

6th December 2024

Dear Parents / Carers,

Today I have received a number of messages directing me to an online article which I want to share with you. The Sunday Times Parent Power Guide to the UK's top schools has been published and I am both pleased and proud to let you know that the school is ranked at number 2 in the list of top primary schools in North East and number 33 nationally. To check out the article and to see the list in full please [click here](#). This recognises the hard work that everyone associated with the school does each and every day.

In a further update to staffing for after Christmas I would like to confirm that Mrs. Henney will be remaining in Year 3 for the remainder of the year. When Mrs. March returns to school in January she will be working in Year 4 with Mrs. Lowes.

It has been lovely this week spending time in classes with the children as they work to complete their current topics as well as prepare for Christmas. Early Years have had an amazing week exploring both the Christmas story and traditions. I know Nursery thoroughly enjoyed putting up their Christmas tree!

Our Key Stage 2 PE work on orienteering is also drawing to an end. The children have had a great, if somewhat cold, time developing their map reading, independence, team work and resilience skills through a wide range of orienteering activities.

It has been a musical week this week. The choir sang at the Swan Christmas Fair on Monday and last night was our annual Music showcase. This year accompanied by readings, monologues, comedy acts, dancing and a special mini-concert on the ukuleles! We have also had our termly Rocksteady Concert. The children really enjoyed performing as a band for their families. For pictures and more information please see later in the flyer.

I hope that you all enjoyed attending our Christmas Fair. Thank you to the Friends of Heddon who have worked really hard in organising this event.

Please check out our updated 'Diary Dates' at the end of the flyer for upcoming events.

Thanks to all the parents who supported the school through the ASDA cashpot for schools programme. I am pleased to let you know that we have raised £209.76 for school.

Could I ask that when attending our school and church events in the coming weeks that you park safely and showing consideration to our neighbours.

Well done to Year 4 with the best attendance this week: 97.7%.

Well done to Year 1 and Year 5 for the best attendance for this year: 97.4%.

I hope that you enjoy reading this flyer and have a relaxing weekend.

Mr. A. Wheatley,
Headteacher



'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14

Attendance Matters



ATTEND today...
ACHIEVE tomorrow...
ATTENDANCE matters.

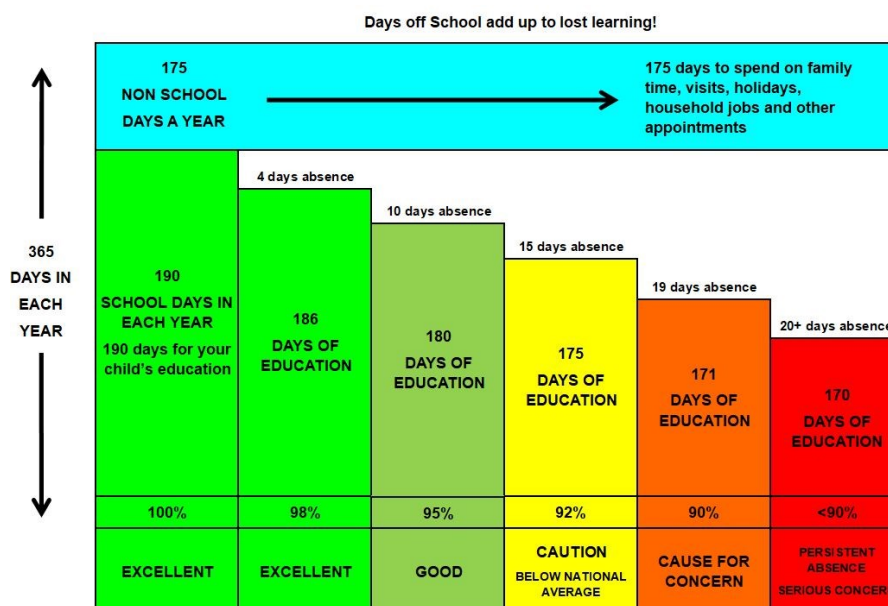


We continue to focus on attendance and punctuality so please remember that our School starts at 8.55am (9am for Nursery) and anyone arriving after this time will be marked as late.

