox Odyssey, was released almost 50 years ago?

While videogames might seem like part of the latest tech, consoles and popular arcade games like *Space Invaders* and *Pac-Man* first appeared in the 1970s and '80s. Before that you would have had to stick to playing board games for fun.

The videogames industry is booming and it's predicted that the UK games market could be worth a whopping £10 billion by 2023. Can you see yourself becoming the next big game programmer, developer, or designer? This month, as part of the Yorkshire Games Festival: Bonus Level, discover what it takes to work in the games industry and check out some amazing resources at tinyurl.com/5g1ot60a.



First News has teamed up with **sky Kids** show FYI and the **young audiences CONTENT FUND** to make a series of videos for you to watch at home or at school, called *I Don't Get It*. The plan is to explain stuff that can be complicated or difficult to understand. This week, Ruby explores what can be done to tackle the issue of bullying.

HOW TO BEAT THE BULLIES

SKY Kids FYI presenter Ruby spoke to Place2be and YoungMinds mental health ambassador Katie Thistleton, to learn the difference between 'banter' and bullying.

HAVE you ever been bullied? If so, you're not the only one. In fact, three out of five people are thought to have been bullied at some point.

There are lots of different types of bullying. Bullying could be calling someone mean names, spreading rumours, purposely excluding someone from groups, stealing stuff, threatening people – or even hurting someone.

It can happen anywhere, too – even online.

Sometimes it can be tricky to know the difference between banter and bullying, so Ruby asked mental health ambassador Katie Thistleton for advice.

Katie said: "We all like a bit of banter. It's good to have a sense of humour and you don't want to seem like the one in the group that doesn't like a laugh, but I think we use the word banter a lot when some of the things people are saying can be quite hurtful. So if you find that somebody's words are upsetting you and getting you down, that's not banter, it's bullying."

A report from LGBT+ charity Stonewall found that nearly half of LGBT+ pupils are bullied in school because of their gender or sexual orientation.

Katie told Ruby that "banter should never be about somebody's race, someone's appearance, their sexuality or their disability."

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU'RE BULLIED?

One idea from Ruby is "if someone's sending nasty messages over a social media site, just take some screenshots or screen recordings so you've got a record of it, and then just block them."

"If they still find a way to keep on bullying you, then I reckon you should tell an adult you trust. It can be a mum, a dad or even a teacher at school."

Katie also advises that "it is always a good idea to try to talk to a trusted adult like a parent or a teacher, but if you feel like you can't do that, there are helplines as well that you can call." We've put a few in the box below.

After all, as Katie says, we should try to remember that we "should never feel ashamed or embarrassed about the fact that you've been bullied. So many people get bullied – I was bullied – it doesn't matter what you look like, what clothes you wear, how you talk – we're all really different, but that's what makes us really special and amazing. Be proud of who you are."

It's never good to ignore bullying, since it can start to have an impact on your mental health.

Ruby reckons the best thing to do is to talk about it and get it sorted before it turns into an even bigger problem – and we agree here at First News!

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT BULLYING?



NEED SUPPORT?

CHILDLINE

Childline is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people.

Helpline: 0800 11 11

Website: childline.org.uk

EACH

EACH has a freephone helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment.

Helpline: 0808 1000 143

THE MIX

Offers support to anyone under 25 about anything that's troubling them.

Helpline: 0808 808 4994

Website: www.themix.org.uk/get-support



Ruby talking to mental health ambassador Katie Thistleton

IN 2019, A STUDY BY CHARITY 'DITCH THE LABEL' FOUND THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF BULLYING WAS VERBAL BULLYING. CYBERBULLYING WAS THE LEAST COMMON

Kids – to find out more, watch the full *I Don't Get It* video on how to beat bullying at first.news/IDGI

Teachers – you can watch the film in the classroom alongside our tie-in award-winning educational resources at schools.firstnews.co.uk

Can you tell us a bit about your new story, *Two Terrible Vikings*?

My new book is about the riotous adventures of Viking twins Hack and Whack, their wolf cub Bitey-Bitey, their friends Dirty Ulf, the girl who hates baths, and Twisty Pants, who is always bragging about how many ogres and sea monsters he has battled. Hack and Whack track trolls, go raiding and steal all the presents at a birthday party. So the stories are a mixture of wild fun and how I imagine life might have been for children in a Viking village.

What made you choose Vikings as the characters for this book?

I love Norse mythology and I love funny books about naughty rebellious children, so I combined both ideas. Vikings are pirates, after all, and because Hack and Whack are young Vikings, their parents want them to be bad. So they can steal boats, run off to sea, and rampage. They have enormous freedom and so do I.

Did it take a lot of planning to create the new characters?

My characters tend to evolve as I write, but I have adored making up the names for the Viking children. I have lists of Norse names for giants and dwarves and I often refer to them to help me come up with characters. My newest one is an evil berserker called Grunt Iron-Skull.

Hack and Whack are quite naughty! Were they inspired by anyone in particular and what is the naughtiest thing they do?

They are entirely imaginary! I think stealing a boat and sailing off to raid Bad Island is pretty naughty by our standards, but not by Viking ones.



Horrid Henry is a bit naughty too, so what is it about naughty characters that you like writing so much?

I like their energy and the way they do unexpected things. This gives me a lot of freedom as a writer to open doors marked 'Do Not Enter'.

The book has lots of great illustrations. How closely do you work with the illustrator to make your vision come to life?

