



FRIDAY FLYER

Friday 16th October 2026



Headteacher Update

This week has been all about partnership between home and school. It was lovely to see so many of you at our parents' evenings, celebrating the progress the children have made since September and how well they have settled into their new classes. Our Early Years families went one step further at our Open Day sessions, getting stuck into some learning alongside their child, from crafting scarecrows in Nursery to exploring the classroom and outdoors in Reception. It really did feel like a team effort.

The children also really impressed us with how sensibly they responded during our practice fire drill on Thursday. Although the alarm can catch us all a little by surprise, every child showed that they would know exactly what to do in an emergency, moving calmly and quietly to our assembly point. That is exactly what these practices are for.

As ever, we have had a number of children finding their own ways to help out in school. One example of this was Teddy in Year 2, who spotted the autumn leaves blowing in through the school entrance and kindly asked if he could help me clear them. As anyone with a garden will know, it is a job that is never quite finished at this time of year, but Teddy tackled it with real enthusiasm. Kindness in action!

Out at Mowden Hall, children from Years 3 and 4 took on schools from across the North East in a cross country event. With no shortcuts and nowhere to hide, cross country is a real test of stamina and endurance and every runner showed tremendous determination to keep going right to the finish line. The tired legs were worth the effort!

On Tuesday, we were delighted to welcome friends from Ponteland Methodist Church for one of their Open the Book sessions. This time it was the turn of Noah's Ark, told through a physical retelling of the story, which brought some of our finest actors together. The team give their time so generously and the children always look forward to their visits.

Our PTFA Pumpkin Decorating Competition is almost upon us! As a final reminder, entries should be brought into school on Tuesday and dropped off in the spare classroom alongside Year 2. Our special guest judge of the day will have the tricky task of picking a winner from each key stage, with results announced on Thursday. Judging by previous years, they will have their work cut out.

Harvest also brings us together next week. Thank you to everyone who has already sent in donations for the harvest table today and if you have not yet had the chance, **please bring them in on Monday morning**. Key Stage 1 will share their harvest songs in a morning worship at 9.15am on Monday, with Early Years following at 2.30pm. Key Stage 2 celebrate together on Wednesday at 9.15am. If you would like to join us, please sign up using the letter sent home.

We have one more busy week ahead before school closes for half term on Thursday 22nd October. We hope the weekend gives all of our children a chance to recharge their batteries for these final days of the half term.

Best wishes,

James Watson
Headteacher





ATTENDANCE



Attendance for this week is summarised below

Well done to Chestnut class in Year 3, who topped our attendance table in a week that saw 9 classes making it into the green! With just one week to go until half term, every day really does count, so we would love to see all of our classes finishing on a high.

As the colder months arrive, coughs and sniffles inevitably start to do the rounds. If your child is a little under the weather but well enough to learn, school is usually the best place for them. If you are unsure, please get in touch.

Weekly Overview			
Acorns (Nursery)	94.12	Oak (Reception)	97.59
Birch (Year 1)	98.67	Beech (Year 2)	95.67
Chestnut (Year 3)	99.23	Rowan (Year 3)	95.20
Alder (Year 4)	97.92	Maple (Year 4)	97.27
Pine (Year 5)	97.35	Hazel (Year 6)	95.52
Juniper (Year 6)	93.33		
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

When the Clocks Go Back

The clocks go back an hour on Sunday 25th October, right at the start of half term. While the grown ups among us may be dreaming of an extra hour in bed, children's body clocks rarely get the message and earlier wake ups are common for a few days afterwards.

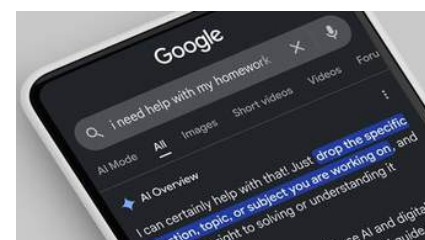
Moving bedtime later by 10 to 15 minutes each night in the days beforehand can really help, along with keeping bedrooms dark on lighter mornings, sticking to the usual bedtime routine and switching screens off an hour before bed. A settled routine over half term also makes the return to school much smoother. The Sleep Charity also has some helpful tips for families, [which can be accessed here](#).



