



# FRIDAY FLYER

Friday 18th September 2026



## Headteacher Update

There has been so much to celebrate at Richard Coates this week. We were delighted to welcome author and specialist writing coach, Adam Bushnell into school, along with Jet, his much loved tortoise travelling companion. With help from some excellent young actors across the school, Adam led a wonderful interactive storytelling session for everyone in worship. Thank you Adam for joining us and for inspiring so much great writing.



Following on from another visitor we have had recently, Karen from Young Carers Northumberland, who joined last Friday's worship, we wanted to share the attached flyer with families. If you know a young carer under the age of eighteen who helps look after someone in their family, whether that is practical tasks at home or physical and emotional support, please take a look at the services available by scanning the QR code [on this information leaflet](#).

In the sporting world, I would like to congratulate our Under 11s boy's Year 6 football team for the tenacity, sportsmanship and resilience that they showed in a highly competitive Pele Trust tournament on Thursday. The team came away with two draws and one narrow 1-0 loss, showing excellent determination throughout. We look forward to more upcoming fixtures from our other Year 6 football teams over the coming weeks.



Another group who deserve a special mention this week are our new Year 6 Active 60 volunteers, who have put themselves forward for a leadership role, promoting fitness and the daily sixty minutes, representing their school, developing PE lessons, leading playground activities and promoting our school values. They will take part in some training over the coming weeks before putting these skills to use on our school yard and beyond.



As a staff, we also had a fantastic opportunity for learning this week with a training session from Paul Rusby of the Newcastle and Durham Diocese about the development of spirituality in schools. It was a wonderful chance to think about the moments across our curriculum that let children wonder at the natural world and find a little peace, calm and awe.

It has been one week since we launched our team houses, and so many children have already been making a special effort to show our school values and add to their team totals. After week one, St Cuthbert has taken first place on the leaderboard. Each week starts fresh on Monday, and the points from across the half term will go towards a special reward for our overall winners. Keep up the good work everyone!

| POSITION | HOUSE NAME  |
|----------|-------------|
| 1        | St Cuthbert |
| 2        | St Aidan    |
| 3        | St Oswald   |
| 4        | St Bede     |
| 5        | St Mary     |

A big thank you from all of us to Jake, a former Richard Coates pupil and now an apprentice chef at Ponteland High School. Over recent weeks he has been spending time in our school kitchen alongside Mr Million, developing his own range of delicious soups, and staff were very glad of a taster or two as the weather has turned colder.

Staying on the theme of food, we look forward to welcoming parents of our Reception children into school on Monday to enjoy a school meal alongside them. It is a lovely chance to spend some social time together in the school setting and we hope as many of you as possible can join us at 11am.

Finally, a last minute reminder to get those best smiles ready for Tuesday, which is individual photographs day. If you would like sibling photos taken too, please come along before school to the doors by the school hall.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend,

James Watson  
Headteacher



# ATTENDANCE



Attendance for this week is summarised below

Congratulations to Chestnut class who were top class for attendance this week with 98.5%. We did note a number of absences related to illness and holiday last week. Deciding whether your child is too poorly for school can be a difficult judgement call and we would encourage parents to seek guidance about whether your child is still able to attend.

To help, we are sharing this handy NHS and UK Health Security Agency checklist poster below, which sets out clearly when to keep your child at home and when it is advised to send them in. You can [access this poster here on the Letters page](#) of our school website.

| Weekly Overview   |       |                                      |       |
|-------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Acorns (Nursery)  | 89.39 | Oak (Reception)                      | 96.21 |
| Birch (Year 1)    | 92.36 | Beech (Year 2)                       | 95.33 |
| Chestnut (Year 3) | 98.46 | Rowan (Year 3)                       | 96.80 |
| Alder (Year 4)    | 87.06 | Maple (Year 4)                       | 98.18 |
| Pine (Year 5)     | 95.59 | Hazel (Year 6)                       | 88.67 |
| Juniper (Year 6)  | 89.33 |                                      |       |
| Attendance Guide  |       |                                      |       |
| 98% - 100%        |       | Excellent level of attendance        |       |
| 95% - 97.9%       |       | Good level of attendance             |       |
| 92% - 94.9%       |       | Caution (below national)             |       |
| 90% - 91.9%       |       | Cause for concern                    |       |
| 89.9% or below    |       | Persistent Absence - Serious concern |       |

