

12th December 2024

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome this week to a rare 'Thursday Flyer'! Tomorrow school is closed to children as it is a training day. We look forward to seeing everyone back in school on Monday 16th December for a jam packed final week of term.

It has been a busy week of events in school this week. Year 6 got to see Ponteland High School's performance of 'We will rock you'. They had an amazing morning with Year 6 children from across Pele Trust watching many of our ex-pupils singing and dancing in the performance. Early Years had a special elf visitor today where they learnt about 'The Greediest Elf' in a magical theatrical performance. Year 3 wowed their families as they performed their Christmas ukulele concert where they showcased what they had learnt mixed in with some Christmas classics! Well done Year 3.

On top of all of this we had a delicious Christmas lunch today along with the children sharing their wonderful Christmas jumpers!

It was lovely to see Mrs. Henderson and Mrs. Graham back in school today as representatives from St. Andrew's Church in Heddon. They worked with Year 4 to make all the Christingles which will be used at the service at Church. For details of the Christmas Services at St. Andrew's Church please see later in the Flyer.

Thank you all so much for supporting our Christmas Fair. I am pleased to let you know that through your generosity the school raised £1093.87. Thank you again to the Friends of Heddon School for organising this event.

Please check out our 'Diary Dates' at the end of the flyer for times and venues for our Christmas performances and services next week. The children have been working hard and cannot wait to share their Christmas events with you. Could I ask that when attending our school and church events in the coming weeks that you park safely and show consideration to our neighbours. There is information about safer parking contained later in the Flyer.

Well done to Reception and Year 1 with the best attendance this week: an amazing 100%!

Well done to Year 1 and Year 5 for the best attendance for this year: 97.6%.

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.

Northumberland
County Council

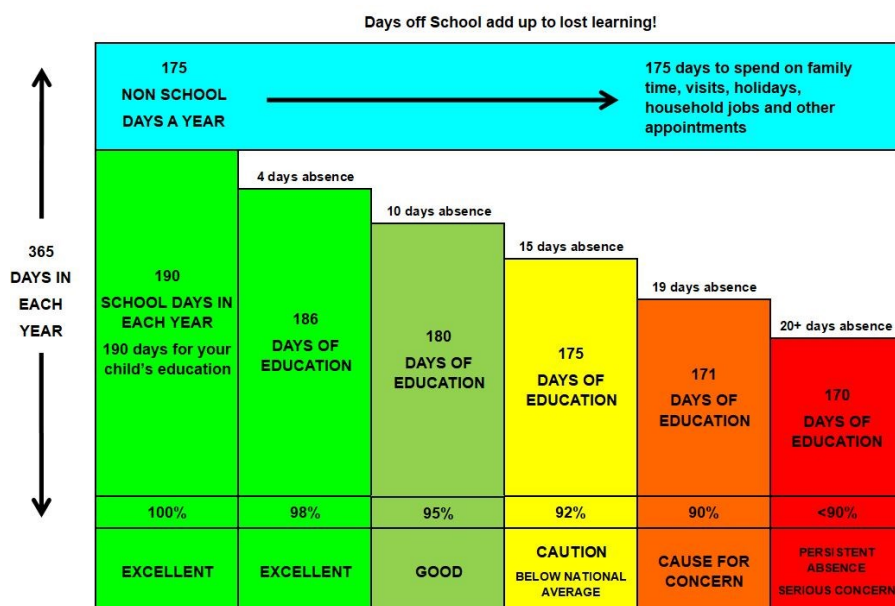


We continue to focus on attendance and punctuality so please remember that our School starts at 8.55am (9am for Nursery) and anyone arriving after this time will be marked as late.

Attendance for this week is summarised below:

Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year	Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year
Nursery (Hedgehogs)	96%	95%	Year 3 (Gibside)	89.8%	95.9%
Reception (Owls)	100%	93.7%	Year 4 (Lindisfarne)	94.4%	96.7%
Year 1 (Wallington)	100%	97.6%	Year 5 (Bamburgh)	99%	97.6%
Year 2 (Craggside)	99%	97%	Year 6 (Dunstanburgh)	95.7%	97%

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 morning the Hedgehogs and Owls enjoyed The Greediest Elf show by Big Foot Productions.



