

21st February 2025

Dear Parents / Carers,

I really can't believe that we are the end of another half term, especially the one which marks the mid-point of the school year! It has been a really busy week in school with a number of events taking place. It has been a pleasure today to spend time in classrooms seeing lots of Design Technology taking place. I have seen castles in Year 2, torches in Year 4 and fairground rides in Year 5. Not only were the children working effectively in teams but the quality of their discussions was amazing. The standard of their final products was excellent and their pride and enjoyment was clear to see.

We were sorry to say goodbye to Mrs. Lowes this week as she leaves her role as Year 4 teacher. I am sure that you will join us in wishing her all the best in her future endeavours.

This week we were pleased to host the first Pele Trust 'Let's Dance' festival. I would like to offer thanks to Miss Robinson and Mr. Smith for organising and running this event. It was wonderful to see the children from the Pele Trust primaries dancing, talking and supporting each other. Our children thoroughly enjoyed it and were awarded the 'Passionate Performance' Award. If you would like to check out their dances you can see them on our YouTube channel or by [clicking here](#).

Thank you to all the people who visited our Year 3 Poetry Exhibition this week. The children were so proud to be able to share and showcase the work that they have been doing this half term. It was lovely to see so many of you there not only reading the poems but completing the quizzes and having a go at writing your own poems. Year 3 recorded themselves performing verses from some of their poems. This was shown at the exhibition but if you would like to see it you can do so on our YouTube channel or by [clicking here](#).

The children had a great time today breaking the rules and we raised £519. Thank you for your generosity.

I would like to remind you that Monday 3rd March 2025 is a teacher training day and school reopens on Tuesday 4th March 2025.

Well done to Year 6 with the best attendance this week: 99.7%.

Well done to Year 5 for the best attendance for this year: 97.3%.

I hope that you enjoy reading this flyer and have a peaceful and relaxing break. We look forward to seeing everyone safe and well back in School on **Tuesday 4th March 2025**.

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.*

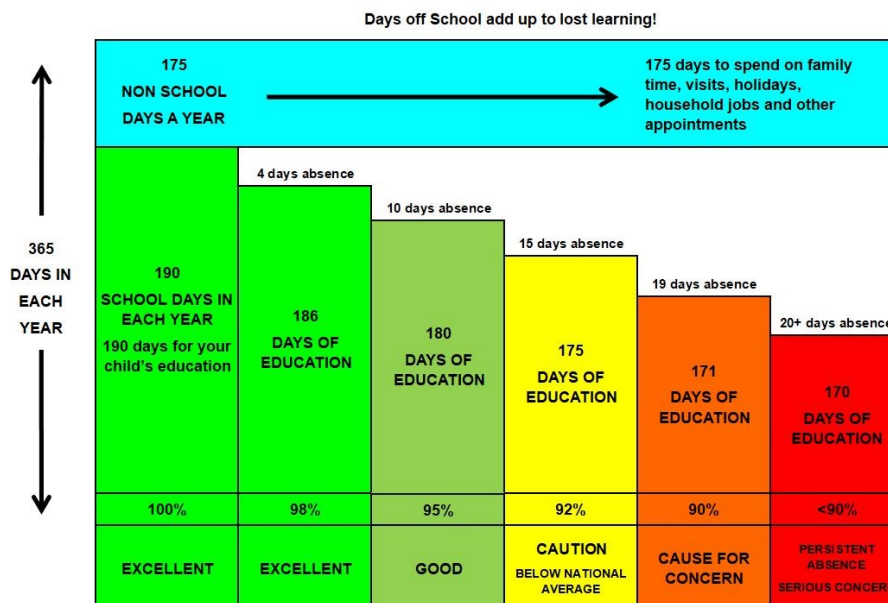


We continue to focus on attendance and punctuality so please remember that our School starts at 8.55am (9am for Nursery) and anyone arriving after this time will be marked as late.

Attendance for this week is summarised below:

Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year	Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year
Nursery (Hedgehogs)	96.8%	95.8%	Year 3 (Gibside)	97.6%	96%
Reception (Owls)	98.1%	94.8%	Year 4 (Lindisfarne)	97.4%	96.5%
Year 1 (Wallington)	97.1%	97.2%	Year 5 (Bamburgh)	98.8%	97.3%
Year 2 (Cragside)	96.8%	96.9%	Year 6 (Dunstanburgh)	99.7%	97.2%

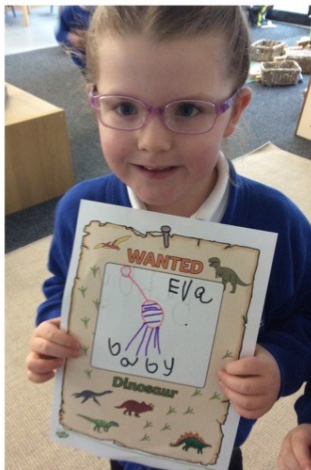
Please see the graphic below which shows the significant impact of absence over time .



'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14

This week, the Hedgehogs have been very excited to discover a dinosaur egg in their classroom. They have been desperate to find the missing dinosaur! We have enjoyed learning more dinosaur facts, describing different dinosaurs, making wanted posters, continuing dinosaur patterns, as well as developing our balance in PE. Have a lovely half term everyone, you deserve it!



