

Friday Flyer

Friday 19th September 2025

Headteacher Update

There are many things that make me proud to be headteacher of this school and right up there in the top three is the fact our children show such passion for the causes they believe in and are empowered to use their voices to make a difference. We have lots of pupil-led committees in school (and recruitment is currently underway for this year's cohorts), from Fundraising Committee to Diversity Council and each group really does have agency to effect change. None more so than Eco Council which is comprised of the most passionate eco warriors you could ever hope to meet. They are led by the equally passionate Mrs Wilds who has driven the school forward to achieve the Eco Flag Award again. What a difference they are making to not only our school but the wider environment.



Best wishes

Claire Johnson



Safeguarding & wellbeing

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 ENCOURAGING OPEN CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

With tricky topics and occasional clashes of opinion, it can be challenging to maintain an environment where children feel able to talk candidly and honestly. However, encouraging such conversations helps to develop trust – making it easier to unpack even sensitive subjects as children get older. Here are our top tips for promoting open conversations at home.

1 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Criticism, blaming or shaming can all prevent children from feeling emotionally safe – while showing affection, positive attention and an interest in what a child has to say builds their sense of security. These formative years are when children's opinions and values begin to take shape, so it's important to provide a non-judgmental environment in which to discuss them – especially if their opinions differ from your own.

2 CONSIDER OTHER OUTLETS

Some children may find it easier to talk while they're participating in another activity such as drawing, writing, walking or sport. If it's possible, taking part in these activities together presents you with an opportunity to communicate while doing something side by side. A child may feel less pressure that way and can be more inclined to open up of their own accord.

3 NORMALISE CHATS ABOUT FEELINGS

Incorporate mental health and emotional wellbeing into everyday conversations, using age-appropriate language and examples to help children understand their emotions. Ask questions like "How are you feeling today?", "What was the best and worst part of your day?", "If you could start today again, what would you do differently?" and "Is there anything you want to talk about?"

4 LISTEN ACTIVELY

When children express themselves, make it obvious that you're listening closely and giving them your full attention. Maintain eye contact and validate their feelings without immediately trying to solve the problem. It's not helpful to dismiss their issues as childish or "teenage angst" – or to assume that they'll simply "get over" whatever they're feeling. Children don't have your life experience; their resilience is still developing as they learn to push through difficulties and handle problems.

5 ASK OPEN QUESTIONS

Encourage children to share their thoughts by asking open questions about their feelings and experiences. Closed questions (such as "Did you enjoy school today?") are more likely to elicit a simple "yes" or "no" response. Instead, you could ask things like "Who did you spend time with at break?" or "Who did you sit with at lunchtime?"

6 RESPECT THEIR BOUNDARIES

If a child isn't ready to talk to about something yet, respect their boundaries: this reinforces that their feelings are important and worthy of consideration. Ideally, you're aiming to let them know you care without smothering them, so just make it clear that you're there for them whenever they're ready to chat. Gentle, regular check-ins can sometimes be the best form of progress.

7 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Model open, honest and healthy communication in front of children and young people. Try to demonstrate kindness when talking about others and yourself, because if children hear adults being overly harsh, critical or judgmental, or see them having unrealistic expectations of themselves, it makes them more likely to adopt and repeat this behaviour themselves as they grow.

8 HAVE REGULAR CHECK-INS

Check in with children periodically to discuss how they're feeling and what's going on in their lives. This could be a weekly or monthly conversation, where the child has an opportunity to share whatever's on their mind. For parents and carers, getting away from the house and other distractions might be productive here: you could consider regular trips to a coffee shop or a café, or just a weekly walk.

9 PROVIDE RESOURCES

It's often beneficial to let children know about other support that's available to them if they're struggling to talk to you specifically. Encourage them to talk to school counsellors, trusted adults or even a therapist, if necessary – while normalising this route and dispelling the harmful stigma around asking for help. Older children could engage with resources such as Kooth or YoungMinds.

10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

It's beneficial to praise children for expressing their feelings honestly – emphasising how important it is to talk about their emotions and how proud you are of them for doing so. This can be especially pivotal for boys, who often experience more of a stigma around talking frankly about their feelings and their mental health – a barrier that can be overcome, with enough love and support.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College



Attendance for this week is summarised below

Nursery (Acorn)	93.5%	Year 3 (Pine)	99.0%
Reception (Chestnut)	100%	Year 4 (Alder)	95.2%
Reception (Pinecone)	98.7%	Year 4 (Yew)	99.0%
Year 1 (Holly)	97.7%	Year 5 (Oak)	97.4%
Year 1 (Ash)	99.3%	Year 5 (Beech)	96.3%
Year 2 (Sycamore)	100%	Year 6 (Elm)	98.4%
Year 2 (Willow)	97.3%	Year 6 (Birch)	92.1%
Year 3 (Maple)	88.3%	Whole school Cumulative from Sept	97.4%

98% - 100%	Excellent Attendance
95% - 97.9%	Good Attendance
92% - 94.9	Caution (below national)
90% - 91.9%	Cause for concern
Below 89.9%	Persistent Absence - Serious Concern

Absence Procedures

If your child is ill, please keep them at home until they are well enough to return to school. **Please notify us by phone call or email before 9.15am** if your child is to be absent, and continue to inform us on a daily basis if they continue to be ill.

We have a continual focus on attendance and punctuality and this is of the utmost importance in your child's education. Please remember that our school gate closes at 8.55am as this is when our lessons begin. Anyone arriving after this time is classed as late and will miss valuable learning opportunities which take place immediately after registration, such as phonics.

What does the Government say about school attendance?

At KS2, pupils who attended school nearly every day in Year 6 (with an attendance rate of 95-100%) were 1.3 times more likely to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to pupils who only attended 90-95% of the time. **This means missing just 10 days of year 6 reduced the likelihood of reaching the expected standard by around 25%.** Pupils who attended nearly every day were 1.8 times more likely to achieve the standard than persistently absent pupils who only attend 85-90% of the time (relating to 4 -6 weeks more time in school).
DfE report: [Link between attendance and attainment, March 2025](#)

This week in Nursery

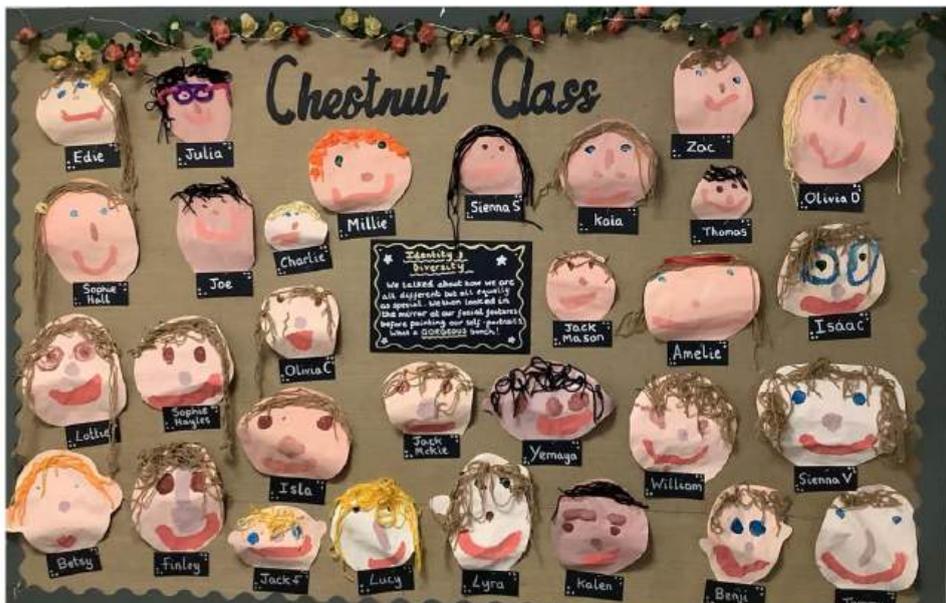
This week in nursery we have enjoyed exploring one of our Spine Books, Handa's Surprise. After listening to the story using the toys and book, we used our senses to explore the 7 different fruits Handa's put in her basket, counting them as we went. The fruits we tried were; banana, orange, mango, passion fruit, avocado, pineapple and guava juice. What a treat for our taste buds!



PIC • COLLAGE

This week in Reception

We have been exploring our global theme of Identity and Diversity this week. We have shared our core texts, 'It's ok to be different' and 'This is me' and looked at how we are all different but all very special and unique. Over the last few weeks we have all looked closely at our facial features in the mirror and painted our self-portraits, which are now proudly on display in our classes - what a gorgeous bunch!



PIC•COLLAGE

This week in Year 1

Year 1 have had another fantastic learning week in school! We have been practising our oracy skills in Literacy by writing and performing the story of Beegu, and comparing amounts in Maths and showing our understanding of 'greater than, less than and equal to'. Across our Rainbow Challenges we have seen lots of fantastic independent learning in action: cutting skills in DT creating and designing our own octopus, thinking about what we would take to space to visit Beegu and writing our packing lists, and discussing our families and what makes them special. We have finished our week off with a lovely trip to the woods to identify trees from their leaves. Well done Year 1!



Miss Storey and Mrs Kenyon

This week in Year 2

This week in Year 2 we have been exploring pitch in music. We discovered how the larger chimes of the xylophones made a much deeper sound than the smaller chimes. Also, as scientists, we began learning about how animals change. This week, we learned how an animal's offspring differs from its adult versions. We have also been expanding our descriptive skills by describing the Great Fire of London in our own dramatic retells.



Mrs Nowosielska and Mr Massey

This week in Year 3

We've had a fantastic week in Year 3 as we continued exploring our Stone Age topic. The children enjoyed a visit to the outdoor timeline, where they investigated what life might have been like for people during the Stone Age. In Art, they created their own cave-style drawings by tracing around their hands, and in English they wrote detailed setting descriptions inspired by our class story Stone Age Boy. The children impressed us with their imaginative ideas and brilliant vocabulary – well done, Year 3!

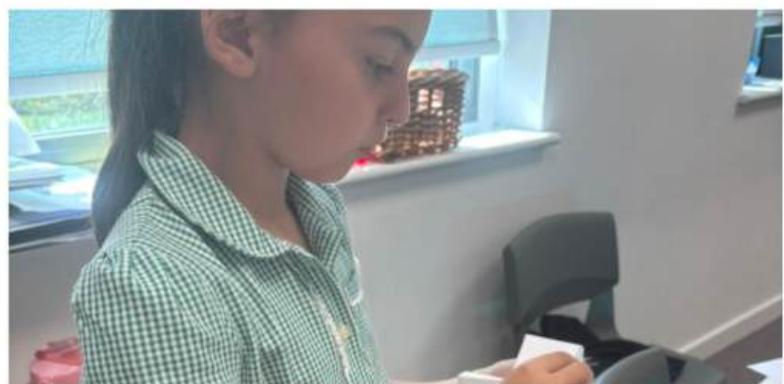


Miss Mears and Mr Shaw

This week in Year 4

Our young designers have been busy honing their cutting, sticking, and folding skills in preparation for our brand-new Design and Technology project - creating Viking longships! Over the next few lessons, we will be exploring the fascinating features and clever structures of these remarkable ships, discovering how they were used for battle, trade, and travel.

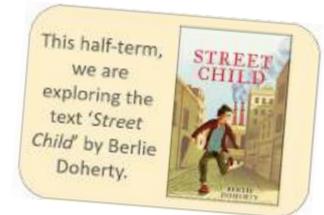
The children have worked hard transforming simple 2D nets into 3D shapes this week, building the skills they need to tackle more complex designs. Soon, they will apply these techniques to construct their very own magnificent Viking longboats. We are incredibly excited to see their creative ideas come to life!



This week in Year 5

Easy PEasy

Alongside our focus on invasion games, this half term we are completing a School Games Multiskills festival, delivered through PE lessons. All the children have been set different challenges based around agility, balance, coordination and accuracy.



All Northumberland schools that are School Games accredited run this festival, with scores for each event submitted. The winning classes are invited to compete at a county final in the new year.

This week we familiarised ourselves with the different activities and will start to build up our confidence before submitting our scores. There was certainly some wonderful athletic ability on display already!



This week in Year 6

It's been a busy week in year 6! We are off and running with our science topic for this half term; Electricity. We are investigating circuits, how exactly electricity works and also how to troubleshoot to find and fix faults in electrical circuits. The children worked carefully and maturely, as all good scientists do, to build, alter and fix circuits using a range of equipment. We have also begun a new writing topic in English. We are going to be focusing on suspense and tension to produce a spooky story about a lighthouse. This week we began looking at the features of suspense writing and how these impact on the writer to create a dark and mysterious mood.