Good question. I see my role more as choosing a brilliant illustrator and then standing back and admiring what they do. Steve May is such a funny illustrator, and I knew instantly he was perfect for this

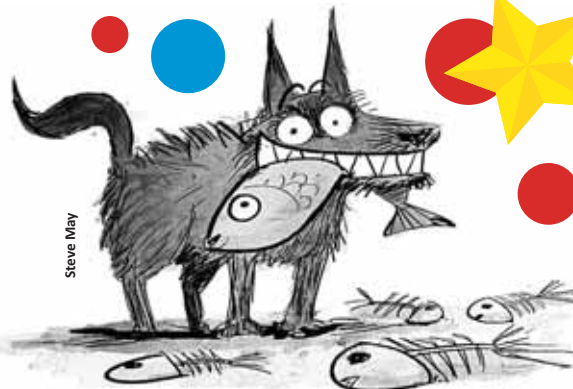


Helen Giles

VIKING ADVENTURES

HORRID Henry creator Francesca Simon is back this week with a brand-new tale about a pair of mischievous Viking twins. We found out why she's so fond of coming up with naughty characters!

book. I think my only suggestion was to have lots of dust around Dirty Ulf, in homage [paying respect] to Pig-Pen, one of my favourite Peanuts characters.



Steve May

Have you ever had a go at illustrating?

I am a truly terrible artist, so no!

You studied medieval history when you were younger, so is there any other era that you would like to set your books in?

I think I'll stick to Viking era Scandinavia for now. I have, however, always wanted to write a book set in medieval France.

Will we see any more stories about Hack and Whack?

Yes! I'm writing the new book as we speak.

Lots of families are spending more time at home, so do you think this is a great opportunity for kids to practise their writing?

Absolutely. But they should write the stories they want, to live freely in their imaginations, and not worry about their spelling or what they ought to write.



Steve May

What advice would you give to kids who want to write their own books?

Keep a notebook and write down any ideas that strike you. Then try mixing up those ideas. Think of a story as a journey. How is your character different at the end from the beginning? What's happened to them to make them change? Ask yourself lots of questions. The answers will be your story. What does your character WANT more than anything? And WHO or WHAT is stopping them getting what they want? When you know the answer, you can get writing.

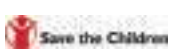
If you could give ten-year-old you a piece of advice, what would it be?

One day, your frizzy curly hair will be admired by everyone and no-one will ever call you 'Fire Hazard' again. So always be yourself and enjoy who you are.

Two Terrible Vikings by Francesca Simon is out now!



CHARITIES SUPPORTED BY FIRST NEWS



HAVE A LAUGH FOR RED NOSE DAY



Comic Relief

COMIC Relief 2021 launched this week, so some of the celebrities taking part have shared their red nose portraits and their reasons for why laughter is so important!

JOE SUGG

"Let's face it, after what has been a very difficult year for many, we could all do with raising our spirits, and Comic Relief is one of those charities that helps do just that while supporting those who need it most. I like to always see the funny side in everything, and I'd say it's my way of coping with things; I'd say it's something we all have in common, that just makes the world a nicer place."

KARIM ZEROUAL

"I'm so excited to be involved in this year's Red Nose Day campaign – I've been a huge supporter of Comic Relief for many years and taking part in last year's The Heat is On challenge in Namibia was by far one of my proudest achievements to date. To me, Red Nose Day is all about having a laugh while raising money for those who need it most, and I can't think of an easier way to help than by picking up some of these amazing goodies if you can spare a little change."



Comic Relief



Comic Relief

DAME JUDI DENCH

"I absolutely believe in laughter being the best medicine. Red Nose Day is something we can all enjoy, and goodness knows during this lockdown everyone has relied so much on television and seeing as many films as they can. I look forward to it enormously. I hope we all have a wonderful laugh and at the same time donate something, as it goes to a very, very good cause."

BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH

"I think laughter is a panacea [cure]; it's always been a national medicine. I think people reached out for it in lockdown; it's a way of getting through life's difficulties and releases the tension to just have a moment's respite from it. And that relief is much needed now."

MO GILLIGAN

"There's just something so special about laughter and its ability to bring people together. Comic Relief has never felt more needed, especially when so many people have had it so tough right across the last year. I'm proud to do whatever I can to help this year's incredible campaign."

SIR LENNY HENRY, COMIC RELIEF CO-FOUNDER

"The last 12 months have been difficult and uncertain for all of us. And the most vulnerable in our communities have been hit hardest. Together, for 35 years, we've seen how having a laugh can make a difference. Laughter has the power to connect people. To bring us together. And can give us a moment of escape. Red Nose Day will be different this year. But we'd love you to join us, even if it's just to share a laugh. If we raise some money along the way, then brilliant. We know that when times are tough, laughter really can make a difference."



Comic Relief

DID YOU KNOW?

This year, the ten Red Nose Day noses are 100% plastic-free! They're plant-based and made from a by-product of sugarcane called bagasse. The noses are designed to look like cute woodland creatures! Get yours from Sainsbury's or [comicrelief.com/shop](https://www.comicrelief.com/shop).



Comic Relief's Red Nose Day is on Friday 19 March. There's a whole night of brilliant and funny TV to entertain the whole family and to raise money for the projects supported by Comic Relief!



FIVE MINUTES WITH...

MARK WRIGHT

THE radio and TV presenter told us all about his new fitness show for kids.

What is your new show all about?

Workout the Wright Way is all about keeping active during these confusing and difficult times. It's very important for people to stay active because not being at school or not being at work takes away a lot of natural exercise that you forget about: walking around the office, walking around school, PE at school especially, so we're keeping everyone fit during this lockdown.

