

6th February 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

It has been another busy, if somewhat wet, week in school with lots of exciting activities happening. Reception were very excited to have a visit from the Fire Brigade who came in their fire engine, sounded the sirens and even showed them how tall the ladders were! We would like to say a big thank you to all the firefighters who came to talk to the children.

Next week is Children's Mental Health week and children will be learning about this and taking part in activities across the week. On Friday Key Stage 2 will be visiting other teachers over the day for a carousel of activities. We would love you to join us on the yard at 8.45am on Friday 13th February 2026 for a whole school 'Wake Up Shake Up' dance led by Mrs. Walker. Parents are invited to join in so bring your dancing shoes!

Please see later in the Flyer for details of our Key Stage 2 Poetry Exhibition. All the classes in Key Stage 2 are providing poems and we would love for you to come and share them with the children. It is open for one night only on Wednesday 4th March between 3.15pm and 4.15pm in the Studio.

Please check out our online safety guide which this week has YouTube as its focus. There are lots of handy hints and tips to ensure that children remain safe if they are using this app.

We would also like to share with you some new research and information about the impact of screen time upon sleep and what this can mean for your child. There are links to the research and other useful and interesting information and guides for you.

If you have been to the school office you may have noticed our OPAL Play Penny Pot. If you have any spare coins in your pocket (no matter how small) and would like to donate them to support purchasing more equipment for our active playtimes then we would really appreciate you putting them into our pot.

Please check out our updated 'Dates for the Diary' section of the flyer for all our upcoming events.

Well done to Year 3 with the best attendance this week: 99.6%

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

I hope that you enjoy reading this flyer and you have a relaxing weekend.

Mr. A. Wheatley,

Headteacher



Attendance Matters



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

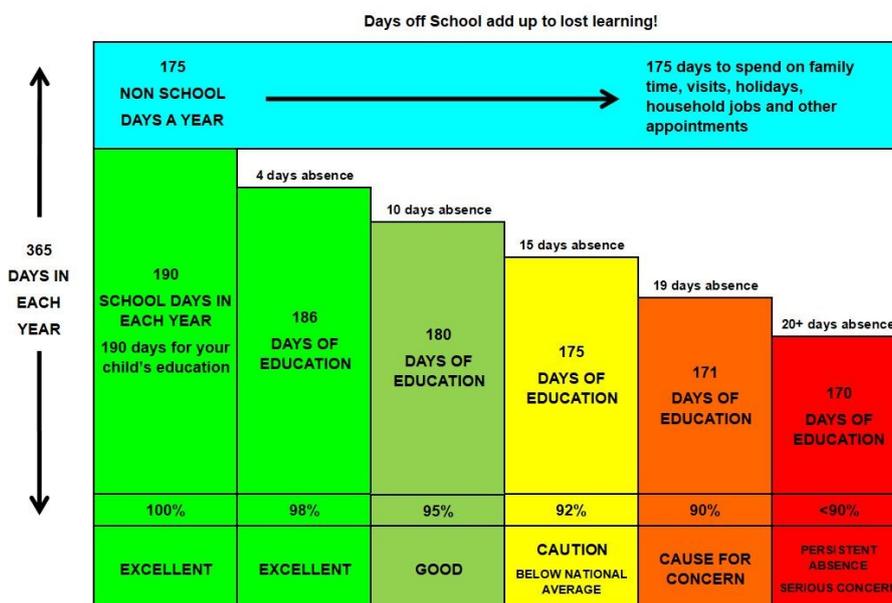


We continue to focus on attendance and punctuality so please remember that our School starts at 8.55am (9am for Nursery) and anyone arriving after this time will be marked as late.

Attendance for this week is summarised below:

Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year	Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year
Nursery (Hedgehogs)	96.7%	96.1%	Year 3 (Gibside)	99.6%	96.8%
Reception (Owls)	95.7%	96.6%	Year 4 (Lindisfarne)	91.1%	96.5%
Year 1 (Wallington)	99.2%	94.7%	Year 5 (Bamburgh)	97.4%	97.5%
Year 2 (Cragside)	95.5%	96.9%	Year 6 (Dunstanburgh)	96.1%	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'

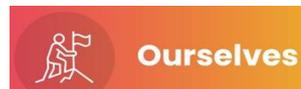
1 Corinthians 16:14

This week in Nursery, the children have been learning all about capacity and using vocabulary such as 'empty, full, nearly full and nearly empty'.



The Hedgehogs have also loved gymnastics this week and Mr Smith was very impressed!

PIC•COLLAGE



## A Visit from the Fire Brigade with Reception

Reception had a fantastic visit from the firefighters at Ponteland Fire Station this week. They told us all about how they helped people, how they rescued adults and children and how all of their tools worked.



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Learning

Life



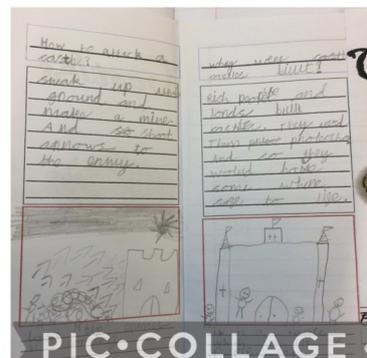
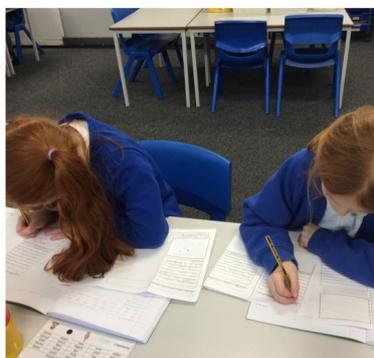
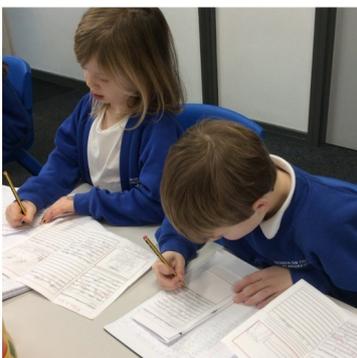
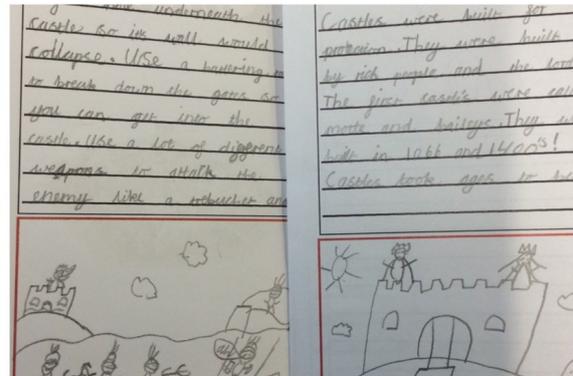
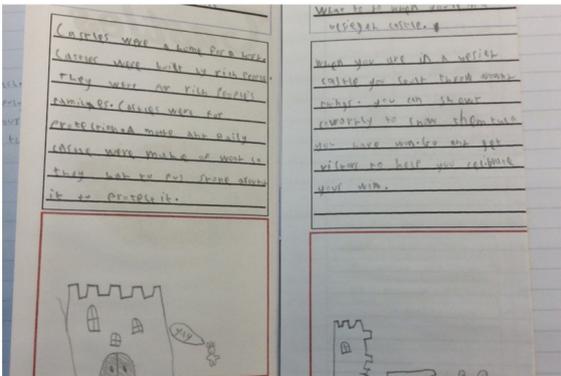
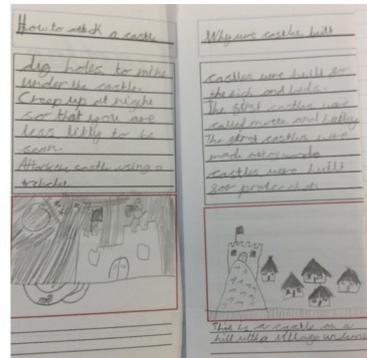
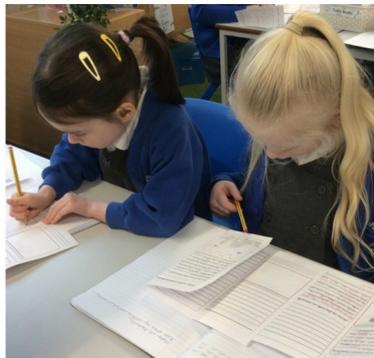
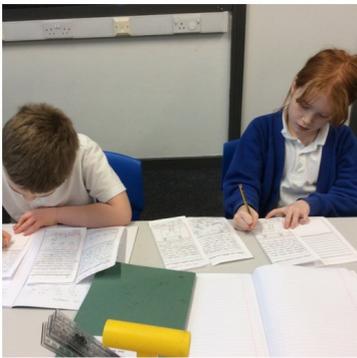
## Pop Art with Year 1

