

5th June 2026

Dear Parents / Carers,

It is lovely to welcome all the children back for the final half term of the school year.

What a week it has been in school! It has been our 'Made in the North East week' and the children have been learning about different aspects of life and the history of the North East. All the children have had the opportunity to participate in a visit this week related to what they have been learning about.

We have been to places as diverse as local farms with Nursery and Reception, the bridges across the Tyne with Year 1 to exploring our industrial heritage with Years 2, 5 and 6 exploring inventors at the Discovery Museum, mining at Woodhorn and shipbuilding at the Sunderland Maritime Museum respectively. Year 3 and 4 explored the history of our region visiting Prudhoe Castle and the waggon ways and George Stephenson's Cottage.

While out and about, all the children were amazing ambassadors for our school drawing many positive comments from the guides and volunteers at the venues.

The children were all fantastic when out and about and were a real credit to the school.

I would also like to extend thanks to all the parent helpers who gave up their time this week to volunteer and accompany the children on their visits. Your help is very much appreciated. Special thanks to Mr. Henderson who gave up his time (and garden) to talk to the children in Year 4 and show them his steam locomotives.

Thank you all for your contributions towards the costs of the visits which enabled them to take place and so enriched the children's learning and experiences.

Good luck to Year 1 and Year 4 who, next week, will complete the Phonic Screening Check and Multiplication Tables Check respectively. You will be amazing!

Well done to Year 2 for the best attendance this week: 98.1%.

Well done to Year 6 for the best attendance for this year: 97.4%.

Thank you very much for all of your support this half term and for the term ahead.

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.

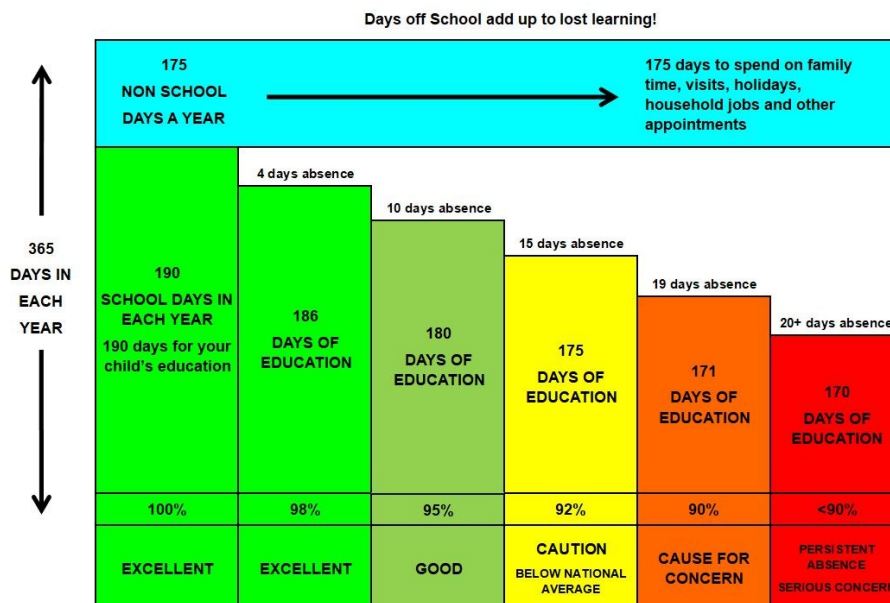


We continue to focus on attendance and punctuality so please remember that our School starts at 8.55am (9am for Nursery) and anyone arriving after this time will be marked as late.

Attendance for this week is summarised below:

Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year	Class	Attendance this week	Attendance this year
Nursery (Hedgehogs)	94.3%	96%	Year 3 (Gibside)	96%	96.8%
Reception (Owls)	93.4%	95.3%	Year 4 (Lindisfarne)	97.3%	96.1%
Year 1 (Wallington)	87.2%	94.8%	Year 5 (Bamburgh)	94.5%	96.4%
Year 2 (Cragside)	98.1%	97.3%	Year 6 (Dunstanburgh)	95.7%	97.4%

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

As part of 'Made in the North East week', the Hedgehogs have been learning all about farming. We have been developing our cutting skills, practising our subitising skills and painting our own cows.

Our older children also had a fantastic time at Whitehouse Farm.



PIC • COLLAGE



## At the Farm with Reception.

Reception have had a fabulous week learning all about farming as part of 'Made in the North East Week', we particularly all really enjoyed going to Red Hemmels Farm and learning all about how to be a farmer and how to look after the countryside.

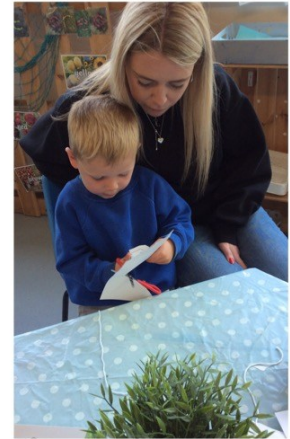


Life



Learning

The children in Early Years had a wonderful afternoon with their grown ups at our Early Years Open Afternoon, to explore lots of Farm themed activities. Thank you to everyone who attended, we greatly appreciate your continued support.



PIC·COLLAGE

Others



Learning

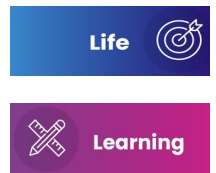
## At the Quayside with Year 1

In Year 1 for Made in the North East week we have been looking at the seven bridges along the Quayside in Newcastle. We have spent time naming the bridges, along with drawing what we would want our own bridge to look like. On Wednesday we went on a trip to see all of the bridges along the Quayside and we were lucky enough to see the millennium bridge move! Everyone had a super time at being photographers and got some excellent pictures of all the bridges. Well done Year 1!



## Influential Inventors with Year 2.

Year 2 enjoyed a fantastic day at the Discovery Museum! During the morning, they took part in a guided tour, learning about some of the North East's most influential inventors and exploring the inventions that made them famous. In the afternoon, they attended a workshop focused on the Rainhill Trials and the Rocket locomotive, designed by George and Robert Stephenson. To finish the day, the children carried out their own Discovery Trials, designing and building miniature locomotives before racing them to find out which could travel the furthest.



### At Prudhoe Castle with Year 3.

This week in Year 3, we have been celebrating Made in the North East week by covering our topic 'Medieval castles'. We have been writing castle stories, leaning about the inside and outside of castles, and designing and making our own medieval tiles. The highlight of our week was our trip to Prudhoe Castle. We were lucky enough to have exclusive access to the castle. We did a tour, followed by a scavenger hunt and then wrote some acrostic poems about the castle.



## An Unforgettable Adventure in Year 4

What an unforgettable adventure Year 4 had during our "Made in the North East" week! Diving headfirst into our transport theme, we began by exploring how people move across our region. We used Google Maps to plan intricate North East journeys, put our maths skills to the test by converting units of time and mapped out routes across the Tyne and Wear Metro to convert units of measure. We also stepped back in time to learn about the legendary local railway pioneer: George Stephenson. Creativity and financial literacy collided when we put our money and budgeting skills to work at "Mrs. March's craft shop" to buy materials for a model rocket competition. The challenge reached a whole new level thanks to some truly outrageous pricing - including a steep £1.50 fee just to rent a pair of scissors!

While a last-minute trip cancellation could have dampened our spirits, it turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Instead, we headed out for a spectacular day adventuring to Wylam. We stood in awe at George Stephenson's birthplace, enjoyed a picnic in the park, marvelled at the historic old rail bridge and explored the mini museum at the Falcon Centre. The long walk back to school was a true resilience builder but our frequent "sweetie stops" kept everyone smiling and helped us build lifelong memories together. Back in school, we channelled our inner actors to perform scenes from *The Railway Children*. Finally, we wrapped up our incredible week by blending art and history, creating stunning single-point perspective pictures of the iconic Wylam Waggonway. It was a week packed with grit, creativity and North East pride!



## At Woohorn Colliery with Year 5.

Year 5 had a wonderful time stepping back in time during our recent visit to Woodhorn Colliery. The children acted as real history detectives, examining authentic mining artefacts alongside original photographs and logbooks from the era. By comparing these items with modern historical texts, they learned how primary and secondary sources combine to tell a complete story.



Life



Learning

## A Nautical Time with Year 6.

Year 6 took a trip to Sunderland Maritime Museum, as part of their Made in the North East activities. We listened to Ian and Alan, two experts in local Maritime history, as they explained the North East's vital role in the country's history of ship building. We also found out about a local man, Jack Crawford, and his bravery in the famous Battle of Camperdown. The children listened fantastically, before enjoying some hands on activities in the afternoon, including rope making, a throwing competition and hammering.



## Tesco Stronger Starts Competition

We are delighted to share that our school came second in the Tesco Stronger Starts competition! This means we will receive an amazing £1,000 to spend on OPAL Play and Forest School resources. A huge thank you to everyone who supported us by shopping at Tesco and collecting blue tokens for our school. We really appreciate every vote and couldn't have achieved this without your support. We'll let you know soon what we'll be purchasing with the funding, and we're looking forward to providing even more exciting opportunities for our children to enjoy.

In the meantime we are still looking for further OPAL play donations:



**West Northumberland  
Family Hubs**  
June - July 2026




Contact

Prudhoe Family Hub  
Broomhouse Lane  
Prudhoe  
NE425FT  
**01661 839350**

**What's on at Prudhoe Family Hub**

**FREE**

These are some of our groups, pop in and see us!

<p><b>Mondays</b></p> <p><b>Brilliant Babies*</b> (0-6 months) 10-11am for 6 weeks at Prudhoe Family Hub Starting 1<sup>st</sup> June</p> <p><b>Stay and Play</b> (0-2 years) 1-2pm Weekly at Ponteland Medical Group Starting 1<sup>st</sup> June</p> <p>  Find us on Facebook &amp; Instagram @WestFamilyHubs</p>	<p><b>Tuesdays</b></p> <p><b>Stay and Play</b> (0-18 months) 10-11am Weekly at Prudhoe Family Hub Starting 2<sup>nd</sup> June</p> <p><b>Calm Stay and Play</b> 1-2pm Weekly at Prudhoe Family Hub starting 2<sup>nd</sup> June</p> <p><b>SEND Family Chill Out</b> 3.30-4.30pm Weekly at Prudhoe Family Hub Starting 2<sup>nd</sup> June</p>	<p><b>Wednesdays</b></p> <p><b>Stay and Play</b> (0-5 years) 10-11.30am Weekly at Albemarle Barracks (for military families) Starting 3<sup>rd</sup> June</p> <p><b>Empowering Parent Carer Programme*</b> 9.30-11am for 6 weeks at Prudhoe Family Hub Starting 10<sup>th</sup> June</p> 	<p><b>Thursdays</b></p> <p><b>Stay and Play</b> (0-5 years) 10-11am Weekly at Prudhoe Family Hub Starting 4<sup>th</sup> June</p> 	<p><b>Fridays</b></p> <p><b>Early Communicators*</b> (15-36 months) 10.30-11.30am for 6 weeks at Prudhoe Family Hub Starting 5<sup>th</sup> June</p> <p><b>Stay and Play Outdoors-Riverside Walk</b> (0-5 years) 1-2.15pm Weekly Meet outside Prudhoe Riverside Cafe (NE42 6NP) Starting 5<sup>th</sup> June</p> <p><i>New group!</i></p>
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**\*Get in touch for more information**

Please get in touch for more information about our groups, sessions & digital offer



Sign up for a group or session



Online Notice Board



**Parent Support & Skills** *Workshops and discussions helping parents and carers strengthen relationships and support their children's wellbeing.*

- Dad Pad** The essential guide for new dads developed with the NHS
- Dad Talk** Online workshop for dads, during pregnancy and beyond
- Healthy Relationships** Support to reduce conflict and improve everyone's lives.
- Togetherness** Free digital programme providing tools to support parents/carers & young people at each developmental stage [togetherness.co.uk](http://togetherness.co.uk) access code - HADRIAN
- Sleep Workshop** Support & guidance available from trained sleep awareness practitioners

**Additional Needs &/or Disabilities** *Supportive sessions for children and young people with additional needs, and their families, to connect, relax, and share experiences.*

- SEND Safe Space** A welcoming, safe space where you can make the most of our Family Hub facilities.
- Empowering Parents & Carers Programme** Supportive wellbeing group for parents/carers of children with additional needs and/or disabilities
- SEND Family Chill Out** Regular relaxed after school sessions
- Calm Stay & Play** Quieter sessions, with no booking required

**Early Learning & Play** *Fun and engaging sessions helping you support your children's learning and development through everyday activities.*

- Brilliant Babies** Specially designed supportive groups for families with young babies
- Terrific Toddlers** Meet other families with toddlers at these social sessions with topical themes
- Ready Steady School** Encourage your little one's independent skills with these fun, friendly sessions
- Early communicators** For children between 15-36 months who are experiencing some difficulties with their understanding and/or use of language
- Stay & Play** Regular fun sessions, with no booking required

**Baby Support & Early Parenting** *Friendly sessions for new and expectant parents to connect, learn, and explore their baby's growth and development together.*

- Building a Brain** A bitesize online workshop exploring brain development
- Bumps to Babies** Develop a healthy lifestyle for you and your baby, support for expectant mums and dads.
- Feeding Friends** NHS partner support with breastfeeding and more
- Weaning Workshop** A guide to starting solid foods with your little one
- Toilet Training Workshop** Practical advice for parents and carers beginning the toilet training journey
- Wellbeing Service** Tailored support for Mums or Dads living in Northumberland who are expecting a baby or have a child under 2 years of age.