## SAFEGUARDING AND WELLBEING

### Updates of the Week

#### Settling Back into Good Sleep

A few weeks into the new term is often when tired evenings and later bedtimes start creeping back in, especially with the darker mornings on the way. Primary aged children generally need somewhere between nine and eleven hours of sleep a night and a predictable wind down routine. Having a bath, story and lights out at a similar time each evening, makes a real difference to how settled they feel at bedtime and how ready they are to learn the next day.

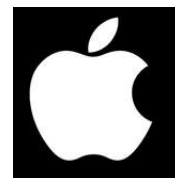
Small, gradual changes can have a big impact. Keeping weekend wake up times close to school days and switching off screens at least an hour before bed both help. For age by age sleep guidance and tips for tricky bedtimes, visit The Sleep Charity [via this link](#).



#### New Apple Parental Controls

Apple has just released a fresh set of child safety tools across iPhone and iPad, including a feature called Ask to Browse which means a child needs your approval before visiting a new website, and Time Allowances which let you set sensible daily limits for games, entertainment and social apps. There are also stronger protections built in for shared photos and video calls, automatically blocking violent or graphic content

If your child has an Apple device it is well worth taking ten minutes this weekend to look through Settings together and set these up. It is a good chance to have a relaxed chat with them about why the limits are there and check what is accessible. Step by step instructions can be found [here](#).





# YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

## Nursery

This week, we have talked about who is special to us. We talked about who is in our family and drew pictures of our loved ones! It was lovely to hear about your lovely families.

We have also played lots of games which helped us to learn each others' names and develop our team work skills. One of our favourites was shouting a friends name as we rolled a ball towards them. Team work makes the dream work, after all!



## Reception

We have had a fantastic, busy week of learning in Oak Class! We started our brand-new core text, 'The Little Red Hen'. To help us learn the tale, the children made up their own actions and worked together to create a wonderful class story map. In maths, we practised our subitising skills, learning how to 'see and know' an amount without counting.

The children loved putting their reasoning skills to the test this week, using clever thinking to prove Mrs Brogden wrong during our maths challenges! Thank you for your continued support. Have a wonderful weekend!





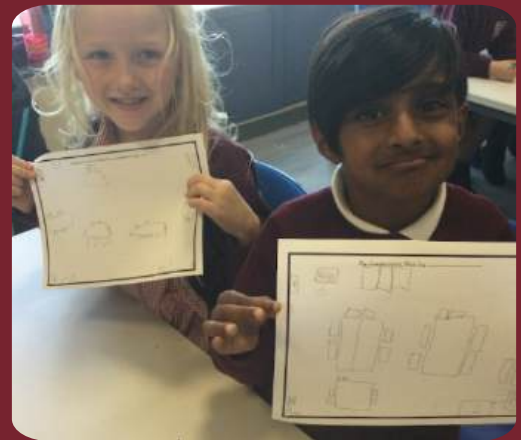
# YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

## Year 1

In Year 1 this week we have been learning to count on and back within 10. We have used tens frames and counters and solved problems involving numbers to 10. The children have identified one more and one less and amazed us with their maths skills!

In geography, we have begun learning about places in our school environment and where they are located. We enjoyed a tour of the school and located different parts of the school. We then explored simple maps and produced fantastic maps of our classroom. The children continue to thrive and let their light shine displaying their many talents in discovery time. We are really proud of how hard they have worked this week!



## Year 2

We've had a busy and exciting week of learning in Year 2! In English, the children let their imaginations run wild as they designed their very own characters inspired by our text, The Bog Baby. In science, we put on our scientist hats and went on a microhabitat walk around the school grounds, identifying different minibeasts in their natural environments and discussing why these habitats suit them.

During maths, we have been working hard to partition two-digit numbers into tens and ones using the base ten equipment. Finally, in art, we continued exploring the natural artwork of Andy Goldsworthy and had a go at designing our own creative, nature-inspired pieces.





# YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

## Year 3

It has been a busy week of learning in Year 3! In English, the children demonstrated great resilience adapting to our new 'Write Stuff' framework, using time adverbials, onomatopoeia, similes, and noun phrases to write fantastic adventure stories based on The Stone Age Boy.

In maths, we continued partitioning numbers to 100, challenging ourselves with flexible partitioning to show off our impressive thinking patterns. Finally, in Science, we played 'rock detectives', using specific scientific vocabulary to name, describe, and identify different rock properties!



## Year 4

It has been a wonderful week in Year 4. We were lucky enough this week to welcome Adam Bushnell into our classes to inspire us and help us with our writing. He brought in lots of exciting props to help us bring a description of the rainforest to life! It is fair to say that Year 4 is full of authors. Their writing was incredible. From majestic parrots to towering trees when we listened to their descriptions it felt like we were really there!

We cannot forget of course the extra visitor he brought to see us...Jet the tortoise!





# YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

## Year 5

What a busy week we've had in Year 5! The children have thrown themselves into our new science topic, Materials and their Properties, investigating and testing a range of materials to classify them by hardness, transparency, and magnetism. On Tuesday, we were delighted to welcome Natasha from the LISA Project, who will be leading four British Sign Language sessions with us this half term; the children loved learning how to sign their names and simple greetings!

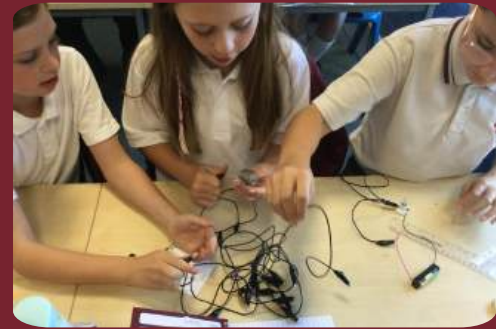
On Wednesday, author Adam Bushnell visited to share his love of reading and storytelling, inspiring the children to discover new books. We've already been so impressed with the fantastic enthusiasm for reading in Year 5 this term! Another fantastic week, well done!



## Year 6

What a busy and exciting week we have had in Year 6! The children have worked incredibly hard on their newspaper reports inspired by our class text, *Gaslight* by Eloise Williams, developing their writing through engaging headlines, journalistic language, and key event reporting. We have been so impressed with their creativity and enthusiasm.

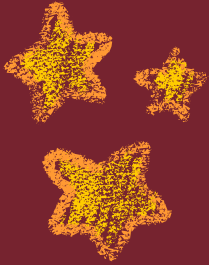
In maths, we completed our place value unit, with the children particularly enjoying applying their understanding of negative numbers to various problems. Finally, in science, we investigated electrical circuits, making our own and learning how to represent them accurately using standard circuit symbols. Well done, Year 6, on another fantastic week of learning!



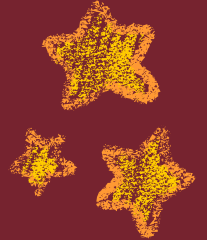


# HAPPY *Birthday*

Wishing a very Happy Birthday to the following children, who will be celebrating their special day in the upcoming week. We hope that you have a wonderful day!



Happy Birthday to:



Elis (Year 1)

Charlotte (Year 3)

Ava (Year 5)



# OTHER NEWS

## **Birthday Books**

A big thank you to Nathan in Year 1 Birch and Heidi in Nursery, who have both kindly donated books to their class libraries to mark their birthdays. Nathan managed to source an impressive signed copy of 'The Great Green Island', whilst Heidi opted for a wonderful choice of book in 'Paper Chase' for her class to enjoy. These birthday books will serve as a lovely memory of your special day for years to come, while bringing lots of joy to others along the way. Thank you!



## **Relationship and Health Education policy- Open to Consultation**

Our updated Relationships and Health Education policy for this academic year is [available via this link on the school website](#). This policy demonstrates how our curriculum is designed to support children in growing up healthy, both physically and mentally and in building positive relationships, in line with the latest DfE guidance. We welcome any comments or questions from parents and carers, please get in touch with the school office if you would like to discuss it further.