Can We Trust the Answer at the Top?

When children search for something on Google, the first thing they often see now is an AI generated summary. It looks confident and saves time, which makes it very tempting for homework, but an independent review by Common Sense Media found these summaries can give inaccurate information and unsuitable responses to sensitive questions. At the moment, they cannot be switched off within normal Google searches.

The best protection is a simple habit: treat the summary as a starting point and check where the information came from. Next time you look something up together, try asking "how do we know that's true?" Common Sense Media has also put together a [short guide for parents](#) with more ideas on using Google's AI search safely.





YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

Nursery

A huge thank you from our Nursery children and staff to all of our amazing families for joining us in our setting this week! We very much enjoyed spending time with you in class and the children loved showing you all of their favourite things to do at school.

From painting and crafting scarecrows to riding bikes and building princess castles, we loved every minute! Thank you for your continued support and for making the time to come and see us. It was lovely to chat with you all!



Reception

What a wonderful Open Week we have had in Oak Class! It has been a joy welcoming families into our classroom and sharing how confidently the children have settled into Reception life. The children were so proud to show you their routines and the activities they enjoy each day.

Together we explored our continuous provision and celebrated the children's growing independence and enthusiasm for their new environment. Your visits created such a warm sense of partnership and the children loved having you alongside them. Thank you for taking the time to join us- your support means so much!





YEAR GROUP NEWS

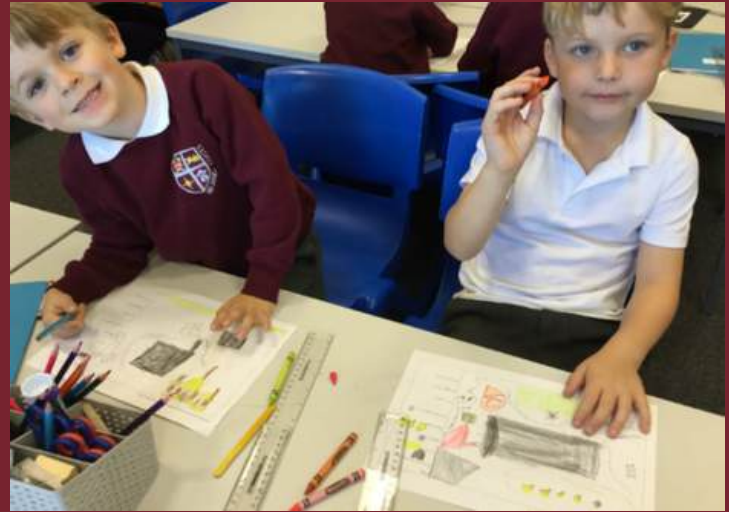
Take a look at this week's learning

Year 1

This week we have been learning all about instructions. The children have been giving them to their friends, following them carefully and putting them in the right order. They have also learned about imperative verbs and written their own instructional phrases.

We enjoyed another fantastic Open the Book worship, joining in with the retelling of Noah's Ark. Our wonderful Year 1 actors really brought the story to life!

In geography, we created our own maps of the school using symbols and a key, along with bird's eye view plans. Next week we will use them to lead our friends around the school!



Year 2

This week in Year 2 we have enjoyed reading The Big Book of Bugs and we have been using expanded noun phrases to describe bugs and minibeasts. We have been so impressed with the children's vocabulary and ideas in our lessons and their fantastic contribution to learning.

In science, we have been learning about habitats around the world. We have explored rainforests, deserts and oceans and thought about the living things we would find there. We have drawn detailed diagrams of world habitats and learned how animals who are found there are suited to their habitat.





YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

Year 3

Year 3 have continued their biographies of Malala Yousafzai, using facts to write about her positive and negative experiences at school. They also recorded her 'mind blowing moment', explaining how her terrifying experiences gave her a platform for her voice to be heard. Next week we will write our own independent biographies, so we have been researching key facts about Roald Dahl.

