



FRIDAY FLYER

Friday 2nd October 2026



Headteacher Update

It has been a week full of kindness, community with a few surprises at Richard Coates and our children have once again shown just how willing they are to roll up their sleeves for others.

A fantastic group of hardworking children kindly gave up their own break time to help keep our school grounds neat and tidy. Armed with rubber gloves, plastic bags and some huge brushes, they set to work clearing away the fallen apples from beneath the trees along our pathway. Thanks to their willingness to help and team effort, making a fantastic difference to our school site.



Their kindness is a wonderful reflection of something we value deeply as a school: being part of a wider community. Our links with the local area mean a great deal to us, including our regular visits to nearby care homes. This week, a group of Year 6 pupils polished their singing and signing skills ahead of a special visit to Grange Lea Care Home. Their performance was warmly received by the residents and even drew in an unexpected guest. A local cat, well known for calling in at the home each day in search of extra treats, settled down and stayed for the entire show. We will take that as a glowing review.



In sporting news, our Year 6 girls took part in a seven a side tournament at Darras Hall Primary School and we are delighted to share that the team put in a fantastic display including a 6-0 win, a tightly fought draw and narrow loss. They played with real determination and excellent teamwork throughout. Congratulations also go to our Active 60 pupil leaders, who completed their first training session at Ponteland High School this week. In the coming months, they will be helping to develop activity and sport across our school and judging by their enthusiasm, the rest of us had better start warming up now.



This week also saw the very first of our Recommended Reads sessions, and we were delighted that so many children brought in a special book to share with their class. We have all been persuaded by a friend's recommendation to find time for a book we might never have picked up and it has been wonderful to see the same thing happening in our classrooms as one child's enthusiasm inspires others to give a story a try. These sessions will take place on the first Friday of every month and we are already looking forward to hearing next month's choices.



Speaking of stories, we have some wonderfully talented writers at Richard Coates and I would love to see them put their skills to the test. The BBC 500 Words competition opened on Tuesday 29 September and closes at 9pm on Friday 6 November 2026. It invites children to write an original story of no more than 500 words on any subject they like, so whether your child dreams up dragons, detectives or something entirely their own, this is a brilliant chance to let their imagination run free. It would be fantastic to see some of our children's work published. You can find more information on the [BBC 500 Words website](#).

Whether you plan to get into a good book, take up action on the sports pitch or simply a well earned rest, I hope you all have a great weekend.

Best wishes,

James Watson- Headteacher



ATTENDANCE



Attendance for this week is summarised below

Our whole school attendance this week was 96.1%, compared with a national primary average of around 96% in the latest DfE figures. A special well done goes to Chestnut class in Year 3, who have taken the top spot in our attendance chart and become the first class this year to achieve 100%.

It is easy to think that the odd day here and there does not matter, but even 95% attendance adds up to around two weeks of learning missed across a school year. Where possible, we would ask that routine appointments are made outside the school day and if anything is making it harder for your child to get to school, please get in touch with us.

Weekly Overview			
Acorns (Nursery)	98.54	Oak (Reception)	94.48
Birch (Year 1)	97.93	Beech (Year 2)	96.67
Chestnut (Year 3)	100.00	Rowan (Year 3)	93.60
Alder (Year 4)	93.75	Maple (Year 4)	98.18
Pine (Year 5)	97.06	Hazel (Year 6)	93.79
Juniper (Year 6)	93.67		
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

Keeping an eye on online harm groups

In this morning's worship, the children learnt about Clever Never Goes, an important part of how we help them to stay safe as they grow in independence. Rather than the traditional "stranger danger" message, which can cause unnecessary worry, Clever Never Goes focuses on the situation rather than the person. Children learn that they should never go anywhere with anyone, whether a stranger or someone they know, unless it has been arranged with a parent or carer beforehand.

Your child may well come home to tell you all about it, so this is a perfect moment to talk it through together and reinforce the message. You can find a free home pack and some simple practice activities on the [Clever Never Goes Parent Resources Hub](#).



Social Media and the New Rules

You may have seen in the news this week that the government has confirmed that the planned ban on social media for under 16s will begin in March 2027, covering apps such as TikTok, Snapchat, YouTube and Instagram. For most of our children this may feel a long way off, but the habits formed now really matter. Many apps and games already have a minimum age of 13, and some of the biggest risks for younger children come from chat features in games where they can be contacted by people they do not know.

Checking the settings on your child's devices and keeping screens in shared spaces can make a real difference, but the most powerful protection is an open conversation. Children who feel able to tell a grown up when something worries them are far safer than those who keep it to themselves. [Internet Matters](#) has clear, practical guides to parental controls for most popular apps, games and devices and you are always welcome to contact a designated safeguarding lead in school for further advice.





YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

Nursery

Our Forest Friday sessions are in full swing! We are very much enjoying spotting signs of Autumn, such as changing leaves, conkers, and pine cones. We used some of our Autumnal finds in lots of different ways this week—making faces in our playdough as well as creating observational drawings where we thought carefully about smaller details.

In maths, we focused on the number 1. We spent time finding different representations of the number 1 and manipulating our fingers to act out rhymes like 'The Finger Family' and '1 Finger, 1 Thumb'.



Reception

What a busy and exciting week we've had in Oak Class. In maths, the children have been exploring repeating patterns, challenging themselves with ABAB and AAB sequences using colours, shapes and classroom objects. They showed brilliant focus and creativity as they built and extended their own patterns.

We have continued our work with The Little Red Hen, using the story to inspire our own set of instructions for making bread. The children loved becoming little bakers, carefully thinking about each step and using 'bossy verbs' to guide the process.

Our autumn theme has also continued in science, where we explored the sounds, smells and sensory changes that come with the new season. From crunchy leaves to earthy scents, the children have been curious, observant and full of thoughtful ideas about how our environment is changing.





YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

Year 1

In science we have been testing materials to find out which material would be most suitable for an umbrella for the The Big Bad Pig. We have made predictions drawing on our knowledge of materials and carried out an investigation. We were able to make observations and draw conclusions from our results. Year 1 are fantastic scientists.

In other areas of learning this week we really enjoyed our Open Book Worship where The Creation Story was re enacted. We have been learning in RE how Christians believe God created the world and been using art to illustrate the Creation Story.



Year 2

It has been a week filled with curiosity and fantastic learning in Year 2! In English, we kicked off our excitement for non-fiction reading with our new core text, The Big Book of Bugs. To dive into our topic, the children went on a bug hunt around the school grounds, carefully spotting and recording all the insects they could find—they have already loved discovering so many fascinating bug facts!

In science, we expanded our knowledge by exploring world habitats, discussing what makes a habitat and why specific environments are perfectly suited to the animals living there. In Maths, the children showed great focus using the greater than (>) and less than (<) symbols to compare different numbers. Brilliant effort and hard work all round this week, Year 2!





YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

Year 3

It has been a lovely week of learning. In preparation for our upcoming poetry unit, we began exploring the poem *Summer is Here* in our reading lessons. The children worked hard to spot unfamiliar words, re-reading lines to deduce meaning before using dictionaries to look them up. We were so impressed with how skillfully they navigated the dictionaries!

In PSHE, we reflected on what it means to be a good friend and identified qualities that build positive relationships. The children created posters full of thoughtful advice on how to build and maintain meaningful friendships.

In maths, we completed our place value unit and moved on to addition and subtraction up to 100. Drawing on their prior knowledge and using manipulatives, the children tackled new number sentences brilliantly, showing fantastic perseverance along the way.



Year 4

Year 4 has worked incredibly hard this week! In English, the children drew inspiration from author Adam Bushnell to plan and publish their own stories based on 'Journey', while also building confidence reading poems and tackling complex vocabulary. In maths, they have been busy consolidating times tables and rounding numbers.

In geography, fantastic homework projects on the Rainforest have helped the children compare the Amazon to our local area. Meanwhile, in art, they have been studying Henri Rousseau, experimenting with watercolours and negative space to recreate his distinctive style. Well done, Year 4!





YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

Year 5

This week, Year 5 really launched into our current text *Kensuke's Kingdom*. The children have impressed us with their fantastic writing, particularly when creating vivid descriptions of the dramatic storm that causes Michael to fall into the sea. In our reading lessons, we have also been exploring the developing relationship between the two main characters, Michael and Kensuke.

In maths, we have continued working on addition and subtraction using the formal column method, focusing on regrouping and exchanging with challenging calculations. In PSHE, the children delivered fantastic speeches for the School Councillor election, sharing brilliant ideas to represent their peers. We are incredibly proud of everyone who took part!



Year 6

It has been another busy and productive week in Year 6! In English, the children have produced amazing setting descriptions inspired by Victorian England as we continue enjoying our class book, *Gaslight* by Eloise Williams. They worked hard to develop their vocabulary and descriptive language, creating vivid settings for the reader to imagine. In maths, the children showed great determination tackling practice SATs papers and building confidence applying their knowledge.

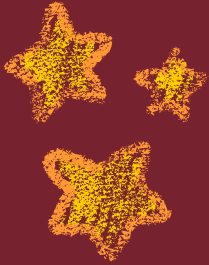
In science, we investigated electrical circuits, with the children enjoying troubleshooting and fixing broken circuits through great teamwork. Finally, we were all about small tag rugby games and learning how to dodge opponents. Well done, Year 6, for another fantastic week of learning!