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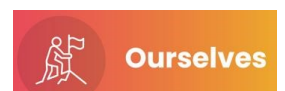


PE with Reception

For the last few weeks in PE we have been learning all about gymnastics. We have learnt about different shapes which help our co-ordination and balance. Can you spot our straight, tuck, star and straddle shapes? This week with help from Mr. Smith we have been using our 'pizza' hands to do a backwards roll.



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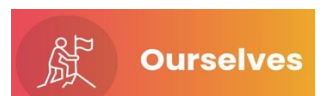
Ourselves



Learning

Forest School with Year 1

Year 1 had a wonderful afternoon on Monday at forest school, we learnt how to start a fire. Then we sang some songs around the fire before toasting some marshmallows on the fire. How yummy! What a great way to finish an amazing half-term!



Building Castles in Year 2

Our castles are complete! With strengthened joins and stable bases, we have worked really hard to work with our friends to create our castles.



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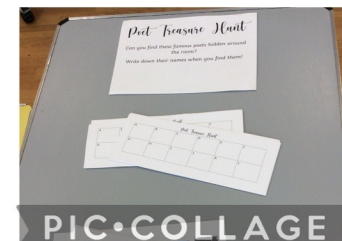
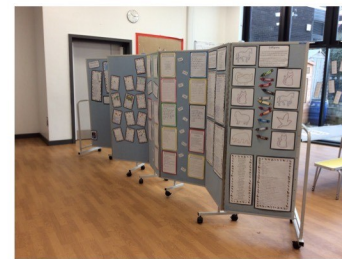
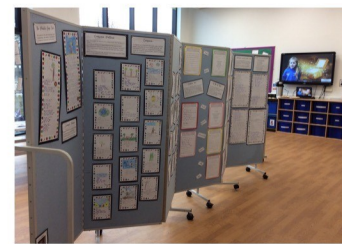
Others



Learning

Year 3 Poetry Exhibition (Part 1)

On Wednesday evening, Year 3 held their poetry exhibition in the studio. Along with the children's work we also had a poetry corner where children (or their grown ups) could write a paint chip poem, a treasure hunt to find the names of famous poets to match the pictures as well as guess the teachers' favourite poems.

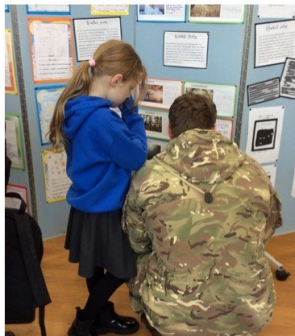


We would also like to share the video that played in the exhibition showing the children reading one of the verses that they wrote for their 'Magic Box' poems. You can watch the video by visiting our YouTube channel or by [clicking here](#).



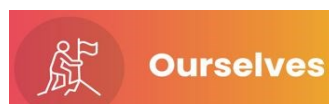
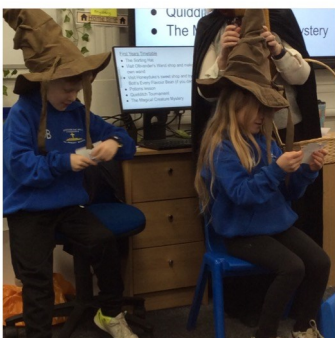
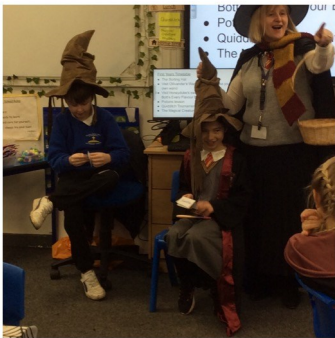
Year 3 Poetry Exhibition (Part 2)

We would just like to thank everyone who was able to make it and we hope you enjoyed looking at all of the amazing poetry the children have written over the half term. We are all incredibly proud of how hard the children have been working!



Harry Potter Day in Year 4 (Part 1)

Year 4's Harry Potter Day was amazing! We started the day with the sorting hat putting us into Houses, then we visited Ollivander's shop to make our own wands using all kinds of magical objects like dragon heartstrings, mermaid scales and phoenix feathers. Before playtime, we were brave enough to try Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Bean. Some of us were lucky and got a lemon sherbert or blueberry, unfortunately some of us suffered vomit or earthworm!

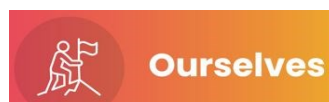


Harry Potter Day in Year 4 (Part 2)

After break, it was time for Professor Snape's Potions Lesson. Using dragon's blood, we created Love Potion, Befuddlement Draught, Drink of Despair and many others, watching the liquids magically change colour before our eyes. The Quidditch Tournament in the afternoon was exciting, energetic and competitive. Well done to all teams who made their Houses proud!