Attendance for this week is summarised below:

Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year	Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year
Nursery (Hedgehogs)	93.1%	94.8%	Year 3 (Gibside)	90.2%	96.5%
Reception (Owls)	94.1%	93.1%	Year 4 (Lindisfarne)	97.7%	96.9%
Year 1 (Wallington)	97.3%	97.4%	Year 5 (Bamburgh)	97.6%	97.4%
Year 2 (Cragside)	93.3%	96.7%	Year 6 (Dunstanburgh)	96.6%	97.1%

Please see the graphic below which shows the significant impact of absence over time.



'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14

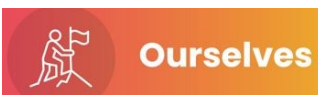


Festive Fun!

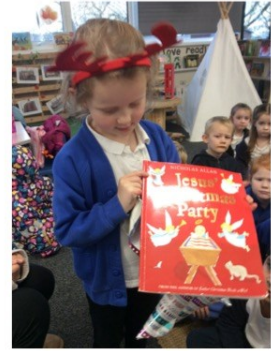
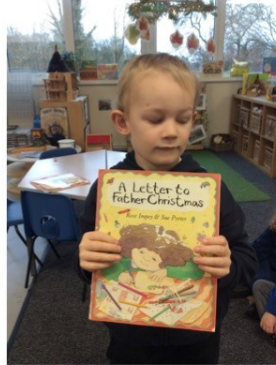
The Hedgehogs have loved getting into the Christmas spirit! We enjoyed putting our Christmas tree up together, as well as a range of Christmas themed art work and crafts.



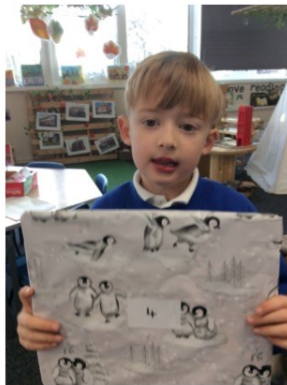
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There was definitely a festive buzz in the air this week in Reception as we began to prepare for Christmas.



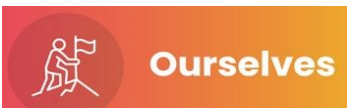
We have enjoyed opening a book, and sharing a festive story each day, from our advent tree.



We have had reindeer fun in PE with Mr Smith.



And we have been practising our Nativity Story it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!



