

19th December 2025

Dear Parents / Carers,

I can't believe another term is over and Christmas is here yet again. We have had an amazing week with the children. They have had a great time finishing cards and calendars followed by fun during their Christmas treats including a special visit to Early Years from the Clumsiest Elf!

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.

Please check out the dates and times of the services at St. Andrew's Church over the festive season later in the Flyer.

Well done to Nursery with the best attendance this week: 98.8%

Well done to Year 6 for the best attendance for this year: 97.8%.

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



'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14

Attendance Matters



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

 Northumberland
County Council

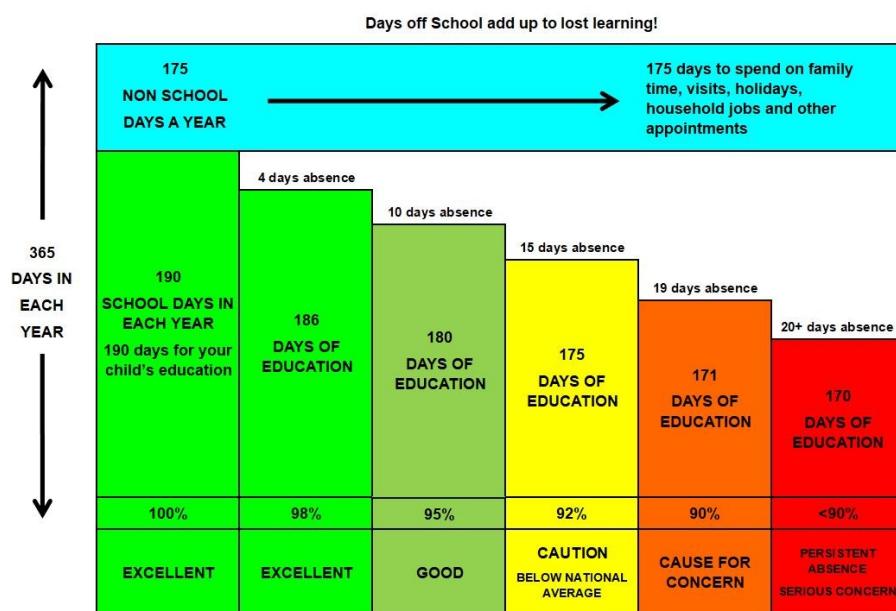


We continue to focus on attendance and punctuality so please remember that our School starts at 8.55am (9am for Nursery) and anyone arriving after this time will be marked as late.

Attendance for this week is summarised below:

Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year	Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year
Nursery (Hedgehogs)	98.8%	96.1%	Year 3 (Gibside)	97.6%	96.8%
Reception (Owls)	96.4%	96.6%	Year 4 (Lindisfarne)	96%	96.5%
Year 1 (Wallington)	94%	94.7%	Year 5 (Bamburgh)	93.9%	97.5%
Year 2 (Cragside)	87.1%	96.9%	Year 6 (Dunstanburgh)	95.7%	97.8%

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



'Let all that you do be done with love'

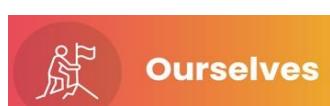
1 Corinthians 16:14

The Clumsiest Elf with Early Years

Early Years had a brilliant time watching a performance of The Clumsiest Elf - we loved the songs, joining in with actions and helping to solve the mystery of Santa's missing keys.

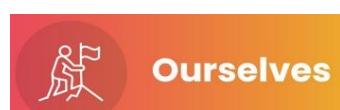


PIC•COLLAGE



A Miracle in Town with Early Years

Early Years really enjoyed performing to family and friends this week with their Christmas nativity called 'A Miracle in Town'. There were lots of lines to learn, songs to sing and dances to do. The children were amazing and we are really proud of them all!



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PIC • COLLAGE



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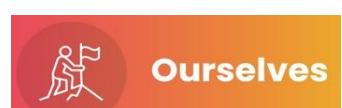
I'm Gonna Shine with Key Stage 1

This week was our Key Stage 1 performances of our nativity 'I'm Gonna Shine'. Every single child has worked so hard over the last few weeks learning their lines and practising the songs and they put on two fantastic performances in the church to all the grown ups. They made their teachers proud! Well done Key Stage 1!