This half-term in art we have been looking at the work of Roy Lichtenstein, a pop art artist. Each week we have been practising different skills to help us to make our own pop art painting such as; mixing paint, using the Ben Day dot technique and using different materials to make our paintings textured. This week we have begun to make our own final pop art pieces that we will stick into our sketchbooks next week.



## Information Leaflets in Year 2

This week in English, we have been busy creating our own informative leaflets all about castles. We started by organising our facts under clear subheadings, which helped to group our ideas and make the information easy to read. We then edited our work to improve our spelling and punctuation before writing up our final booklets neatly.

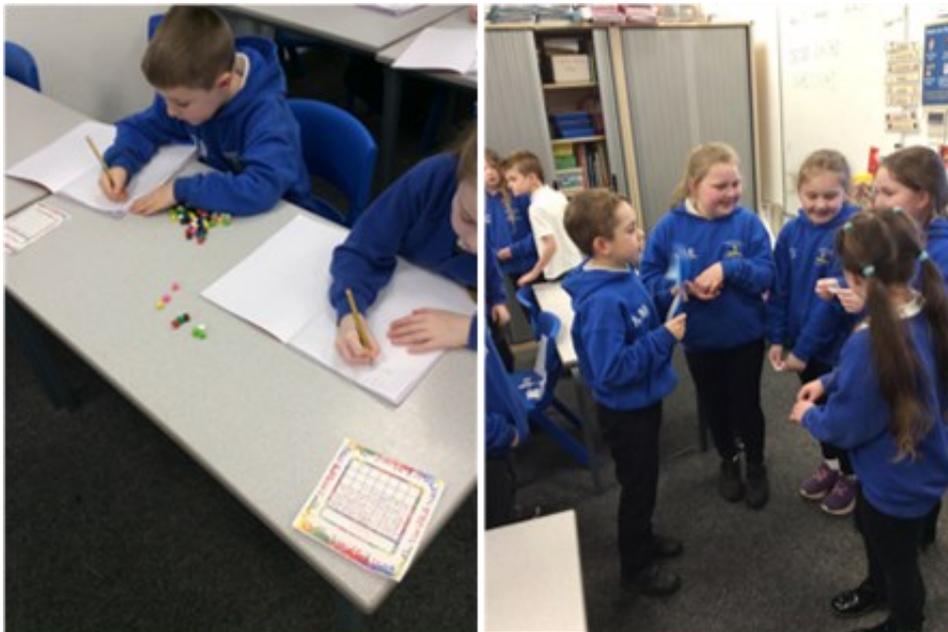


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### A Busy Week in Year 3.

This week in Year 3, we have been perfecting our knowledge of multiplying and dividing by three. The class have used manipulatives to help them group and share different amounts into equal groups. We have also started our new PE topic, gymnastics. The class practiced different balancing techniques.



## Fractions with Year 4.

Year 4 have been getting to grips with fractions this week. They have demonstrated a deep understanding of what a fraction is by giving loads of examples of a whole and a part; they have also been able to show fractions as a certain amount of equal parts. Our strategies for remembering the roles of the numerator and denominator may be a little unusual (your Y4 child could show you how to dance like a denominator) but they have resulted in clear, confident Maths work!



## Chemical Reactions with Year 5!

This week, Year 5 carried out an exciting science experiment to explore chemical and irreversible changes. We used vinegar, bicarbonate of soda, a plastic bottle and a balloon to see what would happen when they were mixed together. When the two substances reacted, a gas was produced and the balloon began to inflate. The children observed that this was an irreversible change because we could not get the original materials back.