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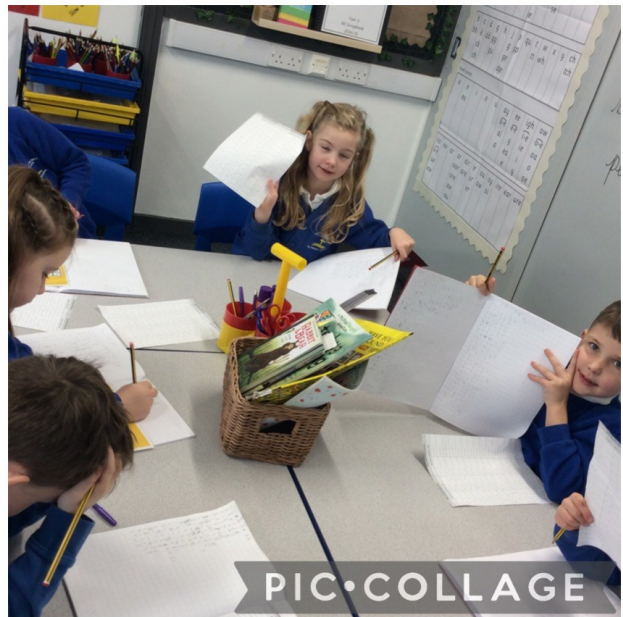
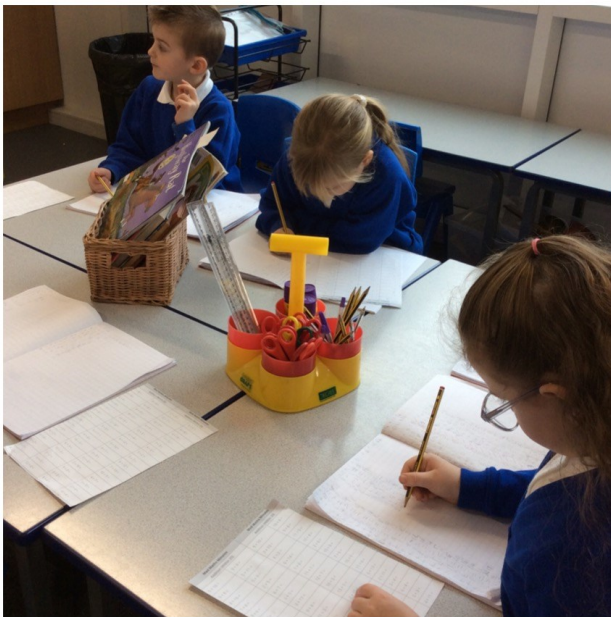
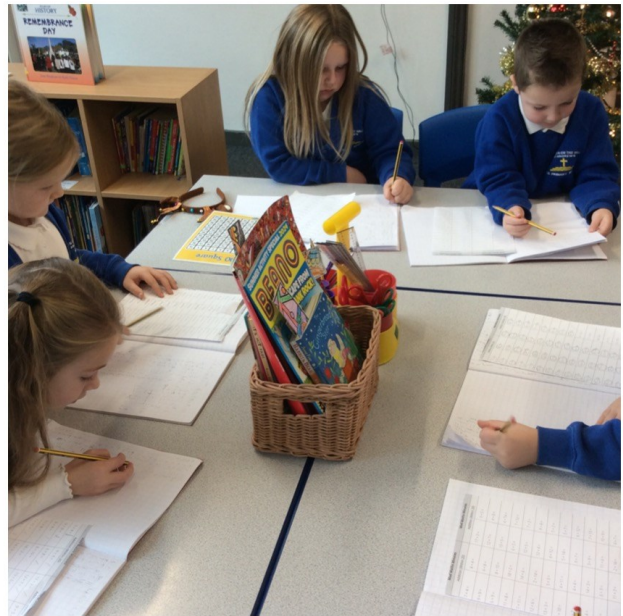
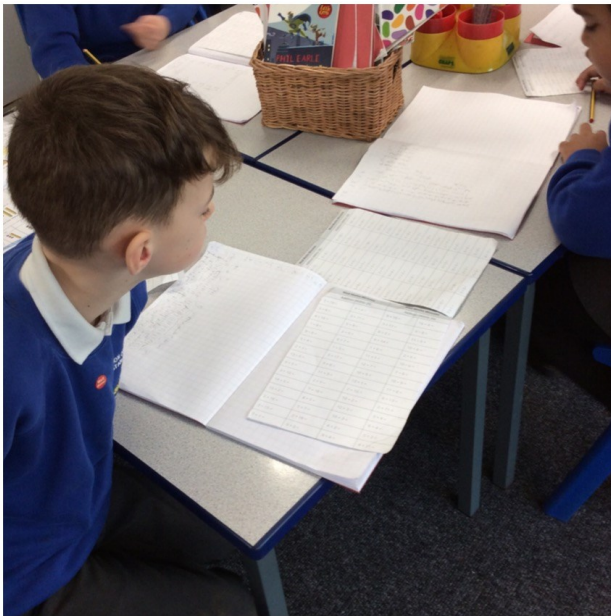
Making Patterns in Year 1

In Maths we have been recognising different patterns with 2D and 3D shapes, everyone is doing a brilliant job at saying and identifying all of the different 2D and 3D shapes. We have also then been making our own patterns using 2D and 3D shapes. Well done Year 1!