What made you want to do fitness for kids?

They're at an age where using that energy that they've normally got loads of, is very important for their mental state and physical state. For me to be a part of helping that and just helping kids improve their fitness is incredible. It was kind of an overwhelming feeling to be asked to be involved, because it's something that I think is very important, and the fact that I get to do it is incredible.

What would you say to kids who aren't sporty to encourage them to get involved?

Just give it a go! Give it a go once and I promise you will enjoy that buzz and that involvement. With Workout the Wright Way you're training at home so you're alone, no-one can see you. You can sweat, you can groan and moan, it doesn't matter. I encourage everyone to get involved because it's so much fun and so good for you.

Were you sporty at school, and were there any sports you didn't like?

I was sporty at school, but then when I finished school, I found it very hard to know what to do when it came to exercise. I had to ask different people and I got loads of



Mark also plays football for Crawley Town

different information. That's why I'm so pleased to be giving this to kids, because I know how hard it was when I started. My favourite sport at school was probably football. I wasn't a lover of rugby, but I didn't hate it.

Have you ever tried any unusual sports?

The most unusual sport I've probably tried is an extreme sport, white water rafting, and I have to say I loved it!

Workout the Wright Way will be on BBC Two, BBC Bitesize and iPlayer at 8:45am every weekday

PICS OF THE WEEK

SNOOPY is back and he's got a brand-new series launching this week on Apple TV+.

The Snoopy Show is based on the iconic comic book series that has been around for 70 years!

If you haven't heard of him before, Snoopy is a beagle who goes on lots of adventures with his pals. Each episode of The Snoopy Show will feature three short cartoons, all based on the classic comic strips.

The Snoopy Show launches on Apple TV+ on 5 February.



THIS WEEK



Channel 4

1 Reece, 14, has been crowned the winner of Junior Bake Off. "This honestly feels like a dream come true," he said. "I have applied twice and I can't believe that I got in to begin with – and then to win, it's just amazing." Look out for some top baking tips from Reece in First News later this month!

2 ITV bosses have confirmed that Britain's Got Talent will not be made in 2021. They decided that making the show with social distancing rules in place wouldn't work. The show will be back in 2022!

3 Disney's newest animated film, Raya and the Last Dragon, will be released in cinemas (if open) and on Disney+ on 5 March. The film will only be available to stream with Premier Access, which means even if you have a Disney+ subscription you will have to pay extra to watch the film.



COOKIE! IS BACK

FOR fans of *Wimpy Kid* comes the second book in the laugh-out-loud series by Blue Peter legend Konnie Huq. It's filled with scribbles, stories and saving the planet.

Cookie wants to throw a Save the Planet party for her birthday but Suzie Ashby, aka the most annoying girl in the world, has stolen her idea! Will Cookie ever have the eco-friendly birthday of her dreams?

If you're new to **Cookie**, don't forget to check out the first book in the series!

Head to konnie-huq.com to follow more of her work!



PLAN YOUR OWN CAMPING TRIP FOR THE SUMMER!

I will go camping with...

We will play outdoor games like...

Our tent will look like this!

"Fresh and very funny... sure to be a big hit!"
Jacqueline Wilson

OUT NOW

Piccadilly PRESS

Available from **Waterstones**

MAKE SOME TASTY SMORES!

S'mores are a great American treat that are normally made by toasting marshmallows over a fire and squishing them with some chocolate between biscuits called Graham crackers. Here's our version, perfect to warm you up in the chilly winter months. Don't forget to ask an adult for help with any cooking!

Getty



1. We don't have Graham crackers in the UK but you can use a biscuit like a rich tea or a digestive.
2. Place your biscuits on a baking tray. Put some chocolate chunks on the biscuits and some marshmallows on the chocolate.
3. Place the baking tray under the grill until the marshmallow is toasty.
4. Place another biscuit on top of the melty marshmallow, squish down and eat. Yum!



Getty

THE BIG PICTURE



FRENCH sculptor Rachid Khimoune poses at a new exhibition of his *Tortues de la Paix* installation, in the Galerie Italienne in Paris.

The name of the exhibition is French for Peace Turtles, and if you look closely you can see that the 'shells' are actually soldiers' helmets, from the armies of many different countries.

Rachid says that the turtle is a symbol of wisdom and humanity, which hibernates during winter before emerging in the spring. He says this annual cycle is like the suffering that is regularly caused by war, which is what inspired his 1,000 Peace Turtles.

IT'S QUIZ TIME!

TEST out your English language knowledge with this brain-busting quiz!

1 Which of the following is the best definition for "dodo"?

- a) A type of bird found in New Zealand that cannot fly
- b) The largest bird in the world that can run fast but cannot fly
- c) An extinct, very large bird that was unable to fly
- d) A large Australian bird that can run fast but cannot fly

2 Which is the odd one out?

- a) ecstatic
- b) elated
- c) melancholy
- d) delirious

3 Which of the words below is NOT a synonym for "adequate"?

- a) enough
- b) unacceptable
- c) satisfactory
- d) sufficient

4 Unscramble the letters to find a word that means "a large African or Asian mammal with one or two horns on its nose".

RICH SOONER

5 Which word joins with the words below to create new compound nouns?

- a) fly
- b) peanut
- c) bean
- d) fingers

6 True or false? The word "crocodile" comes from a Greek word meaning "lizard".

10 Happy Valley is a special place where only certain words are allowed. Can you work out what kind of words can be found in Happy Valley?