Dates for your diary in 2025



Tue 23rd September 2025	Bee Showcase at Ponteland High School 4pm - 5pm
Tue 30th September 2025	Year 6 - Victoria Tunnels Trip - Packed lunches needed
Mon 29th Sept - Weds 1st Oct 2025	Year 6 Prospective Parent's Open Mornings
Thur 2nd October 2025	Year 6 - Prospective Parents Evening at Ponteland High School 5.30pm to 7.30pm
Tue 14th October 2025	Flu Immunisations Day
Wc 20th October 2025	Captain Chemistry
Wc 27th October 2025	October Half Term
Mon 3 November 2025	Teacher Training Day
Tue 4th November 2025	School resumes
Wed 26th November 2025	Individual Photo Day
Fri 19th December 2025	School breaks up for Christmas break - School finishes at 1.30pm
Mon 5th January 2026	School Resumes

Opal Needs You!

The children thoroughly enjoy exploring the different zones of OPAL and it has really enhanced our playtime experience. If you are having a clear out, we would love to take some of your old equipment off your hands. If you have any of the following items, please bring them to the school office after the Christmas break:

- Wellies
 - Waterproofs
 - Barbies/dolls
 - Toy trucks/cars
- Shop items: till, fruit and veg baskets etc
 - Metal pots and pans
 - Children's Gardening Tools
 - Dressing up items

Is your child struggling with sleep?



*For children and young people aged between 4-25 years

- Understanding sleep cycles
- Causes of sleep issues
- The importance of sleep
- What you can do to support your child to sleep better

Virtual Sleep Workshop

Delivered **virtually** over one session.

BOOK NOW 

Thursday 11th September 12:30-2:30pm

Wednesday 15th October 10:30-12:30pm

Visit our website

[http://](http://nland.cc/familyhubs)



nland.cc/familyhubs



Can you help our PTA?

PONTELAND PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA



Ways you can help...

EMPLOYER

Are you employed by one of the biggest employers in the North East who offer Grant Match Fundraising? Could they help you help your School? Or will they allow you paid time away from work to help with fundraising events? Chat to your HR department today to see if there's a way to help!



ACCENTURE
PROCTOR & GAMBLE
NISSAN
SAGE
GREGGS
BARBOUR
DELOITTE
VIRGIN MONEY
BELLWAY
NORTHERN POWERGRID
VERTU
...AND MANY MORE



TIME

Do you have time available to help plan, organise, set up, clean up and be a volunteer at our many fundraising events throughout the year? We appreciate any available time, even if just for one event. Please contact us on pontelandpta@gmail.com

MONEY

We understand that time is not something everyone has to offer and we are often asked about the ability to make regular or one off cash donations to the PTA as an alternative.

Should you wish to do so please reference 'Donation' along with your name to the Ponteland Primary PTA account:

Acc no: 20669059

S.C: 20-59-61



SKILLS

Do you have a skillset that could help the School PTA? Marketing, PR, Graphic design, finance, events planning, social media and so many more skills are valuable to us. This may be offered as your time or as feedback to what you see and experience from the PTA.

"WHEN PARENTS ARE ENGAGED AND TAKE PART IN SCHOOL AFFAIRS, IT CREATES A POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS"

Pontelandpta@gmail.com



Ponteland Primary School is committed to keeping all children safe. Our staff regularly participate in safeguarding training and are fully aware of how to keep our pupils safe and what signs to look out for. Our pupils know they can share any concerns and we have robust policies and procedures in place which underpin safeguarding. It is our paramount priority to keep all children healthy and safe.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads are:



Mrs Johnson (Head Teacher)
Lead DSL



Mrs Wright (Family & Behaviour
Support Adviser) Deputy DSL



Miss Dinning (Deputy Head Teacher)
Deputy DSL

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Uber Eats



PRE-LOVED SCHOOL UNIFORM



Do you have school uniform in good condition that your child no longer wears but could be worn by someone else in the school community?

Please donate your pre-loved, wearable uniform via the donation basket in reception.

Looking for uniform?

All items washed and ready to wear. Please contact pontprimaryuniform@gmail.com to let us know what you're looking for, including sizes!

Voluntary contributions to the PTA welcomed.

Money box at reception or bank transfer:

Ponteland Primary School Parent Teacher Association

20-59-61

20669059