Addition and Subtraction with Year 2

Year 2 have been working incredibly hard at addition and subtraction this week - really practising at becoming fluent with our strategies. Well done, Year 2!

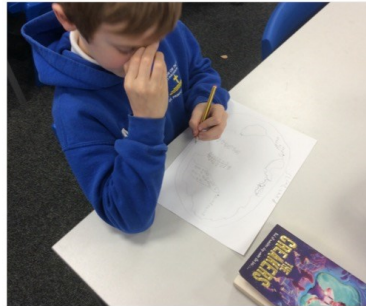
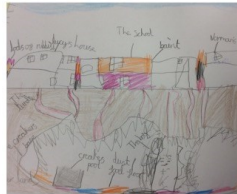
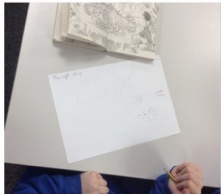
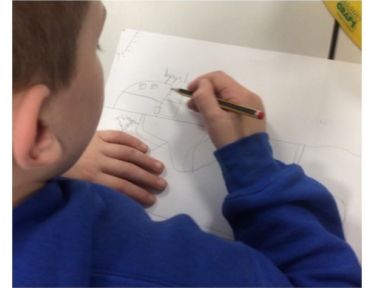
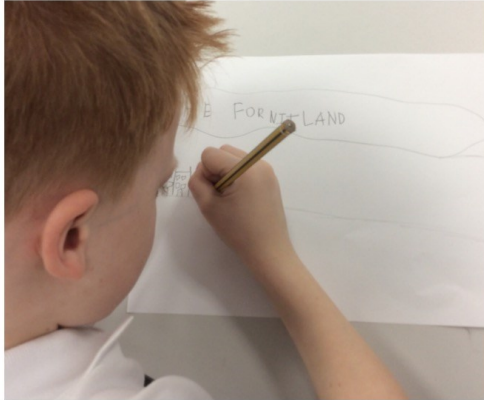


Reindeer Ready with Year 3

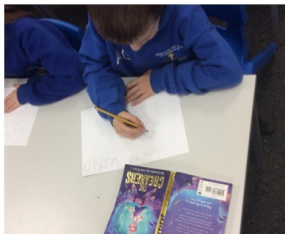
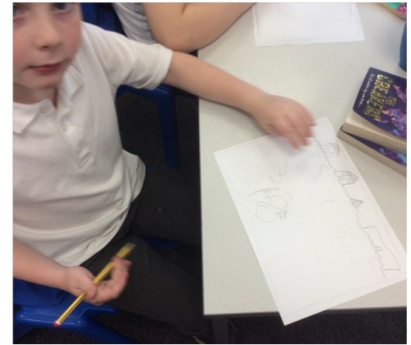
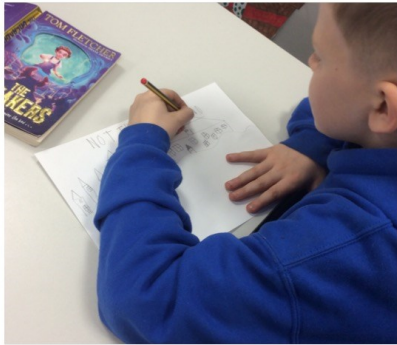
In English, Year 3 have started to use the Christmas advert 'Reindeer Ready' in our English lessons. After watching the advert we completed a hot seat activity where one person in each group had to pretend they were at the McDonald's when Santa came in to order bags of reindeer treats whilst the other children were reporters and asked them questions. We then used this to plan a newspaper article.