- You can have **PUPPIES** but not **DOGS**
- You can have **CHEESE** but not **BREAD**
- **GRASS** is allowed but not **FLOWERS**
- **SLIPPERS** are fine but not **SHOES**

7 Fill in the gaps using collective nouns:

- a) A of sheep
- b) A of bees
- c) A of cattle
- d) A of fish

8 Complete this riddle to work out the word!

My first is in **BIG** but not in **HUGE**
 My second is in **MOON** but not in **SUN**
 My third is in **OPEN** and also in **CLOSED**
 My last is in **KING** but not in **QUEEN**

9 What gets wet while it's drying?

Look at the answers below and count up your score. **What did you get?**

7-10 Champion of the WORD!

4-6 You're a linguist in the making

1-3 Help is at hand in the Collins Primary Dictionary.

WIN! A SET OF FIVE COLLINS PRIMARY DICTIONARIES!

Enter the competition at collins.co.uk/dictionarycompetition

The competition closes on **25 February 2021**

Entry is open to residents of the UK and Republic of Ireland only. Please make sure you have your parent or guardian's permission to enter. Ask a parent if entering via social media. Alternatively, click the envelope icon to enter via email. Full terms and conditions can be found at collins.co.uk/dictionarycompetition



FIVE SETS UP FOR GRABS!

For more dictionary fun and games, visit collins.co.uk/primarydictionary

ANSWERS: 1. C: 2. C: melancholy (the rest mean very happy); 3. B: 4. rhinoceros; 5. butterfly/peanut butter/butter/bean/butterfingers; 6. True: it comes from the Greek word krokodilos; 7. A: flock; B: swarm; C: herd; D: shoal; 8. book; 9. A towel (it gets wet while you use it to dry yourself); 10. Only words with double letters can be found in Happy Valley.

JENGA HERO

IF, like us, you love a good family game, you'll love this impressive Jenga record.

Twelve-year-old Auldin Maxwell, from British Columbia, Canada, has set a new Guinness World Record for the most Jenga blocks stacked on one vertical block.

Auldin successfully stacked a whopping 693 Jenga blocks atop one block, beating the previous record of 485, set last year.

We're not sure about you, but we're totally going to try stacking our Jenga blocks at home during lockdown now.

Though something tells us it's not as easy as it looks!

FUN FACT!

JENGA was first introduced to the public at the famous Harrods department store in London in 1982!



RARE SIGHTING



A SNOWY owl has been spotted in New York's Central Park for the first time since 1890.

The owl delighted birdwatchers when it landed on a baseball field in the famous park, more than 130 years after one was last seen there!

The majestic white owl attracted nearly 100 people, who gathered to take pictures and witness its antics.

Snowy owls are native to the Arctic tundra (cold and flat areas), which makes this sighting in Manhattan incredibly rare.

WANTED! SLEEPING BEAUTY



FANCY getting paid to sleep?

A website team in America is on the hunt for a real-life Sleeping Beauty. That's right, folks!

The lucky candidate will get paid a whopping \$3,000 (£2,219) just to get a good night's kip. The catch? They'll have to take on the role of the site's Official Mattress Tester.

The unusual job post on sleepjunkie.com says all the successful napper needs to do is test out different mattresses, then report on their sleep quality, mood and the comfort of the mattress.

At the end of the job, the candidate will not only take home the cash but they'll get to keep their favourite mattress too. Result!

A SWEET JOB

WILLY Wonka eat your heart out!

A company in Canada is looking for people to become candyologists. Sounds pretty yummy already!

Candy Funhouse is offering \$30 (£21) an hour to taste test and review some of the company's 3,000 sweet and chocolate products.

All the candidates have to do is try out the goodies and share their honest opinions. Where do we sign up?!



Written and illustrated by Paul Palmer



SUDOKU!

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

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

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.

ROCK

FALL

WIN! STIB PENCILS

CAN you complete our crossword puzzle by using the clues below? Send in your answers and three lucky winners will win a set of Stib colouring pencils.

Artists will love these 12 vibrant colouring pencils, each printed with a positive word to spark ideas. Each pack includes a double wooden pencil sharpener and sheet of stickers. 10% of profits go to charity.

www.stibpencils.com



1		2			3		4		5	
6					7					8
9			10			11				
12						13		14		
					15					
16	17							18		
					19					

ACROSS

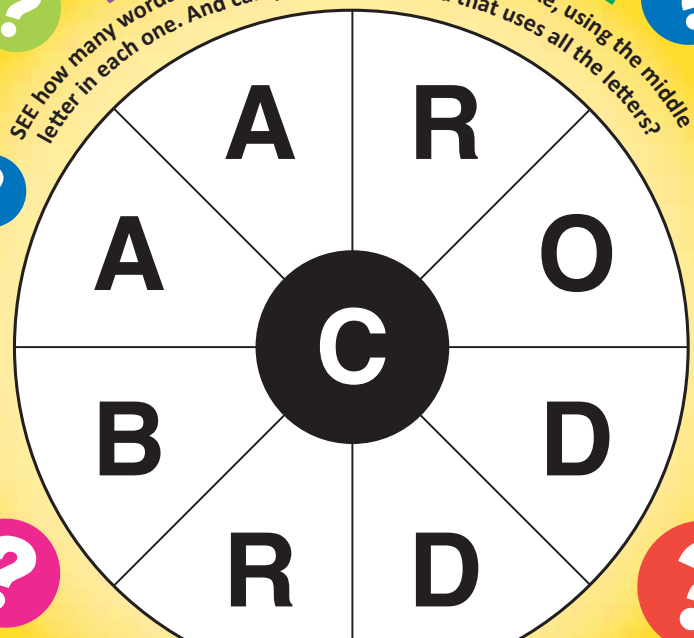
- 1 Small mammal with a spiny back (8)
- 6 Place where grain is crushed (4)
- 7 Sport played by Andy Murray (6)
- 9 Glue together; twig (5)
- 11 A type of snake (5)
- 12 Enter data into a computer (5)
- 13 Famous baddie in Doctor Who (5)
- 16 Spectacular birds of prey (6)
- 18 The joint between the thigh and the lower leg (4)
- 19 Enter without permission (8)

DOWN

- 1 English county where one finds Southampton (9)
- 2 New ____ : Indian capital (5)
- 3 Items of headwear (4)
- 4 A boat used on Venetian canals (7)
- 5 Move over snow on runners (3)
- 8 Handheld fireworks (9)
- 10 Two lines in a poem that rhyme (7)
- 14 Sri ____ : country off the coast of India (5)
- 15 Area of land surrounded by the sea (4)
- 17 Creative school subject (3)

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?



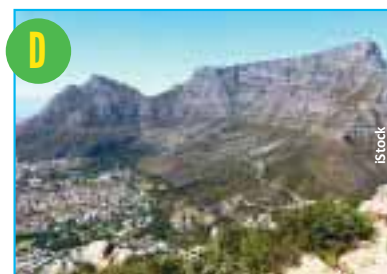
CAN you spot the five changes we've made to this picture from Disney's upcoming film *Raya and the Last Dragon*?



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WHERE ON EARTH?

CAN you guess which country these are all associated with?



LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS:

Spot the difference: head is bigger, yellow circle in background is now blue, microphone has been removed, stripe on Yolanda's trousers is green, keyboard is longer.

Word ladder: best, pest, past, pass, pals, palm.
Word wheel: overheard.

L	I	V	I	N	G	R	O	O	M		9	4	2	8	6	1	3	7	5
A			A		O		R				6	5	3	4	7	2	8	1	9
R	E	C	A	P		W	A	G	E		7	8	1	9	5	3	2	6	4
V	R		K	S	A		A				3	7	8	6	2	5	4	9	1
A	C	I	D	I	C		S	N	U	G	1	2	6	3	4	9	7	5	8
	S	N	F		I						4	9	5	1	8	7	6	3	2
R	I	T	A		T		T	I	S	S	8	3	7	5	9	4	1	2	6
I		I	P		C		E		G		2	6	9	7	1	8	5	4	3
B	E	A	N		S	A	D	L			5	1	4	2	3	6	9	8	7
	N	O		T					P		5	1	4	2	3	6	9	8	7
	J	O									5	1	4	2	3	6	9	8	7

ANNE DE VAREILLES ARCHAEOBOTANIST



IF you can imagine a nature and history lover crossed with a detective, that's the pretty cool job that Anne does for Historic England!

WHAT I DO

I'm an archaeologist who studies the segments of plants left behind by ancient people – so I'm an archaeobotanist. Before the age of plastics, humans used plants in so many ways: as construction materials; to build furniture, hunting traps, ropes and nets; to make clothing, baskets and agricultural tools, and for food, of course. My job is to sample for plant remains during excavations and identify them in lab conditions. It's a bit like detective work – once you have all the 'clues', the most interesting part can begin: understanding what the remains tell us about how people lived, what they ate and how they interacted with their natural environment.

HOW I GOT MY JOB

I've always been interested in how the present has been shaped by the past, so I took a degree in archaeology. I did a master's and then worked in commercial archaeology as an excavator and archaeobotanist. I decided I wanted to focus on research, so I returned to university to do a PhD.



WHAT I LOVE ABOUT MY JOB

It's a privilege to handle remains that were once used thousands, sometimes tens of thousands of years ago. You get to travel and work abroad on excavation sites, which can be really fun. I love that we can discover stories about the past and learn from them. On a day-to-day basis I really enjoy being able to use scientific methods to understand human behaviour.

WHAT'S DIFFICULT ABOUT IT

Finding a permanent job in archaeology can be hard. Spaces are limited, especially within academia (working in a university), and competition is high.

WHAT SKILLS I NEED

You need to be passionate about the past. For archaeobotany it also helps to be a budding botanist.

USEFUL QUALIFICATIONS

Universities encourage you to take at least one science at A Level, though specific techniques will be taught during your degree. It helps to think about which part of the human story you're most interested in and which sciences might be most useful.

WHERE YOU SHOULD START IF YOU WANT TO DO THE JOB TOO

Getting involved in a 'dig' is a good idea. It's good fun and will give you an idea of what archaeology is really like. You should also go to university open days and talk to specialists about their line of work.

HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR JOB COULD CHANGE IN THE FUTURE?

I think archaeology will become increasingly scientific as techniques develop.

VISIT [FIRSTCAREERS.CO.UK](https://firstcareers.co.uk) – A SHOWCASE OF HUNDREDS OF JOBS AND CAREER PATHS TO INSPIRE YOU

WIN! A GAMING ACCESSORY BUNDLE



NUMSKULL.COM is a treasure trove of cool gaming accessories, including these very cool LED charging cables and super handy Nintendo Switch cases.

Both feature imagery from your favourite movies, including *Harry Potter*, *Jurassic Park*, *Back to the Future* and *Minions*, and the case holds up to ten game cartridges with a zipped section for other bits and bobs.