In art, we talked about what Stonehenge is, how old it is, what it was used for and why it is so special. The children then painted sunset skies and added black paper stones on top to create some wonderfully striking silhouettes.

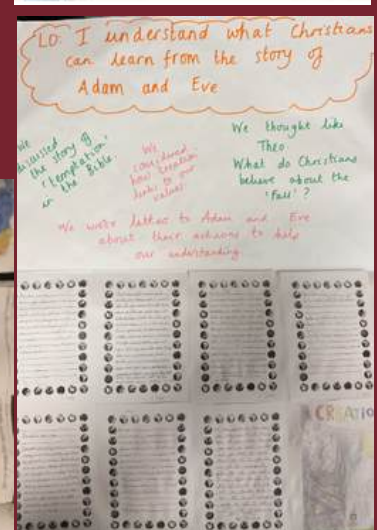


Year 4

Year 4 have had a brilliant week! They have worked really hard in maths, where we have moved on to addition and subtraction, and have shown superb fluency using the column method.

In science, the children have enjoyed exploring the school grounds to hunt for invertebrates, which they then classified using keys.

In RE, we have continued learning about the Creation story and how it shapes the way Christians lead their lives. We have now moved on to discuss Adam and Eve and temptation. The children have discussed this really well and thought carefully about how it relates to everyday life.





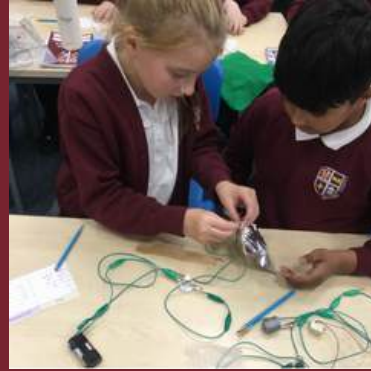
YEAR GROUP NEWS

Take a look at this week's learning

Year 5

It has been another busy and exciting week of learning in Year 5. In English, we have started a new unit of work focusing on non-chronological reports. The children have begun creating their own reports about emperor penguins, developing their skills in organising information and writing in a clear, factual style. In maths, we have started our new unit on multiplication and division. The children have been working hard to identify multiples and common multiples, building their understanding of these important mathematical concepts.

As part of our materials unit in science, the children enjoyed investigating different materials to discover which were electrical conductors and which were electrical insulators. They explored how materials behave in an electrical circuit and used their observations to help them draw conclusions. Well done, Year 5, for another fantastic week of hard work and learning!



Year 6

This week we completed our final piece of writing based on our Victorian novel, *Gaslight*. Writing as the main character Nansi, the children produced diary entries full of description, emotion and interesting, varied language. It was a lovely way to round off the unit. We have also been learning about Victorian school life and comparing it with our own. We suspect nobody is asking for the slates back!

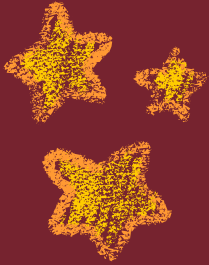
In maths, we have mastered long multiplication and moved on to short division, using both the bus stop method and factors to help us divide.



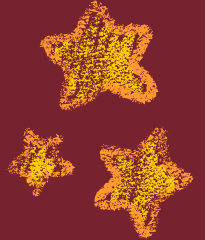


HAPPY Birthday

Happy birthday to the following children, who will be celebrating over the coming week. We hope you all have a wonderful day with family and friends!



Happy Birthday to:



Florence (Reception)

Mikail (Year 1)

Theo J (Year 3)

Rudi (Year 4)

Lucas (Year 6)



OTHER NEWS

Family First Magazine

The autumn issue of Family First, a free magazine for parents, is now available to read online. Written to help families build a happy and healthy lifestyle, it is full of expert advice, ideas for family time and tips for parents from other parents. There is even a section of tips for kids written by kids, so it is well worth sharing with your little ones too. With the darker evenings drawing in, it could be just the thing to browse together over half term. You can [read the autumn issue here](#).