They told us the story of Tinker McJingles the mischievous elf!



What a fun morning!



PIC•COLLAGE



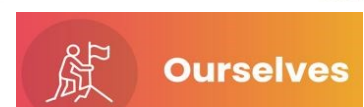
Ourselves

Life





The Owls and Hedgehogs had a fantastic morning together, doing lots of elf themed crafts and activities. We enjoyed our delicious Christmas lunch too!

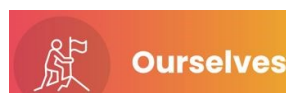


Christmas Fun in Year 1

We have had such a busy week, we have been busy writing book reviews about our story, 'Oliver's Vegetables' in literature works. Then in Maths we did our first ever Maths test and everyone worked really hard to answer the questions. In amongst all of this we have been practising our Nativity everyday! Today we had our lovely Christmas dinner, which I think we can all agree was delicious.



PIC•COLLAGE



Christmas Fun with Year 2

Year 2 had a fabulous time today enjoying their Christmas dinner, wearing their Christmas party hats and pulling crackers. We are working really hard with our nativity and can't wait to perform to you all next week.



PIC•COLLAGE

Year 3 Ukulele Concert

On Wednesday afternoon Year 3 had their ukulele concert. The children have been working hard in their ukulele lessons to learn some of the chords and have learnt to play a selection of songs. I'm sure the parents that were able to join us for the concert would agree that the children are all doing amazingly well for only playing the ukulele for a term. The children performed 11 songs including the Christmas songs Silent Night, Jingle Bells and Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer.



Learning

Life



'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14



We had a busy morning helping Mrs Henderson and Mrs Graham prepare Christingle bags for the church service on Christmas Eve. Our classroom was like an Elves workshop, we had lots of fun!



PIC•COLLAGE

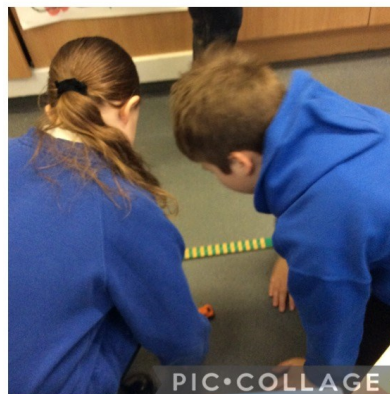
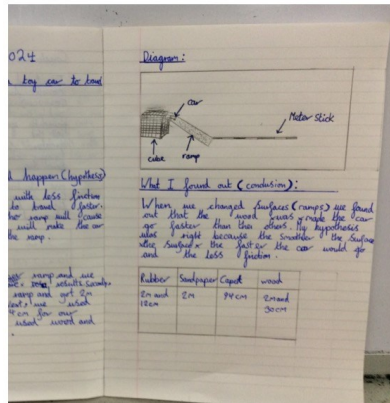
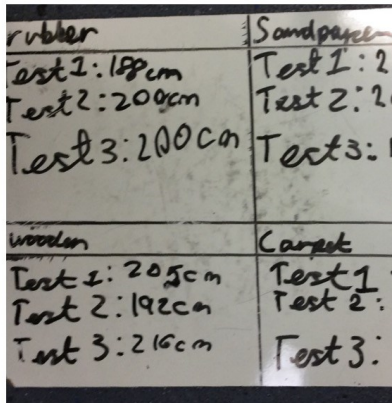
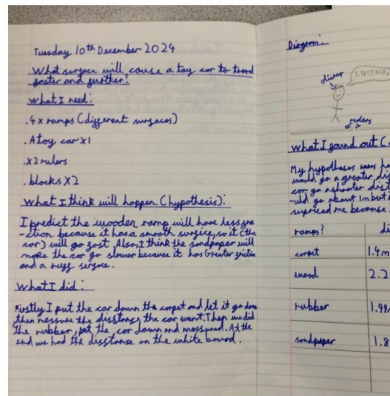
Others



Learning

Friction Experiments with Year 5

This week has been very busy in year 5 although we have thoroughly enjoyed our Science lesson. Within our topic of 'Forces', we have been focusing on Gravity and Air resistance, so it was now time to investigate friction. We decided to carry out an experiment that would measure the amount of friction a surface would have on a toy car. We used four different surfaces and we measured how far the car would travel on them. We found out that the if the surface that caused the car to travel a shorted distance created the greatest amount of friction.