Learning

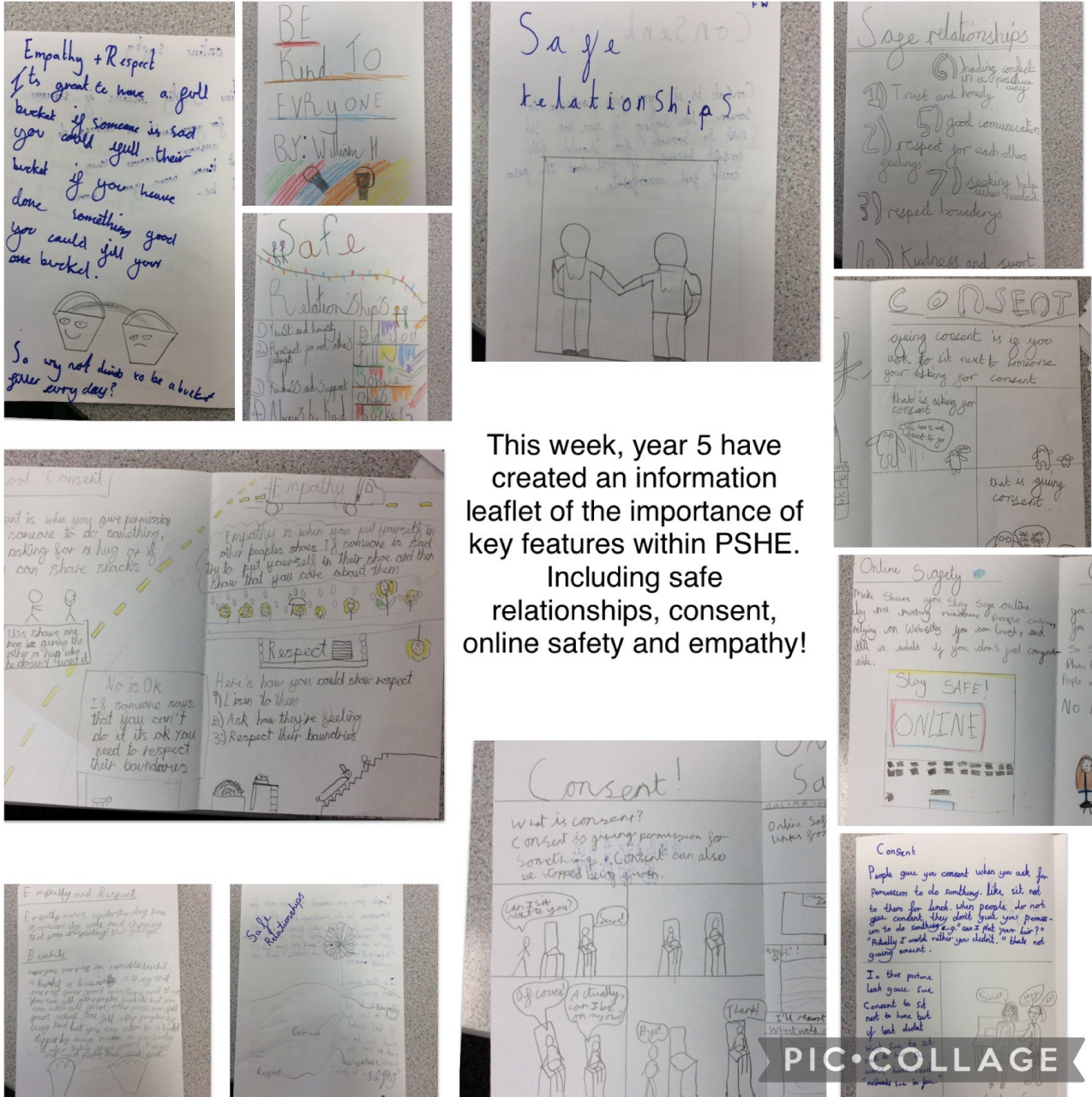


We are really loving the Creakers in Year 4! After reading about the WOLEB we have drawn our own 'world of waste' and used this to inspire fabulous setting descriptions.