We have six bundles, so you can win a *Jurassic Park* cable and thumb grips and case or *Harry Potter* cable and case. Plus we'll throw in a pair of cool Gaming Glasses – pop them on when playing, and they reduce UV and blue light, and the amber lens gives sharper detail. They're designed for PC, laptop and smartphone use too – game on!

To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:

Nintendo was founded in which country?

- a) America
b) Japan c) China



www.numskull.com

ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY GAMING

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 21. The closing date is 18 February 2021.

WIN! A SPA TRIP FOR YOUR MUM

RED Letter Days are giving away a special treat for your mum or guardian this Mother's Day.

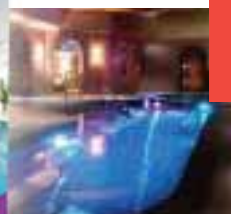
How would your mum like the chance to unwind with this indulgent spa experience and enjoy the chance to relax in style?

Choose from a wide range of luxury UK venues, from quaint country houses to stylish health clubs. There are hundreds of luxury spa experiences to pick from.

Enjoy a day of soothing treatments or retreat for a charming overnight spa escape for two. This voucher is the ideal Mother's Day gift for those who love to be pampered.

To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:

- Which of these is a historic Roman spa city?
a) Birmingham b) Bristol
c) Bath



Red Letter days

Visit www.redletterdays.co.uk to view the experience

This voucher is valid for 24 months. Operational dates will vary according to your choice of voucher. Over-18s at some spas and salons. Please check when booking the experience.

ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY SPA

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 21. The closing date is 18 February 2021.



PRESIDENTIAL POOCHES

DONALD Trump (who was US president from 2017-2021) was the first president to not have a dog since William McKinley (1897-1901) and the first to not have any pets since Andrew Johnson (1865-1869). With new president Joe Biden, dogs are back in the White House, so let's look back at some of the past presidential pups...



George W Bush (2001-2009) had lots of dogs, including Spot the springer spaniel



First Lady Jill Biden with current White House dogs Major (left) and Champ

Bill Clinton (1993-2001) gets a great big kiss from Buddy, his Labrador retriever

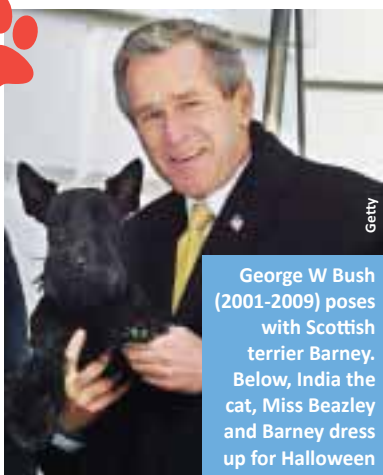


Barack Obama (2009-2017) poses with his family and their gorgeous fluffballs, Sunny (left) and Bo. Both pets are Portuguese water dogs

Gerald Ford (1974-1977) enjoys the company of his pet golden retriever, Liberty, in the Oval Office



Lyndon B Johnson (1963-1969) was often photographed walking his seven dogs. Here he is walking Him, a beagle, and Blanco, a collie



George W Bush (2001-2009) poses with Scottish terrier Barney. Below, India the cat, Miss Beazley and Barney dress up for Halloween



IT'S NOT JUST DOGS...



As well as pet dogs, Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) and First Lady Nancy had two cats, Cleo and Sara

The wife of Calvin Coolidge (1923-1929), First Lady Grace Coolidge, had a pet raccoon called Rebecca. Kids loved her!



PAVÉ PARTY!

JANUARY'S *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* update has landed, and it's bringing the party!

The update adds the Festivale celebration, which will take place in-game on 15 February. At the Festivale, you'll meet the party-loving peacock Dancer Pavé.

By catching feathers for the colourful peacock, you'll be treated to a special performance from Pavé.

Also coming to the game are some sweet Valentine's Day items, including chocolate hearts and heart-shaped bouquets!

Along with all that excitement, Nintendo have teased a special Mario-themed update coming in March! Wahoo!



SWITCH SUCCESS...

A FEW weeks ago, it was rumoured that the Nintendo Switch had been a sales success – and this week, Nintendo confirmed it.

The latest figures are in, and it's been revealed that 79.87m Nintendo Switches have been sold since its March 2017 launch, more than the total of 75.94m Nintendo 3DS consoles that were sold between 2011 and 2020!

The top-selling Switch game has been *Mario Kart 8 Deluxe*, which is now up to a whopping 33.41m copies sold.



...BUT MORE JOY-CON COMPLAINTS

SINCE the Switch was introduced, some of Nintendo's Joy-Con controllers have been troubled by 'Joy-Con drift', an issue where the controllers' sticks move on their own, often ruining gameplay.

After receiving more than 25,000 complaints from countries across Europe about Joy-Con drift, the European Consumer Organisation has asked the European Commission to investigate the issue, and has called for Nintendo to repair faulty Joy-Con for free. The European Commission has said that it is "considering potential action".

In 2019, over 5,000 gamers in the US united to take Nintendo to court over the issue, claiming that the controllers are "defective". The case is ongoing.

Nintendo has previously apologised for "any trouble caused" by Joy-Con drift, and encouraged those who are experiencing the issue to visit support.nintendo.co.uk.



SO LONG, SONIC!

VOICE actor Roger Craig Smith has announced he will no longer be voicing Sonic the Hedgehog, after ten years in the role.

After a decade voicing the blue blur in videogames and on the *Sonic Boom* TV show, Roger Craig Smith announced on Twitter that he was moving "onward to new zones!" He also sent "much love to the fans who've been so kind."