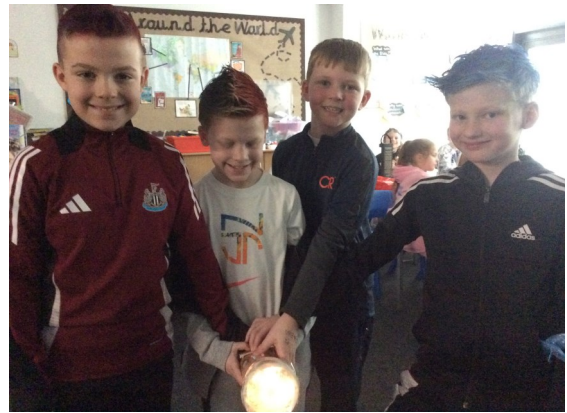
Mrs. Lowes said, "Thank you Year 4 for a brilliant day and for the memories that I will always treasure."



Making Torches in Year 2

Year 5 have been using their Science and Design Technology skills to design and make a working torch. There were lots of ambitious and innovative designs.

Well done everyone!





This week in year 5 we created and performed sales pitches with the theme of 'Dragons Den'. Year 5 pitched the bags we had designed and created in our DT lesson and used our persuasive language learning to convince the dragons to invest!



PIC•COLLAGE



Fairground Rides in Year 5

Year 5 worked in teams to apply their learning about gears and pulleys to design and make a working fairground ride.

Friday 21st February 2025

I can design and create a carousel using a gearing system.



PIC•COLLAGE

Others



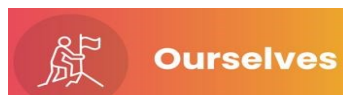
Learning

Playing Quidditch with Year 6

A fun afternoon this week playing Quidditch in our PE lesson. The children were very excited to put their handball skills to the test in a different format this week. Have a restful half term Year 6!

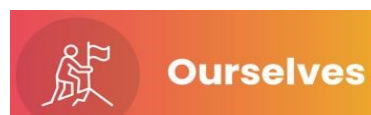


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Let's Dance at Heddon!

On Monday we hosted the first Pele Trust 'Let's Dance' festival at Heddon. The Dance Club were really excited to be able to perform their dances to their peers. They were thrilled to be awarded the 'Passionate Performance' award. Dancers from all the Pele Trust Primary schools attended. There were some amazing group performances and fantastic solo performances covering a range of genres. It was great to see the children from the schools mixing together, dancing, smiling and having fun. Special thanks to Miss Robinson and Mr. Smith for organising and running this event. If you would like to check out our dances you can see them on our YouTube channel or by [clicking here](#).



Domestic abuse is everyone's business

You are not alone



Northumberland Integrated Domestic Abuse Support Service

- DASSN for adults (Harbour) – 01670 820199
- Children & Young People Counselling & Outreach (Acorns) - 0191 3498366
- Changing Behaviour (Harbour) - 03000 202525
- DA in Rural Areas (NDAS) – 01434 60 80 30
- DA Counselling (Cygnus Support) – 01670 853977

Visit: nland.uk/DomesticAbuse

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 WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency' – plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original – and might not be entirely factual, either.

CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID. There is an additional feature – 'Secret code' – where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't reopen them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing protection of privacy.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's Live Location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution; get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to My Contacts or My Contacts Except... Additionally, if a child needs to use Live Location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a Locked Chats folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they've stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any View Once content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a good impression, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content that a user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

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/whatsapp-2025>

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Dates for your Diary - Spring Term 1



w/c Monday 23rd February 2025	HALF TERM HOLIDAY
Monday 3rd March 2025	SCHOOL CLOSED FOR TRAINING DAY
Tuesday 4th March 2025	Year 2 visit to Heddon Library
Thursday 6th March 2025	World Book Day
Friday 7th March 2025	Choir at Ryton Festival
Wednesday 12th March 2025 - Tuesday 18th March 2025	Scholastic Book Fair
Thursday 13th March 2025	Year 5 Careers Fair at the Metrocentre
Thursday 13th March 2025	Year 6 France Trip Parents Meeting - 4.30pm - 5.30pm at Darras Hall Primary School
Thursday 13th March 2025	Bags2School collected.
Monday 17th March 2025	Individual Photographs
Tuesday 18th March 2025	Parents Evening
Thursday 20th March 2025	Parents Evening

Dates for your Diary - Spring Term 2



Tuesday 18th March 2025	Parents Evening
Thursday 20th March 2025	Parents Evening
Friday 21st March 2025	Red Nose Day
Thursday 27th March 2025	Last Night at the Proms Concert for the Choir with the Ad Murum Singers - 5.30pm at the Knott Hall.
Friday 28th March 2025	Early Years and Key Stage 1 Mothers' Day Service at St. Andrew's Church - 9.30am
Friday 28th March 2025	Key Stage 2 Mothers' Day Service at St. Andrew's Church - 10.15am
Friday 11th April 2025	Key Stage 2 Easter Service at St. Andrew's Church - 9.30am
w/c Monday 14th April 2025	EASTER HOLIDAYS
Monday 28th April 2025	School Re-opens
Monday 5th May 2025	SCHOOL CLOSED FOR MAY BANK HOLIDAY
w/c Monday 12th May 2025	Key Stage 2 SATS Week