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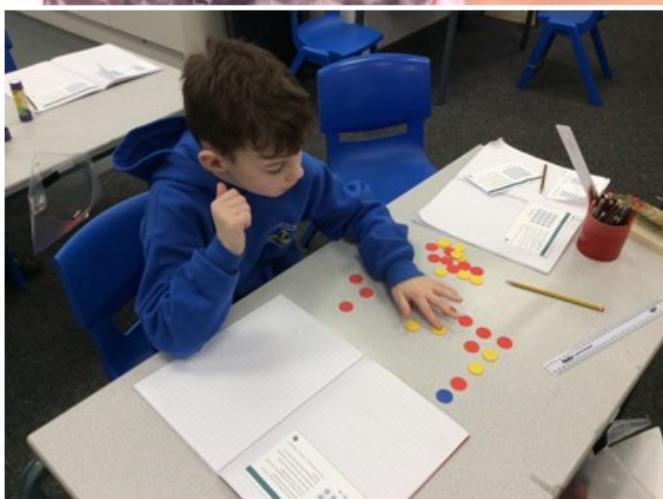


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A Busy End of Term in Year 3.

We've had a very busy end to the term which has included our Christmas choosing time and seen us finishing off our Design Technology project. The children have put so much effort into their moving Christmas cards and they look spectacular. We have been practicing our four times tables and finishing off our English unit which included writing down the recipe for a Christmas pudding!



Christmas Biscuits in Year 4!

As part of Key Stage 2 Christmas Choosing, we adored making Christmassy biscuits. Each child mixed up their own icing and then used a selection of decorations to create some beautiful - and tasty - treats. What really stood out, was the children's creativity and their kindness; so many individuals chose to make something to gift to someone else!



PIC•COLLAGE

Others

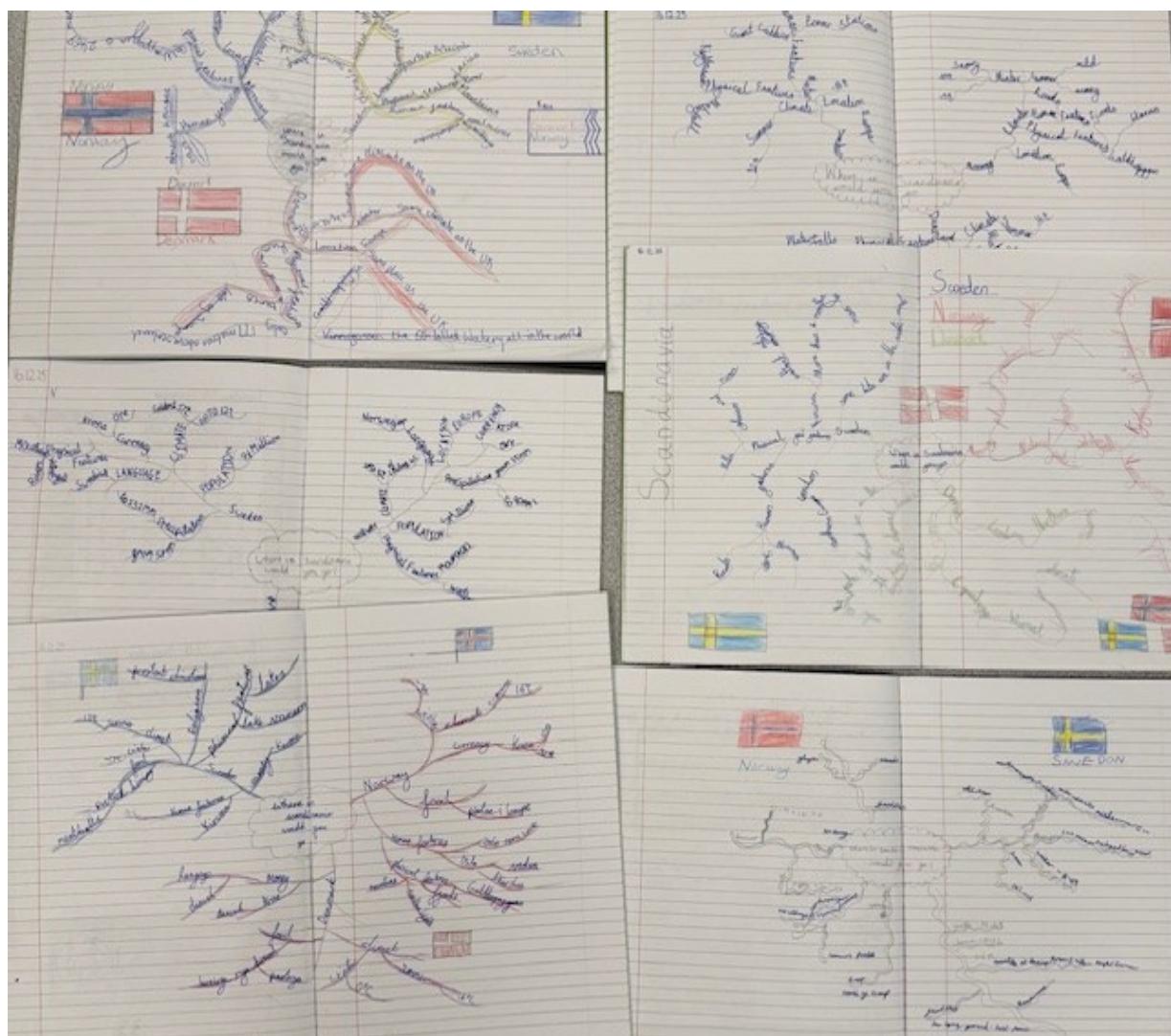


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Super Scandinavia with Year 5!

Our Year 5 class has been working hard on a Geography assessment all about Scandinavia. We explored the Scandinavian countries and where they are located, as well as their weather, climate, and amazing physical features like mountains, forests, and coastlines. We also learned about human features in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, including cities, transport, and ways of life. To finish, we compared Scandinavian cities with cities in the U.K., noticing interesting similarities and differences. We are very proud of the detailed and well presented two-page spreads we have produced!



Learning

A Busy Final Week with Year 6

A very busy final week in Year 6. We've made cards and calendars, rehearsed our words for the Christmas service, penned a short narrative, had fun during our Christmas choosing morning and we even managed to squeeze in our ratio end of unit check! Now for a relaxing two week break. Have a great Christmas Year 6; I look forward to seeing you all in the Spring term.



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Key Stage 2 Carol Service

Key Stage 2 enjoyed sharing the story of Christmas through reading and songs at their annual Carol Service at St. Andrew's Church in Heddon. The singing was truly magical with stunning soloists and groups as well as some amazing choral singing from Handel's Messiah! It was a fantastic way to end our school term and begin our Christmas celebrations.



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Pantomime Performances!

It is lovely to see so many of our children performing on stage at the pantomimes around the area. Sophia, Aurora, Anna, Beth, Emily and Isla were part of the Wizard of Oz at The People's Theatre. Well done everyone!



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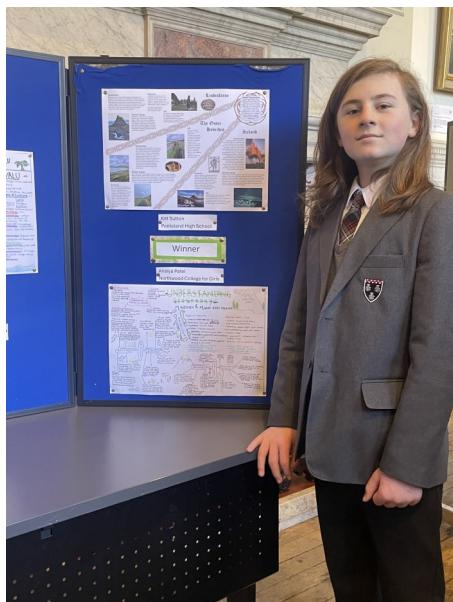
1 Corinthians 16:14

A Success to Celebrate!

We are really pleased that one of our ex-pupils, Kitt, who attends Ponteland High School, has just won the highly prestigious Royal Geographic Society Key Stage 3 Geographer of the year award.

Kitt designed a poster exploring the unique geography of Holy Island, the Outer Hebrides and Iceland examining the forces that shaped the landscape as well as the challenges and opportunities they may face in the future. Kitt's winning entry was one of 1200 received and he was presented with the award at a ceremony in London.

It is always great to hear how our past pupils are doing and being able to celebrate their successes with them. Well done Kitt!



A Big Christmas Tree Sized Thank You!

The school would like to thank Halls of Heddon Plant Nurseries for their very generous donation of a Christmas tree for the school hall.

It not only looked fantastic but also brought a lot of joy and Christmas cheer to children and staff alike. Thank you!





The Parish Council are holding a **Volunteer Thank you Event**

Everyone is welcome, whether you currently volunteer in the village, whether you would like to get involved or whether you would just like to pop along to say hello!

Please join us for mulled wine and mince pies on:

This Friday 19th December

6 – 9 pm

At the Knott Hall



Others



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EMPOWERING PARENT/CARER PROGRAMME

6 - WEEK GROUP

Support your wellbeing and meet other parents. This is for parents and carers of a child, young person, or adult up to 25 years with additional need and/or disability.

When?