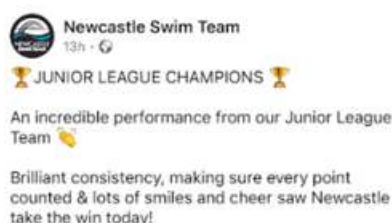
## **Year 3 Pupil Grows a Healthy Crop**

Well done to James in Year 3, who has been busy with green fingers in the garden growing his very own tomatoes and carrots, a lovely way to be thinking ahead to harvest festival season. The energy from his healthy crop even helped him complete the Great North Run Mini! Keep up the great work, James!



## **A Winning Weekend in the Pool**

Congratulations to Isaac in Year 6, who swims for Newcastle Swim Team. His team were victorious in the junior league final this weekend and Isaac was named in the region's top ten of ten year old swimmers for his performances. A brilliant achievement, well done Isaac!



## **Jewellery Reminder**

A gentle reminder that jewellery, including earrings, is not permitted in school. The only exception is a wristwatch, in line with our uniform policy and guidance from the Association for Physical Education (afPE). If a child is unable to remove their earrings due to recently having their ears pierced, they must have them taped securely before the start of the school day in order that they can still take part in PE and sporting activities. Thank you for your support.



## **The Big Future Survey**

The Children's Commissioner has written to us directly, asking for our support in getting children's voices heard through The Big Future, her national survey for children and young people. Hundreds of thousands of children across England have already taken part, and we would love Richard Coates families to join them. It takes about five minutes and can be completed [via this link](#) before it closes on Friday 23rd October.





# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2026/2027

| Date                                   | Event                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday 21st September                  | Reception parents invited into school to share school lunch with their child- 11am<br><br>Year 6 Sign and Sign group session                                                                                                                                          |
| Tuesday 22nd September                 | Individual school photograph day<br><br>Year 5 British Sign Language sessions                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Thursday 24th September                | Under 11 7vs7 boys' football competition Year 6 team- 3.30pm-4.30pm                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Monday 28th - Wednesday 30th September | Ponteland High School open Mornings 10.00-11am (for current Year 6)                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Thursday 1st October                   | Ponteland High School Open Evening- 5.30pm-7.30pm (for current Year 6)<br><br>Active 60 pupil leaders training session at Ponteland High School<br><br>Under 11 7vs7 girls' football competition Year 6 team- Darras Hall Primary School 3.30pm-4.30pm                |
| Friday 2nd October                     | Children encouraged to share their recommended reads from home in class- further details via parent letter                                                                                                                                                            |
| Thursday 8th October                   | Reception parents' phonics workshop with Mrs Brogden- 2.30pm<br><br>Under 11 7vs7 girls' football competition Year 6 team- 3.30pm-4.30pm Ponteland Primary School                                                                                                     |
| Week beginning Monday 12th October     | Parents of Nursery and Reception invited to join us in school for open days.<br><br>Parents' Evenings to take place for Year 1-Year 6. Please see the date options for each year group below. Bookings to be made via the link in the parent letter shared via email. |
| Monday 12th October                    | Year 2 Beech class Parents' Evening<br>Year 4 Alder and Maple class Parents' Evening<br>Year 5 Pine class Parents' Evening                                                                                                                                            |
| Tuesday 13th October                   | Year 1 Birch class Parents' Evening<br>Year 3 Chestnut and Rowan class Parents' Evening<br>Year 6 Hazel and Juniper class Parents' Evening                                                                                                                            |
| Wednesday 14th October                 | Year 1 Birch class Parents' Evening<br>Year 2 Beech class Parents' Evening<br>Year 4 Alder and Maple class Parents' Evening<br>Year 5 Pine class Parents' Evening<br>Year 6 Hazel and Juniper class Parents' Evening                                                  |
| Thursday 15th October                  | Year 3 Chestnut and Rowan class Parents' Evening                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Monday 19th October                    | Key Stage 1 Harvest Festival- 9.15am<br><br>EYFS Harvest Festival- 2.30pm                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Wednesday 21st October                 | Key Stage 2 Harvest Festival- 9.15am                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Friday 23rd October                    | School closed- Teacher training day                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |