

20th December 2024

Dear Parents / Carers,

I can't believe another term is over and Christmas is here again. We have had an amazing week with the children. They have had great fun finishing cards and calendars followed by dancing and singing at their class discos. The performances this week were truly amazing. The children really excelled themselves in their singing and acting. We hope that you enjoyed sharing them with us. We are so proud of all the children.

I would also like to thank all the staff and volunteers who have worked tirelessly with the children this term. I am hoping that they all find time to relax over the Christmas period with their own families and recharge their batteries.

The School is very grateful for all the support and kind comments we have received from you as parents, grandparents, carers and other members of our School community. As always, it is very much appreciated.

We are also really sad to be saying goodbye to both Mrs. Cubbage and Mrs. Bilclough today. They have impacted upon the lives of so many children during their time here and they will be really missed. I am sure you will join us in wishing them all the best for the next steps in their journeys. We look forward to welcoming Mrs. Kenyon to the school team as well as to having Mrs. March back in January.

Well done to Year 2 with the best attendance this week: an amazing 100%!

Well done to Year 1 for the best attendance for this year: 97.7%.

On behalf of the School and Academy Committee, I would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas filled with love, joy and peace.

Mr. A. Wheatley,  
Headteacher



## Attendance Matters



**ATTEND** today...  
**ACHIEVE** tomorrow...  
**ATTENDANCE** matters.

Northumberland  
County Council

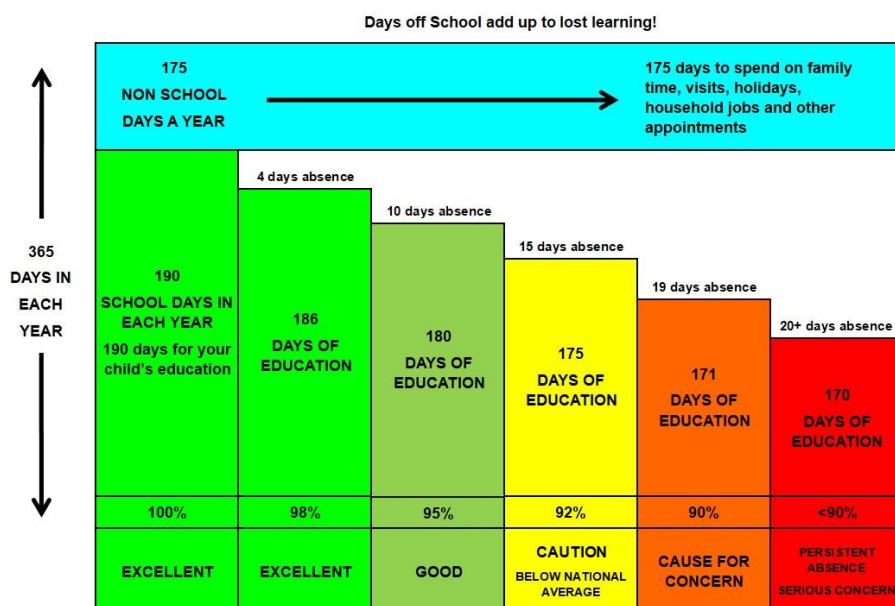


We continue to focus on attendance and punctuality so please remember that our School starts at 8.55am (9am for Nursery) and anyone arriving after this time will be marked as late.

Attendance for this week is summarised below:

Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year	Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year
Nursery (Hedgehogs)	98.7%	95.4%	Year 3 (Gibside)	96.7%	96%
Reception (Owls)	92.6%	93.6%	Year 4 (Lindisfarne)	95.2%	96.6%
Year 1 (Wallington)	99.3%	97.7%	Year 5 (Bamburgh)	92%	97.2%
Year 2 (Craggside)	100%	97.2%	Year 6 (Dunstanburgh)	95.2%	96.9%

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

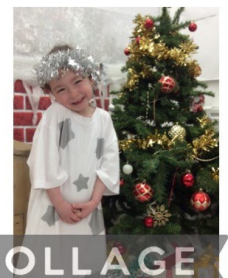


'Let all that you do be done with love'

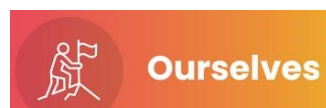
1 Corinthians 16:14



Have a wonderful  
Christmas Owls and  
Hedgehogs!



PIC•COLLAGE







PIC•COLLAGE



**Ourselves**

**Life**







We hope you  
enjoyed our Key  
Stage 1 Nativity as  
much as we did!

Life



Ourselves

'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14





'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14

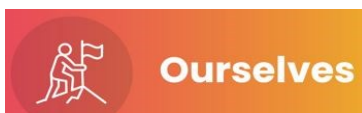


## Party Time with Year 3 and Year 4!

Year 3 and 4 had a fantastic party afternoon. As well as the disco, we could choose to watch The Grinch, do Christmas crafts, play games or create with Lego. And we all looked fantastic in our party clothes! Merry Christmas!



PIC•COLLAGE







PIC•COLLAGE



**Ourselves**

**Life**



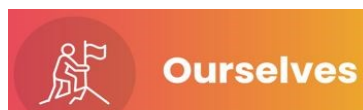
'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14



## A Christmas Disco with Year 5 and Year 6

Year 5 and 6 rounded off their term with a great Christmas Disco. They played party games, danced and sang at the top of their voices! It was great to see the children enjoying themselves after a hard working term.