'Let all that you do be done with love'

1 Corinthians 16:14

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).

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI VIRTUAL FRIENDS

Artificial intelligence has seen significant development over the recent months, with companies releasing new AI-based software or adding an AI element to existing apps (such as Snapchat). One form of AI that has become especially popular has been the 'AI friend' or chatbot. There are now numerous 'virtual friend' apps available, with other successful platforms likely to adopt it soon.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### CONTENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

AI chatbots may not always recognise when content is age inappropriate or harmful and should be filtered out. As a result, there's a possibility that children could be exposed to offensive language or explicit material while conversing with their virtual friend. The companies producing such AI solutions are also unlikely to take responsibility for any content that their algorithms generate.

### REDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

An excessive reliance on chatbots for social interaction could potentially cause a child to begin reducing the amount of face-to-face communication they have, leading to social isolation. If young people become dependent on chatbots to provide companionship, it could possibly hinder the development of their real-life social skills.

### LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Chatbot software isn't always sophisticated enough to pick up on subtle emotional cues or recognise signs of distress in children, as most humans would. It might therefore fail to respond appropriately. AI misinterpreting what it's being told or replying insensitively to a young user who's already struggling could potentially impact a child's emotional wellbeing or exacerbate any existing emotional issues.

### UNINTENTIONAL BIAS

AI companions are only as reliable as the information they've been programmed with. The algorithms they use, therefore, may unintentionally promote bias, stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour. As many chatbots originate from the USA or UK, for instance, they can display a distinctly western-centric worldview. This could lead to children developing skewed attitudes and behaviours if they interact with the AI consistently.

### COGNITIVE LIMITATIONS

Although many are now undeniably advanced, AI-powered chatbots still have limitations in terms of understanding complex concepts, context and nuance. Depending heavily on chatbots to help with learning or solving problems may stunt the development of a child's own powers of critical thinking, their creativity and their ability to engage in open-ended discussions with other people.

### PRIVACY CONCERNS

Chatbots typically collect data about users, including personal information and conversations. This is ostensibly to improve their performance as they gradually learn about our behaviour – but many experts warn that there may be significant risks associated with how this information is stored and used (for instance, the possibility of potential breaches or misuse by third parties).

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CHAT ABOUT CHATBOTS

If a child is already expressing an interest in AI apps, then a relaxed, natural chat should help you to discover which ones they're aware of and how they're using them (or are planning to). Discuss these options with children and perhaps do your own research to ensure that you think they're suitable. Once you're totally happy, you could sit and explore the range of AI chatbots together.

### CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If a child is keen to engage with AI chatbots, encourage them to do so in a safe environment: ideally in a shared space, so you can easily keep an eye and ear on their progress. Set up appropriate content filtering measures in advance – and gently remind them that you'll be close by and ready to help with any questions or concerns that may arise.

### FIND A BALANCE

Work alongside children to establish the right balance in terms of how they might use AI-powered chatbots – and when it's appropriate. It's important to make sure that children still get plenty of opportunities to learn to solve problems for themselves, as well as building their interpersonal skills through face-to-face conversations with friends, family members and teachers.

### TAKE CONTROL

As with any form of app or game, when it comes to AI chatbots we'd strongly recommend that you consider employing parental controls (either on the device being used or within the software itself) to manage which apps children can download and interact with. This is particularly important for younger children, who may be more at risk of being upset or frightened by inappropriate content.

### RECOGNISE THE RISKS

It's unlikely that most children will have even considered the potential risks attached to having a virtual companion. So it's probably wise to explain some of the possible hazards and challenges of AI chatbots to them, emphasising that AI isn't a real person (however much it might sound like one) and may occasionally tell them something inaccurate or skewed by bias.

### Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.



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# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## BUILDING SCHOOL-READY LANGUAGE SKILLS

Oral language is fundamental to children's learning, literacy, and social and emotional development, with long-term impacts. As language develops rapidly between the ages of three and six, early, evidence-based support is essential. This guide offers practical ways to help the children in your care become confident communicators, including through proven approaches such as the DfE-funded NELI programmes available to settings in England.