Learning

At Beamish Museum with Year 6

A lovely day at Beamish yesterday, exploring the grounds and taking part in a Victorian style school lesson. In our different groups we visited the pit village and mine, the 1900s town and the new 1950s section of the museum. Thank you Year Six for a wonderful trip.



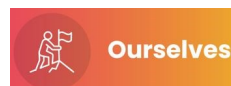
Learning

Life



Out of School Achievements

Well done to Sophia who has been performing in 'Alice in Wonderland' at The People's Theatre in Newcastle. Sophia has had a great opportunity to use her dancing and acting skills. We are all really proud of her.



A Big (Christmas Tree Sized) Thank You!

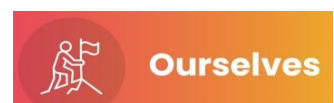
The school would like to thank Halls of Heddon Nursery Centre who have very kindly donated our school Christmas tree.

It looks beautiful in the hall. It has brought light to the dark December days and smiles of joy from both children and staff.



OPAL Play Charter

This term the Play Ambassadors were given the challenge of creating a new OPAL Play, Play charter. They thought very carefully about a short, memorable message that incorporates the key rules and ethos of OPAL Play. They then pooled their design ideas to create this fantastic bespoke Heddon School OPAL Play Charter. It was sent off to a print design company to be produced. We are very excited to be able to share their work and even more excited to collect the posters next week, ready to be displayed in the new year. Well done Play Ambassadors!



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.





St Andrew's Church

A place for everyone

Christmas Services and Events



Saturday 21st December
4pm Carols by Candlelight
Traditional Village Carol Service

Sunday 22nd December
No service at St Andrew's

Tuesday 24th December
3pm Christingle and Crib Service

Wednesday 25th December
9.30am Holy Communion for Christmas Day

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.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON.

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, traveling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during this period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY

Children spend more time online during school holidays, increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Balancing screen time, avoiding harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open discussions about online safety and use parental controls to manage content exposure and screen time effectively. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.

2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The incidence of house fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, cookers and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overloads and the need for quick response plans can make fire safety challenging. Ensure smoke detectors are operational, keep fire extinguishers on hand and teach children how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid leaving cooking unattended and use fire-safe candles to prevent mishaps.

3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS

More families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to seatbelt laws. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time to avoid rushing and mitigate risks on busy roads.

4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES

Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross contamination, unclear labelling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergy needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications like antihistamines or EpiPens. Teaching children how to advocate for themselves and recognise dangerous foods also contributes to safer celebrations.

5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS

Cold weather and seasonal socialising can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Crowded gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection risks. Emphasise hygiene, encourage vaccination, disinfect surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.

6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD

Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for both drivers and pedestrians. Distracted driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate road safety. Encourage pedestrian safety practices, avoid distracted driving and never drive under the influence.

7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS

Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical, fire and choking hazards if mishandled. Frayed wires, toppling Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.

8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS

Some toys and gadgets can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensuring that gifts meet safety standards and are age appropriate can be complex with so many options available. Inspect all toys carefully and ensure any tech devices have parental controls. Setting expectations around safe gift use and discarding packaging that poses a risk also helps to prevent accidents.

9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE

Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and a lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to accidents or poor decision making. Incorporate rest, maintain regular routines and seek support to reduce stress. Encourage activities that promote relaxation to create a healthier, happier holiday experience for everyone.

10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY

Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment and lack of supervision for children. Designate responsible adults, limit consumption and provide transportation alternatives for guests. Teaching moderation and modelling responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and secure.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is a chartered health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety. Specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies, he has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and training.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season>

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Dates for your Diary - Autumn Term



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