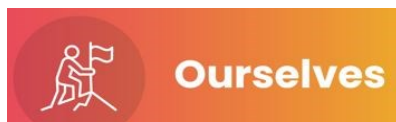
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This week, year 5 have created an information leaflet of the importance of key features within PSHE. Including safe relationships, consent, online safety and empathy!

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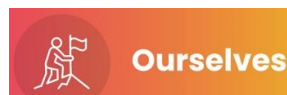


Orienteering in Year 6

As we come towards the end of our orienteering unit, the children were tasked with working in teams to compete against one another. They had to plot course routes for their opponents to complete, before racing them back to a starting point. Well done Year 6 for showing great teamwork this week!



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Ourselves

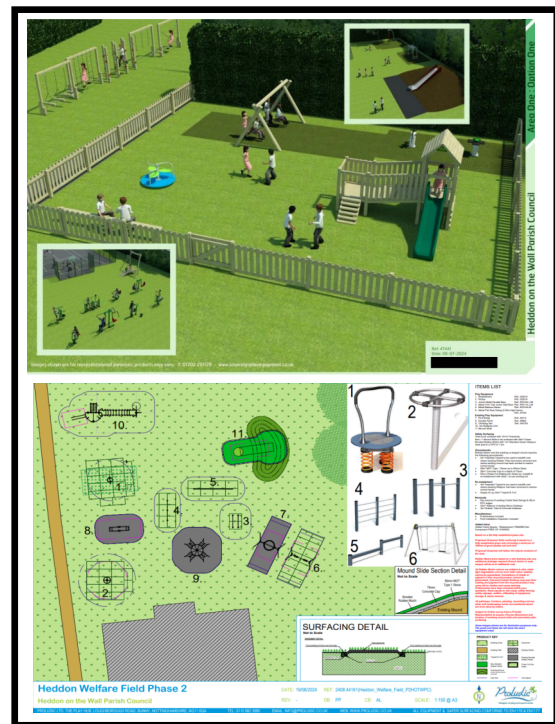
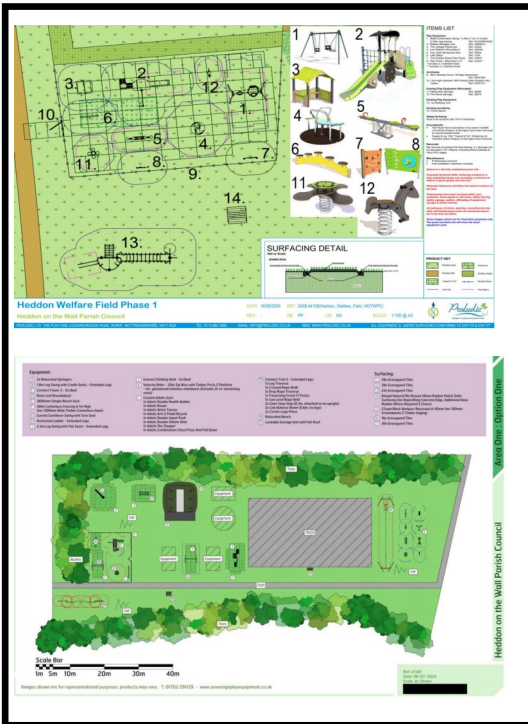


Others



Welfare Field Project

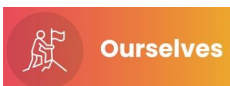
Heddon Parish Council are looking to redevelop the play park on the Welfare Field behind the school. I am aware that this is very popular with children both before and after school. The School Council have already been working with the Parish Council sharing what they think should be there. The Parish Council now have three different plans and are seeking views before making a final decision. You will have been sent a Google Form from school for you to share your views. I have attached pictures of the three proposals below. This is a great opportunity to help shape the facilities in the village for the children.