As *First News* went to press, there was no news on who would be stepping up to voice Sonic next, but our money is on Ben Schwartz, who played the world's fastest hedgehog in the *Sonic the Hedgehog* movie that came out last year.



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FELINE FUNDRAISING

by Joss Tyson

FAR from using the excuse of horrid weather and another lockdown to hibernate, I set myself the challenge of running every day in January to raise money for cats in need.

I was inspired to take on the feat to raise money for Cats Protection after spotting a neighbour's vegan cake sale that was fundraising for the feline charity, and having got our family cat, Margherita, from a local rescue centre.

As a member of a local running club, and with a love of training in the beautiful surroundings of my home town, I have set myself the task of getting out every day in January, as that's my birthday month. I initially had a sponsorship target of £50; I have already smashed that, and have so far had donations nearing £800 and still counting.

With schools now closed, we are juggling homeschooling and getting out for our permitted daily exercise.

Despite the freezing weather, and with snow on the ground, I have not been deterred. I'm not worried about the cold or wet weather, I just want to help cats! I run for my local running club, Ambleside AC, in all kinds of weather, so I am used to it.

Cats Protection Events Officer Gina Rogers said: "We want

to say a huge thank you to Joss for his absolute dedication to this challenge, for running through sub-zero temperatures and snow; the cats in our care will really benefit from all those miles."



Joss running in the snow

JUNIOR JOURNALIST

WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT YOU/YOUR SCHOOL IS UP TO

Write in to let us know what you've been up to lately! Have you been getting creative? Been for a great day out? How has the coronavirus affected your school, friends and family? Why not share your experiences with First News readers?

Email your report (including pictures) to yournews@firstnews.co.uk

Don't forget to include your name and age (and your school's name and address for school news reports). By writing in, you give consent to First News printing details and photographs of those involved in the report.

BOOKS YOUR READS!

THE BOY WHO SANG WITH DRAGONS
ANDY SHEPHERD

reviewed by
Isabella Irvin,
aged eight



This is the fifth and final book in the *Dragons* series by Andy Shepherd. This exciting book also has some wonderful illustrations by Sara Ogilvie, who illustrated one of my favourite books, *Dogs Don't Do Ballet*.

The book is about Tomas and his friends, the Superhero Squad. Tomas has a secret... his grandad has a dragon-fruit tree in his garden that grows real dragons. He and his friends help to look after the dragons, but are faced with new challenges when they discover a hidden secret about the dragons.

They have to launch into action when they also discover that some mysterious people are trying to take dragon-fruit seedlings and experiment with them.

With their own dragons, Zing, Rosebud and Flicker, Tomas and the Superhero Squad hatch a plan to rescue the seedlings and save the future dragons.

I really enjoyed the pace of this book, which is a real page-turner. You need to have read the previous books in the series, as this book continues where the others left off.

It has inspired me to do lots of creative writing during lockdown and I especially like the idea that the most incredible, fantastical things can happen in the most ordinary places.

National Literacy Trust's Virtual School Library

OUR author of the week in the Virtual School Library is Konnie Huq!



Head to the Virtual School Library from the National Literacy Trust and the Oak National Academy to listen to the audiobook of *Cookie And The Most Annoying Boy In The World* completely free! Konnie Huq recommends these books:

- *The Boy At The Back Of The Class* by Onjali Q. Raúf
- *Kay's Anatomy: A Complete (And Completely Disgusting) Guide To The Human Body* by Adam Kay, illustrated by Henry Paker
- *Superfudge* by Judy Blume

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WHAT'S IN THE SHOPS?

STAR WARS VALENTINE'S DAY FUNKO POP!

FUNKOEUROPE.COM £9.99

The famous characters of Star Wars have been given a special Valentine's makeover. Now in pink and red, each loveable character is holding a heart-shaped box in their hands, plus they come in a special edition Pop! box.



BRICKHEADZ VALENTINE'S BEAR

LEGO.COM £9.99

This cute LEGO BrickHeadz Valentine's Bear is the perfect way to let someone know how much they're loved. Holding a large red heart, the adorable little bear sits on a picnic blanket together with his bee friend, a honey jar and flowers. Built and displayed on a baseplate, the Valentine's Bear is a gift that will last all year.



VALENTINE'S DAY

HEART SCRATCH ART MAGNETS

BAKERROSS.CO.UK £3.95

Create a stunning heart scratch magnet for someone special this Valentine's Day. Simply scratch a design onto the specially coated heart surface to reveal rainbow colours. Each heart comes with a scratch tool and self-adhesive magnet for you to create your own messages and designs.

*All prices correct at time of printing



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WIN! A TOBI ROBOT SMARTWATCH



THE Tobi Robot Smartwatch combines all the interactive features of a smartwatch with a playful robot that's packed with personality.

Watch as Tobi Comes to Life Before Your Eyes™ with its moving robot arms and legs, fun sound effects, and 100+ expressions that will keep you giggling, dancing, playing, learning and more!

From learning to tell the time, playing augmented reality games to dancing and using the built-in pedometer, the Tobi Robot Smartwatch offers hours of fun! Plus, it has two cameras for taking selfies and videos, room for up to 3,000 photos or 30 minutes of video, and you can customise your photos with stickers too.

Six lucky winners will each win a Tobi Robot Smartwatch.

To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:



What does a pedometer measure?

- a) Steps b) Heart rate
c) Pulse

ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY TOBI

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 21. The closing date is 18 February 2021.