## Key Stage 2 Carol Service

Key Stage 2 led an amazing service of Carols and Lessons at St. Andrew's Church this morning. Well done to all the readers, soloists, musicians and singers. You were all fantastic. What a wonderful way to end the Autumn term!



Others



Ourselves

Life



'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14



## OPAL Play Platinum Award

The school has received the Platinum Award for Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) in recognition of the wide range of high quality play opportunities we offer children. We received the highest possible accolade during our final audit by OPAL for our participation in the 2-year development programme.

The play areas include a mud pit and kitchen, a large sandpit on the school field, a zen zone, a stage for performing and dancing, den building materials, recycled car tyres, along with climbing frames, roll bars and a canoe which has been cleverly upcycled for creative play.

The final audit report stated, 'OPAL Platinum status puts your school in the top 0.05 percentile of UK primary schools in terms of the quality of your play offer. Playtimes at our school are inclusive, joyful and provide a wonderful variety of types of play.'



Others



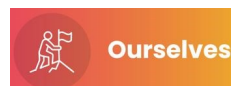
Ourselves

Life



## Out of School Achievements

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



## A Big Musical Thank You!

The school would like to thank Mrs. Milner and Tom for all of their hard work this term with the children. I am sure that you will agree that the singing this year has been of the highest quality. This is due to the amount of time that both Mrs. Milner and Tom give up to come into school to work with the children. It is a wonderful experience for the children to sing to a variety of musical accompaniment.

The obvious delight and joy on the faces of the children during our performances shows the impact of their work.

Thank you from everyone at school. Your hard work is much appreciated.







May the joy of the angels,  
The eagerness of the shepherds,  
The perseverance of the wise men,  
The willingness of Joseph and Mary,  
And the peace of the Christ Child  
Be with us all this Christmas  
Amen







## **St Andrew's Church**

A place for everyone

### **Christmas Services and Events**



**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December**  
**4pm** Carols by Candlelight  
Traditional Village Carol Service

**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December**  
No service at St Andrew's

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December**  
**3pm** Christingle and Crib Service

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December**  
**9.30am** Holy Communion for Christmas Day





SATURDAY 21ST DECEMBER

DEAR HEDDON,  
I'M COMING AGAIN TO HEDDON THIS YEAR!  
THE ELVETTES & I CAN'T WAIT! COME AND  
HAVE A JOLLY HOLLY EVENING AS I VISIT YOUR  
WONDERFUL VILLAGE. SHOW US AS ALWAYS,  
YOUR COMMUNITY AND CHRISTMAS SPIRIT!

LEAVING TRAJAN WALK, NEAR HEDDON SCHOOL  
AT APPROX. 4.30PM

PLEASE SEE FACEBOOK FOR UPDATES.

LOVE SANTA X





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](https://nationalcollege.com).

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

## 1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING

It's concerning how common for young people to spend hours 'doomscrolling': trawling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious. Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose, instead of endlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people accidentally discovering harmful material.

## 2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT

It's important to keep apprised of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching online can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising of a product – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.

## 3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS

Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media. It's worth spending time with children to help them find something suitable and enjoyable. Perhaps you'll even discover a joint interest, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child. As part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.

## 4 REDUCE SCREENTIME

Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capacity to monitor screentime; they also record how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and support children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.

## 5 FILL THE VOID

Monitoring and reducing screentime can create a lot of free time to fill, and young people can even face withdrawal symptoms when made to step away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider what offline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young users will permanently cut down on their screentime, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.

## 6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS

One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day where they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver specifically timed notifications to draw them back in. To avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.

## 7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body norms to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish reality from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.

## 8 DIGITAL DETOX

Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox', from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screentime and less exposure to potentially harmful content. Alternatively, rather than avoiding the app entirely, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead, keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.

## 9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – or if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screentime reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.

## 10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"

Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many schools that are moving towards being 'phone free' due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones continuously. It's important to explain to young people why managing screentime is important. Set out the benefits and ensure they have all the relevant information, so it's not just seen as a punishment.

## Meet Our Expert

John Insley is a senior leader in a Birmingham secondary school and has vast experience in leading schools over the past 15 years – including the development of computing curriculums across primary and secondary schools, writing e-safety policies and supporting schools with computing and e-safety advice.



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Wednesday®

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Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/top-tips-for-safety-on-social-media>



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## Dates for your Diary - Spring Term



<b>w/c Monday 23rd December</b>	<b>CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS</b>
Monday 6th January 2025	<b>SCHOOL REOPENS</b>
w/c Monday 3rd February 2025	Children's Mental Health Week
Tuesday 11th February 2025	Year 6 Visit to Nissan
Monday 17th February 2025	Let's Dance at Heddon
Friday 21st February 2025	Break the Rules Day
<b>w/c Monday 23rd February 2025</b>	<b>HALF TERM HOLIDAY</b>
<b>Monday 3rd March 2025</b>	<b>SCHOOL CLOSED FOR TRAINING DAY</b>
Friday 7th March 2025	Choir at Ryton Festival
Thursday 13th March 2025	Year 5 Careers Fair at the Metrocentre
Monday 17th March 2025	Individual Photographs