Date: Thursday 8th January

Time: 10-11:30am

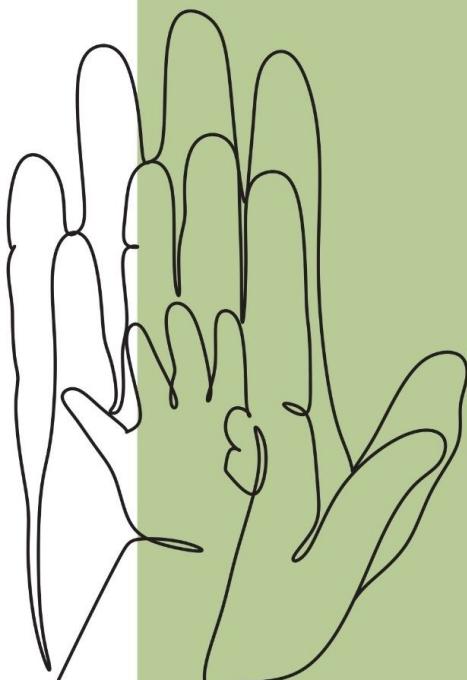
Venue: Hexham Family Hub

Scan here



If you would like to attend, please complete a request for service form by scanning the QR code.
membership/request for service form

Alternatively, call Hexham Family Hub on 01434 601698



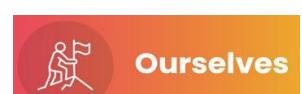
Ourselves



Others

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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.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI TOYS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

TOYS THAT LISTEN AND LEARN



This festive season, the newest toys on the shelves do not just blink or make noise; they listen. Many now come with artificial intelligence (AI), allowing them to talk, learn, and even respond to a child's emotions. These toys can be educational and engaging, but they also collect, store, and process information. This guide explains what that means for families and why it matters.

WEAK SECURITY PROTECTIONS



Some AI toys have poor password protection or open network connections. Others may have microphones or cameras that stay on, even when the toy appears to be off. This can lead to recordings being made without your knowledge, including conversations unrelated to play.

ARTIFICIAL VOICES, REAL INFLUENCE



For very young children, an AI companion may become one of the first voices they interact with regularly. How that voice shows humour, empathy, or authority can shape how a child learns to communicate. If the model is artificial, then part of what is learned is artificial as well.

PRESSURE TO KEEP ENGAGING



Some toys reward repeated use or track engagement, encouraging children to interact more. When children compare how their toys perform, it creates pressure to play more often. This increases the amount of data collected and can make learning feel like competition.

MARKETING THROUGH PLAY



Toys that learn a child's preferences may feed that data into future advertising. A toy that knows a child's favourite colour or hobby could help a company design more targeted marketing to that child and their family.

PLAYTIME AS DATA TRAINING



The information collected from children helps train AI systems. Their voice, emotional responses, and behaviour shape how machines 'understand' people. Play becomes part of a much larger system that influences how future technologies behave.

Advice for Parents & Educators

START WITH A CONVERSATION

Talk to young people. Explain that some toys learn from what they say and do. Help them understand that even friendly technology should have boundaries, and to ask questions about it. Curiosity is healthy, blind trust is not.

SET LIMITS ON USE

Turn off Wi-Fi or Bluetooth when the toy is not in use. Check for updates regularly, as they can change privacy or safety settings. Treat connected toys like any smart device; they should be monitored, updated, and switched off when not in use.

MODEL DIGITAL AWARENESS

Children learn from adults. If they see you checking privacy settings, reading terms, and talking openly about online safety, they are more likely to do the same. Show them how to question technology in a healthy way.

RESEARCH BEFORE YOU BUY

Look for toys that work offline or store data locally. Check for a free or demo version so you can test how it behaves. Read privacy policies to understand what data is collected, where it goes, and whether it's shared with others.

REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS

Find out where the data is stored and who has access to it. Some companies sell or share data with advertisers. If the toy connects through an app, check what it requests access to and limit those permissions whenever possible.

BALANCE AI WITH REAL PLAY

AI toys can be fun and creative, but they are not a replacement for real human interaction. Encourage time away from technology with activities that foster emotional and social development. Use AI toys to support learning, not define it.

Meet Our Expert

Clara Hawking is Executive Director of Kompass Education. She advises governments, school trusts, and global organisations on AI governance and safeguarding, helping schools and families understand how technology shapes learning, wellbeing, and the digital future of children.



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Dates for your Diary - Spring Term



w/c Monday 22nd December 2025	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS
Monday 5th January 2026	School Reopens for Spring Term
Thursday 15th January 2026	Year 6 France Meeting
Wednesday 21st January 2026	Year 4 at Christingle Service at St. Nicholas' Cathedral
Monday 9th February 2026	Pele Trust 'Let's Dance' Festival
w/c Monday 16th February 2026	HALF TERM HOLIDAYS
Monday 23rd February 2026	TRAINING DAY