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SPORT PIC OF THE WEEK



Newcastle striker Callum Wilson scores the second of his two goals past a diving Jordan Pickford of Everton. The Toon Army's 2-0 victory followed a run of five Premier League defeats in a row

AMAZON

Advertisement feature

CALLING ALL YOUNG INVENTORS

THERE'S ONE WEEK LEFT FOR A CHANCE TO WIN £20,000!

SAVING the planet, healthy choices, an ageing population, clean transport and staying connected safely – there are many challenges that we face. They will need many different solutions.

Young people care deeply about making a difference. Using science and technology, they can solve the big problems of our time. The Amazon Longitude Explorer Prize is a competition for young people aged 11-16 that will award £40,000 to teams from schools and youth groups who invent new technologies to solve these challenges.

In 2020 a team from London won. They researched, designed and coded a smartwatch

app that helps people with memory loss live more independently. The impressive winners did all of this during lockdown.

The Amazon Longitude Explorer Prize is looking for its next big winners. It is calling on teams of young people to invent a new technology that makes the world a better place. The top 40 teams will work with experts from Amazon next term to bring their ideas to life!



Team Iscore from Greenford High School won last year with their Tomodachi smartwatch app (left)

Here are some of last year's top entries to inspire you with ideas...

First prize is £20,000 for your school or youth group!



The deadline to enter is **12 February 2021**. To find out more and to enter, visit longitudeexplorer.challenges.org.

SPORT IN NUMBERS

6 February is when this year's rugby union Six Nations begins, but fans won't be allowed in stadiums due to COVID-19. Italy play France in the opening match, followed by reigning champions England (below) versus Scotland. The women's Six Nations has been postponed until later this year because of the pandemic.



22 -year-old Brit Izzy Atkin (below) won a silver in the ski slopestyle at the X Games in Colorado, USA. But she also suffered a nasty crash on her fourth run and had to be taken to hospital. Luckily, her injuries were not serious. China's Eileen Gu, aged 17, took gold. She became the first woman to win three medals at her first X Games.



6 events are taking place at the same time in one Melbourne venue as tennis pros prepare for the Australian Open, which starts on 8 February. World No1 Ashleigh Barty (below) features in one of the three women's events.



DOUBLE DELIGHT FOR DINA

BRITISH sprinter Dina Asher-Smith won two indoor 60m races in two days in her first competitive events since 2019.

At Karlsruhe in Germany, Asher-Smith equalled her personal best of 7.08 secs. It was her first international appearance since winning world championship gold in the 200m two years ago, and her first indoor race in three years. The winning time was just 0.02 seconds off the British record held by Asha Philip.

Then, two days after her triumph, Asher-Smith won the 60m in Düsseldorf, also in Germany. That time she finished in 7.12 secs. The 25-year-old is due to race next at Liévin, France on 9 February.

She then has three more meets before the European Indoor Championships in Poland begin on 5 March.

There was more good news for Britain at the Indoor Track & Field Vienna meeting in Austria. Eighteen-year-old Keely Hodgkinson (pictured right, in 2020) broke the world under-20 indoor 800m record with a winning time of 1 minute 59.03 secs. Her impressive time shaved two seconds off the previous record, set in 2004 by Ethiopian runner Meskerem Legesse.



Dina Asher-Smith celebrates her second win in Germany



MESSI SCORES 650TH GOAL

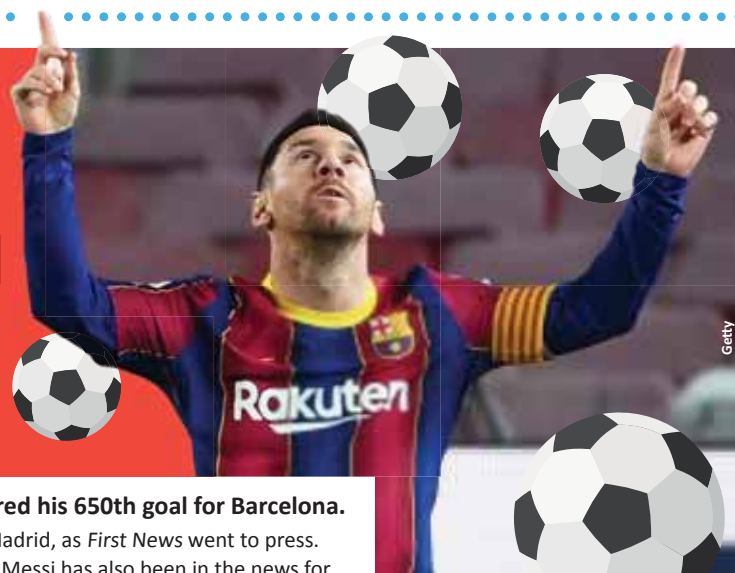
ARGENTINIAN striker Lionel Messi has scored his 650th goal for Barcelona.

The superstar forward reached yet another career milestone with an excellent free-kick in a 2-1 win over Athletic Bilbao. Messi managed to scoop the ball above and beyond five men in the Bilbao wall, another player behind it, and a seventh standing on the goal-line – as well as the goalkeeper, Unai Simón.

The victory took Barcelona to second place in La Liga, ten points behind leaders Atlético

Madrid, as First News went to press.

Messi has also been in the news for off-the-pitch reasons this week. Spanish newspaper *El Mundo* published details of his Barcelona contract, revealing that Messi is earning €555 million (£480 million) across a four-year period. Messi's deal ends at the end of this season. It's not known how *El Mundo* got hold of the confidential contract.



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