'Let all that you do be done with love'

Music Showcase Evening

We had a great time performing at the Music Showcase this week. While guests enjoyed a festive meal from Mr. Bell the children brought lots of Christmas cheer through dance, song, monologues, comedy and ukuleles. There was also a special dance from the staff. Thanks to all the adults who made this special event possible. Also thanks to our ex-pupils who volunteered to help out too!

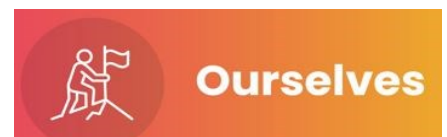


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Rocksteady Concert

Our three Rocksteady bands put on an amazing concert for their families this morning. They have been working really hard both on their musical skills and their band skills. Despite being nervous they performed confidently with obvious enjoyment to loud applause. Thank you to Mike from Rocksteady for his work with the children.



Kaleidoscope

USING OUR DIFFERENCES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Following the success of the Pele Trust 'Flow' Arts project several years ago we are pleased to be part of the latest project taking place across the Trust.

Kaleidoscope is a year-long Music, Art, Drama and Dance project across the Pele Trust which aims to celebrate the uniqueness of our children, help them to understand and value their differences, promoting mental health and well being and developing greater understanding of both the neurotypical and neurodiverse brain. Children will use their voice to create work which reflects what is important to them both individually and as a collective community.

Kaleidoscope will include a performance for a selection of children at the Tyne Theatre in June and culminate in a public exhibition at the end of the academic year.

We will share more details about the project throughout the year.

Safer Parking around our school this Christmas



As a driver you have a responsibility to park
in a safe and considerate manner.

Park with care and help make the area near and
around our school a safer place for everyone.



You can help by...

- ✓ Keeping your speed low, this will allow everyone else to see, think and act safely
- ✓ Always encourage your child to enter and exit your car on the pavement side
- ✓ Checking for pedestrians and cyclists before opening the car door
- ✓ Stopping for a school crossing patrol when asked
- ✓ Parking away from the school gates to reduce congestion
- ✓ Taking care when reversing

By remembering these points not only will you improve the safety of the area around our school, but you will also avoid receiving a parking ticket.

Please don't...

- ✗ Park on single or double yellow lines
- ✗ Double park
- ✗ Park across dropped kerbs
- ✗ Stop, drop or park on the school keep clear yellow zig zags
- ✗ Park on corners
- ✗ Park opposite or within 10 metres of a junction
- ✗ Park near the school entrance
- ✗ Block resident's driveways
- ✗ Idle your engine - this pollutes the air we breathe
- ✗ Stop in the middle of the road to drop your child off

Show us
you care
- park
elsewhere

Fewer cars at the school entrance
will help make it safer for everyone.

What you could do instead...

- ✓ Park and Stride - consider walking part of the way to school by parking away from the school and walking the rest of the way.
- ✓ Try car sharing - consider sharing the school run. If you have to drive to school then get together with other families who need to travel by car and take it in turns to drive.
- ✓ Walking Bus - organise a small group of parents/carers to share the walk to school and take it in turns with other parents/carers to do the school run. You could even combine this idea with Park and Stride.
- ✓ Cycling - you may be surprised by how many quiet roads or back streets there are in the areas that lead to school.



At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING APPS

When looking at options for supporting a child's mental health, the sheer volume can be overwhelming. There are many wellbeing apps available, but unfortunately not all are trustworthy. It's important to evaluate which resources are suitable, reliable and effective. This guide lets you know what to consider before installing such an app, to determine just how useful it's going to be.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

QUALITY & RELIABILITY

Mental health apps can be a useful starting point when looking for wellbeing advice and strategies and can be a useful extension to the in-person services available. However, they aren't a substitute. Information on the quality of some of these apps is scarce. They may look cute and child-friendly, but have they been designed by a mental health professional? Furthermore, do they have research to back up their content?