What happens when you  
add bicarbonate of soda to  
vinegar?



## Poetry and Tests with Year 6

Well done to all Year 6 pupils this week for completing their most recent round of mock SATs papers. The children approached these with a great attitude and an eagerness to do well. At the end of the week, we have used our English lessons to begin to analyse the poem 'If', written by Rudyard Kipling. Today we spent some time writing sentences to use in our own version of the poem; we will pen these next week ready for the poetry exhibition after the half term.



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Learning

## Key Stage 2 Poetry Exhibition

We are thrilled to invite you to our Key Stage 2 Poetry Exhibition! Whether you're a fan of a classic sonnet or you just appreciate a well-timed rhyme, we would love for you to join us for an afternoon celebrating our young wordsmiths.

The stars of the show this year are our wonderful **Year 3** pupils, whose work will be the centerpiece of the display. However, we haven't forgotten the rest of the team! **Years 4, 5, and 6** have also been working hard to create some truly exciting contributions that you won't want to miss.

### The Details

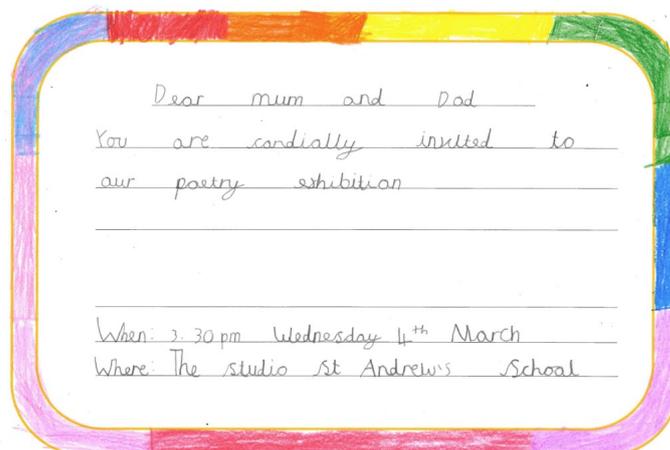
- **When:** Wednesday, 4th March
- **Time:** 3:15 PM – 4:15 PM
- **Where:** The School Studio

### What's in Store?

- **The Main Event:** A gallery of original poems from across the key stage.
- **Family Fun:** Interactive activities for all the family, where you can try your hand at some creative writing, take part in our scavenger hunt or guess the teacher's favourite poem.
- **Refreshments:** Plenty of tea, coffee, and biscuits to keep the inspiration flowing.

We know your time is precious, but we would truly love to see you there to celebrate the children's creativity and hard work.

We look forward to seeing you there—it's going to be epic!



Others



Learning

## Tesco Stronger Starts Programme

Thank you so much to everyone who has helped support the school by voting for us with their blue tokens at Tesco. It is lovely to see pictures of our children voting for us while out shopping! We will be using any funding that we receive from this initiative to provide more new equipment for the children to use during OPAL play.

Please see the poster below for more details about the scheme and how to vote.

We have some exciting new equipment coming as a result of previous fundraising. We hope that this will be available for the children to use in the coming weeks.





### Vote for Our School in the Tesco Stronger Starts Programme!

1. Shop at Tesco



Make a purchase of any value at a participating store.
2. Get a blue token



You will receive one token per transaction at the checkout.
3. Cast your vote



Place your token in our project's designated slot before you leave.

When & Where to Vote



**Voting is open from mid-January to the end of March 2026.**



**You can vote at these 3 Tesco stores:**

Kingston Park  
(NE3 2FP)

Newcastle West Road  
(NE15 6PQ)

Chapel Park  
(NE5 1DR)

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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](http://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# YOUTUBE

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows YouTube. The Google-owned site lets anyone upload videos to be shared around the world, and as a result, it's an incredible resource with instant free access to material covering every conceivable topic. But with over 500 hours of video uploaded every minute, not all of it will be appropriate for young eyes.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate content. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

### CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but it can also lead to binge-watching and screen addiction – especially if 'auto-play' is active. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

### RADICALISATION

YouTube's algorithm tends to promote content that's getting the most traffic – a lot of which can be quite extreme. This can be fine for harmless topics, but YouTube isn't regulated like television, and that means that conspiracy theories, fake news and hateful ideologies can occasionally surface to warp impressionable minds all too easily. Remember – the more they watch, the more they'll be recommended.

### CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as message other users directly. Connecting with strangers online can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, cyberbullying and – in the worst cases – online predators. If a child is creating content themselves, this can increase the likelihood of them becoming a target.

### TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends and challenges, some of which are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may cause physical or emotional harm to children who watch or copy them. The painful 'salt and ice challenge' – where people use these two ingredients to burn their skin – is just one of many examples.

### SNEAKY SCAMMERS

The comments sections of popular content creators regularly have scammers posing as that influencer, attempting to lure users into clicking on misleading links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and often offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users aren't who they claim to be.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

For older children, Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate material (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence, and sexual content) to underage viewers. To prevent children from changing across age-inappropriate content on the platform, we would recommend enabling Restricted Mode on each device that they use to access YouTube. It's worth also turning the auto-play feature off, to prevent YouTube's algorithm automatically recommending something inappropriate.



### TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows parents and carers to monitor what their child is watching, uploading, and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches, and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives a parent or carer oversight of how their child uses sites like YouTube and helps to ensure that they are only accessing appropriate content.

### MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them under 18. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course. You may want to keep an eye on how children interact with this material – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand what they're interested in. Remember that creators often share content outside of YouTube, so don't ignore their web presence elsewhere!

### CONSIDER YOUTUBE KIDS

It's possible to sidestep most inappropriate content completely via Google's own YouTube Kids app for Android handsets and iPhone. This lets you filter content by "preschool" (4 and under), "younger" (ages 5 to 8) and "older" (ages 9 to 12). This isn't a perfect substitute for personal supervision, as the app's filtering system is automated, and Google can't manually review all videos.

### CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that a child is subscribed to can be hidden. If the child is only uploading videos set as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.

### LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases. For example, users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch. If you'd like to avoid children purchasing content online, limit their access to online payment methods. Many parents have discovered the hard way that a child happily consuming a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!

### Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



## Dates for your Diary - Spring Term



w/c Monday 9th February 2026	Children's Mental Health Week
Monday 9th February 2026	Pele Trust 'Let's Dance' Festival
Tuesday 10th February 2026	Parents Evening
Wednesday 11th February 2026	Year 6 at Ponteland High School for Careers Event
Wednesday 11th February 2026	Year 3 Walk around Heddon
Thursday 12th February 2026	Parents Evening
Friday 13th February 2026	Wake Up Shake Up on yard at 8.45am (parents feel free to come and join in as well!)
<b>w/c Monday 16th February 2026</b>	<b>HALF TERM HOLIDAYS</b>
<b>Monday 23rd February 2026</b>	<b>TRAINING DAY</b>
Wednesday 25th February 2026	School Photographs (Individual photos)
Friday 13th March 2026	Early Years and Key Stage 1 Mothers Day Service at St. Andrew's Church - 9.30am
Friday 13th March 2026	Key Stage 2 Mothers Day Service at St. Andrew's Church - 10.20am
Friday 13th March 2026	Choir at Ryton Festival (pm)
Friday 2nd April 2026	Key Stage 2 Easter Service at St. Andrew's Church - 9.30am

## Dates for your Diary - Summer Term



<b>Friday 3rd April 2026</b>	<b>GOOD FRIDAY - SCHOOL CLOSED</b>
<b>w/c Monday 5th April 2026</b>	<b>EASTER HOLIDAYS</b>
<b>Monday 4th May 2026</b>	<b>MAY DAY BANK HOLIDAY - SCHOOL CLOSED</b>
w/c Monday 11th May 2026	Key Stage 2 SATS Week
<b>w/c Monday 25th May 2026</b>	<b>HALF TERM HOLIDAYS</b>
w/c Monday 1st June 2026	Made in the North East Week
Wednesday 10th June 2026	School Photographs (Class photos)
Tuesday 16th June 2026	Year 6 Diocesan Leavers Service at St. Nicholas' Cathedral
Wednesday 24th June 2026 - Sunday 28th June 2026	Year 6 Trip to France
Friday 3rd July 2026	School Summer Fair