### 1 BUILD ORAL LANGUAGE

Support children to use language, not just hear it. Give them the time to talk, respond, ask questions, and share their ideas. Everyday conversations, shared activities, and reading together help children practise both speaking and listening. At nursery or school, programmes such as NELI can help build their vocabulary, storytelling, attention, and listening skills, helping children grow in confidence as communicators.

### 2 SUPPORT LISTENING SKILLS

Help children to listen and follow simple instructions during everyday routines. Break instructions down into short, manageable steps and check their understanding. For example, say, "Please put your coat on," rather than giving them several instructions at once. Strong listening skills support learning, attention, and participation at school.

### 3 GROW THEIR VOCABULARY

Talk with children about the world around them, naming objects, actions, and feelings. Use a wide range of words during everyday activities such as shopping, cooking, and playing. Repeating and explaining new words help children understand and use vocabulary more confidently, supporting their comprehension and communication.

### 4 SHARE STORIES TOGETHER

Read storybooks together regularly and talk about characters, events, and illustrations. Ask simple questions such as "What's happening here?" and validate children's responses with positive feedback. Acting out stories together, asking open questions, and giving children the chance to be the storyteller can all support their narrative skills and confidence.

### 5 NAME DIFFERENT FEELINGS

Help children learn to express themselves by talking about different feelings and naming them clearly, such as happy, sad, or angry. Visuals and role play can support their understanding of this. Being able to express their feelings verbally helps children build positive relationships with adults and peers, reduces frustration, and supports their social development as they prepare for school.

### 6 WORK WITH SETTINGS

Strong communication between home and the nursery, school, or early years setting can help children feel more confident and supported. Parents can visit the setting with their child before they start, helping them become familiar with the environment and key adults. Educators can share relevant information with families and colleagues, so each child's needs are understood. Newsletters can also help families continue language learning at home.

### 7 SPOT LANGUAGE NEEDS

Children develop their language and communication skills at different rates, so early conversations between home and settings are important. If parents have concerns, they should speak to their child's nursery, school, or early years setting. Educators can use tools such as LanguageScreen, included in the NELI programmes, to build a profile of a child's speaking and listening skills and help identify suitable support.

### 8 EVIDENCE-BASED SUPPORT

Prioritise language and literacy approaches that are underpinned by robust research evidence. Evidence-based programmes help ensure children receive support that is more likely to make a meaningful difference. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) provides guidance on the strength of evidence behind different strategies, supporting informed decision-making and effective use of school time and resources.

### 9 MEET INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Settings can use evidence-based assessment tools to understand children's language skills and identify where support may be needed. These tools support SEND reforms, and strengthen whole-setting language development, helping children receive support that reflects their individual communication needs.

### 10 TAKE PART IN RESEARCH

Research trials can give schools, early years settings, and families a valuable opportunity to contribute to evidence construction and future policy. Parents may be asked to give consent, share feedback, or support activities at home, while educators help deliver and monitor approaches in practice. The EEF often has trials that settings can join, including whole-class oral language programmes designed to support children's communication development.

### Meet Our Expert

OxEd is a University of Oxford spinout company specialising in early language and literacy assessment and intervention. They are the delivery team for the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) programme in reception, funded by the Department for Education for schools in England, and for NELI Preschool, which supports nurseries to strengthen children's early language development through evidence-based practice.



See full reference list on our website

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## Dates for your Diary - Spring Term



Wednesday 10th June 2026	School Photographs (Class photos)
Tuesday 16th June 2026	Year 6 Diocesan Leavers Service at St. Nicholas' Cathedral
Friday 19th June 2026	Year 4 visit to Stephenson Railway Museum
Wednesday 24th June 2026 - Sunday 28th June 2026	Year 6 Trip to France
Wednesday 24th June 2026	Year 1 visit to RNLI at Cullercoats
Friday 26th June 2026	Archery Session for Year 5
Monday 29th June 2026	Sports Day
Thursday 2nd July 2026 and Friday 3rd July 2026	Year 6 Transition Days at Ponteland High School
Friday 3rd July 2026	School Summer Fair
Monday 6th July 2026	Year 6 Visit to St. James' Park
Thursday 9th July 2026	Music and Drama Summer Showcase at 4.30pm in School Hall
Friday 10th July 2026	Rocksteady Concert for Parents in School Hall at 10am
Monday 13th July 2026	Moving Up Morning
Monday 13th July 2026	Heddon's Got Talent Finals (Children only)

## Dates for your Diary - Summer Term



Thursday 16th July 2026	Year 6 Leavers Assembly at 2pm in School Hall
w/c Monday 20th July 2026	<b>SUMMER HOLIDAYS</b>