Family First

Half Term Fun with West Northumberland Family Hubs

Looking for ways to keep everyone busy over half term? West Family Hubs have a whole week of free activities running from Monday 26th to Friday 30th October across Hexham, Prudhoe, Haltwhistle and Bellingham. Expect Halloween themed sessions, Stay and Play groups, workshops and activities for children with additional needs and disabilities. Dates, times and venues are all in the [October Half Term What's On Guide](#).



A Fresh New Lunch Menu

We are delighted to share our brand new three week lunch menu, which begins when we return after half term.



Packed with wholemeal bread, pasta and rice alongside more lentils, pulses and fresh proteins, it brings plenty of tasty new dishes for the children to enjoy. It also puts us well ahead of the updated national school food guidelines coming in 2027. [You can see the new menu here](#).

Sporting Stars

Well done to Oscar in Year 6, who swam his way to two silver medals in the 50m and 100m backstroke at the Alnwick Gala, competing in the age 10 category. Backstroke is not even Oscar's most confident stroke and so he was quite rightly delighted with this is a brilliant achievement. Congratulations, Oscar!



Gymnastics

We are also extremely pleased for Lottie in Year 1, who has passed both her Stage 4 and Stage 5 Tumble Gymnastics awards. Achieving two awards takes plenty of practice and perseverance and Lottie should be very proud of how far she has come. Keep tumbling, Lottie!



Supporting Your Child's Mental Health and Wellbeing

Helping our children through the bigger feelings in life isn't always straightforward and there are times when all of us could do with a little guidance. Pele Trust and ASK Psychology are hosting a session for parents and carers, led by an Educational Psychologist, offering practical strategies and advice on when extra support might help. The nearest is at Ponteland Primary School on Wednesday 18th November at 4pm. [You can see the full poster and other dates here](#).





DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2026/2027

Date	Event
Monday 19th October	Key Stage 1 Harvest Festival- 9.15am Re-arranged date for Year 4 Alder class Parents' Evening EYFS Harvest Festival- 2.40pm
Tuesday 20th October	PTFA Pumpkin Decorating Competition- Entries to be brought to the Year 2 classroom
Wednesday 21st October	Key Stage 2 Harvest Festival- 9.15am Re-arranged date for Year 4 Alder class Parents' Evening
Friday 23rd October	School closed- Teacher training day
Week beginning Monday 26th October	Half Term Holiday
Monday 2nd November	School closed- Teacher training day
Tuesday 3rd November	Children return to school following half term holiday
Friday 6th November	Recommended Reads Day- Children invited to bring a book into school to promote and share with their class. English Heritage joins collective worship to launch Pele Trust Unravelling Arts Project
Monday 9th November	Year 5 British Sign Language group visit Grange Lea Care Home.
Tuesday 10th November	EYFS Open Mornings- Sessions for prospective parents with children beginning Nursery and Reception in September 2027- 9.30am
Wednesday 11th November	Remembrance Day Service- We invite any parents or family members currently or previously serving parents to take part in our service. Please contact the school office.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2026/2027

Thursday 12th November	Seven Stories join EYFS for an outreach story workshop
Friday 13th November	Children in Need fundraising day- Details to follow
Week beginning Monday 16th November	Anti-Bullying Week
Thursday 19th November	EYFS Open Mornings- Sessions for prospective parents with children beginning Nursery and Reception in September 2027- 9.30am
Friday 20th November	Odd socks day to conclude Anti-Bullying Week
Monday 30th November	Year 1 visit to Discovery Museum- Details to be shared in parent letter
Wednesday 2nd December	Christmas Lunch Day
Friday 4th December	PTFA Dress Down Day- Children invited to wear non-uniform in exchange for a small donation for the Christmas Fair tombola
Week beginning Monday 7th December	Christmas Performance Week- Details to follow via parent letter
Tuesday 8th December	Year 6 Virtual Workshop- Emotional regulation
Wednesday 9th December	PTFA Christmas Fair
Thursday 10th December	Year 4 Virtual Workshop- Emotional regulation
Monday 14th December	Pele Trust Christmas Concert
Tuesday 15th December	Year 6 theatre visit to watch 'A Christmas Carol'- details to follow