PLACE RESPONSIBILITY ON CHILDREN

Some apps add the words 'kids' or 'children' to their title or use cartoon icons to make them more appealing to young people. When signing up for some of these apps, some will speak to the parent directly, saying something along the lines of "Your child is good to go. Let them take it from here". It's important to remain involved in the child's mental health journey, so regular check-ins are recommended.

DISREGARDING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Young people who feel anxious and have trouble sleeping may download a mindfulness app to help. While this is a good strategy initially, it's not addressing the root of the problem. A child could simply try managing these symptoms themselves (as opposed to speaking out and seeking professional help), which could potentially worsen their anxiety in the long run.

LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Mental health or wellbeing apps are useful tools for the short term, teaching users several helpful habits to manage their condition – such as keeping an illness diary, improving nutrition and practising mindfulness exercises. As every person is unique – and children especially will grow and develop in different ways – these apps struggle to tailor themselves to users' individual needs. For example, many apps don't distinguish between the ages of users and can offer extremely generic advice.

DATA SECURITY

As with any other app – not just these for mental health and wellbeing – it's wise to check out the privacy policy before downloading it. Some of these applications may share data with third parties for numerous reasons (such as targeted advertisements), and if a user is sharing personal and sensitive information within the app, they probably don't want it ending up elsewhere without their consent.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Many apps will provide their most basic features for free but will require you to pay for other aspects – such as a more tailored experience or access to additional resources. This could be a one-off fee or a regular subscription. Consider whether this is actually required. Is it benefiting the child, or could they receive the same support from a medical professional?

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHECK THE CREDIBILITY OF THE APP

Before you download a mental health and wellbeing app, investigate the developers. Have they consulted with qualified mental health professionals to create their resource? Also check whether the app is affiliated with any government or mental health organisations, as these are solid indicators of legitimacy. Reviews can also be a useful signpost to the app's quality. There are many good apps out there, but there are just as many that miss the mark.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Trusted mental health and wellbeing apps designed by qualified, reputable organisations can be used alongside the personalised advice and support of fully trained professionals. These apps should never be considered a substitute for counselling or other tailored medical help. If you have real concerns about a child's mental wellbeing, you should seek appropriate advice from a suitable source, such as their GP – or Childline, who can be contacted by calling 0800 1111.

READ THE PRIVACY POLICY

Look into the app's terms of service – especially its privacy policy. Do so by yourself first, then go over it with the child who is considering using the app, to ensure they know what data will be collected and how exactly it will be used. Use all of this information to make an educated decision on whether or not to download that particular app.

ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Mental health and wellbeing apps can be useful for writing down feelings, tracking your own health and other such activities. These can help if the problem is short-term and temporary – such as a child getting stressed about approaching exams – or if you're currently waiting for professional support. Nonetheless, it is important that children aren't solely reliant on the app and have a safe space to talk about their feelings and experiences in the real world.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/mental-health-apps>

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#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Dates for your Diary - Autumn Term



Wednesday 11th December 2024	Year 3 Ukulele Concert in School Hall at 2.30pm
Thursday 12th December 2024	Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Dinner Day
Thursday 12th December 2024	Year 6 visit to see Ponteland High School production of 'We Will Rock You'.
Friday 13th December 2024	TRAINING DAY - SCHOOL CLOSED
Tuesday 17th December 2024	Early Years Nativity in School Hall at 10am
Tuesday 17th December 2024	Key Stage 1 Christmas Performance at St. Andrew's Church at 1.30pm
Wednesday 18th December 2024	Key Stage 1 Christmas Performance at St. Andrew's Church at 10am
Wednesday 18th December 2024	Lower Key Stage 2 Christmas Party
Wednesday 18th December 2024	Upper Key Stage 2 Christmas Party
Thursday 19th December 2024	Early Years Christmas Party
Thursday 19th December 2024	Key Stage 1 Christmas Party
Friday 20th December 2024	Key Stage 2 Carol Service at St. Andrew's Church at 9.30am
w/c Monday 23rd December	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS
Monday 6th January 2025	SCHOOL REOPENS