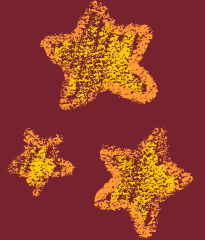


HAPPY Birthday

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:



Grace (Nursery)

Meher (Year 3)

Max (Reception)

Beth (Year 5)

Seth (Reception)

Effie (Year 6)

Hugo (Year 3)

Isabel (Year 6)



OTHER NEWS

Shining Bright: Chief Scout Silver Award

Huge congratulations to Malek, Year 6, who has recently achieved his Chief Scout's Silver Award. This is the highest award in the Scouts section and it is no small feat, as it involves completing a whole range of challenges covering outdoor adventures, community projects and learning brand new skills. Getting there takes months of commitment, plenty of determination, and no shortage of brave weekend camps in the elements. It's a brilliant example of perseverance in action and we are all extremely proud of him. Well done, Malek!



Flying Start at Beavers!

The achievements keep coming across our sections! A huge welcome to Harry in Year 3, who joined Beavers at the end of last term and proudly made his Beaver Promise last week. He hit the ground running by earning his Membership badge plus four additional badges, with plenty more on the horizon. We love seeing this kind of enthusiasm right at the start of the Scout journey!



Trotting to Success!

We love hearing about the wide variety of passions our children pursue outside of school. Freddie in Year 1 gave a brilliant demonstration of equestrian skill recently, leading his horse, Honeybee, to an award-winning performance at a show. Handling a horse takes great patience and confidence, especially at such a young age. Huge well done, Freddie!



Updated Anti-Bullying Policy

Guided by our vision to Let Your Light Shine, we have recently updated our Anti-Bullying Policy to ensure every child feels safe, valued and included in our school family. Rooted in our core values of kindness, respect and perseverance, it outlines how we teach, report and address bullying, empowering our pupils to be 'Defenders' who stand up for what is right. The full document is now available on our school website.



Shine Club: Wrap-Around Care

We recognise that balancing work schedules with school drop-offs and pick-ups can be challenging. To support our families, Shine Club provides warm, reliable wrap-around care for children aged 4 and above. Running from **7:30am until 8:45am for Breakfast Club** and **3:15pm until 5:50pm after school**, sessions feature healthy choices, light snacks and a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities.

You can [view the full flyer](#) with complete details, session rates, and booking information on the letters page of our school website.

Shine Club Wrap-Around School Care

Breakfast Club

Children will get a choice of cereals, toast and fruit to begin their day. After the children have eaten, they will have the opportunity to get involved in a number of activities. These include:

- Board games
- Exercise activities (inside using the hall or outside)
- Lego or construction games
- Comics or books
- Craft, drawing, puzzles

At the end of the session, children will be taken to their classrooms at 08:45am by Breakfast Club Staff. Supervision then passes to a member of the school staff.

Contact information:
Shine Club Manager - Mrs Itally
Telephone: 0161 823587
Mobile: 07526170668
Email: admin@richard-coates.uk

Club Fees and Timings

Breakfast Club fees:	
7:30am - 8:45am	£5.50
After School Club fees:	
3:15pm - 4:30pm	£5.50
3:15pm - 5:50pm	£10

After School Club

Children are collected by Shine Club staff from their classrooms and will be signed in by the after school club leader. Children attending a separate after school club activity for some of the time will be brought to the after school club by that leader following the finish of their club. Snacks are available. Fruit is available at all times. Only a snack will be provided. This is not their tea. Parents/carers are responsible for informing the After School Leader of any dietary requirements.

In order to forecast numbers and plan staffing ratios and food provision carefully, a minimum of a full 24 hours' notice is required when booking and cancelling Shine Club. Children from the age of 4 years can access wrap around care for before and after school sessions.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2026/2027

Date	Event
Monday 5th October	Year 6 Sing and Sign group to visit Grange Lea Care Home
Tuesday 6th October	Year 2 geography local area walk- Year 2
Thursday 8th October	Reception parents' phonics workshop with Mrs Brogden- 2.30pm Under 11 7vs7 girls' football competition Year 6 team- 3.30pm-4.30pm Ponteland Primary School
Friday 9th October	Closing date for register of interest for Year 6 France residential visit
Week beginning Monday 12th October	Parents of Nursery and Reception invited to join us in school for open days. 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. Paired reading week- Children across school will share texts with a reading buddy from a different year group.
Monday 12th October	Year 2 Beech class Parents' Evening Year 4 Alder and Maple class Parents' Evening Year 5 Pine class Parents' Evening
Tuesday 13th October	Year 1 Birch class Parents' Evening Year 3 Chestnut and Rowan class Parents' Evening Year 6 Hazel and Juniper class Parents' Evening
Wednesday 14th October	Year 1 Birch class Parents' Evening Year 2 Beech class Parents' Evening Year 4 Alder and Maple class Parents' Evening Year 5 Pine class Parents' Evening 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 EYFS Harvest Festival- 2.30pm
Wednesday 21st October	Key Stage 2 Harvest Festival- 9.15am
Friday 23rd October	School closed- Teacher training day