

Friday Flyer

Friday 9th May 2025

Headteacher Update

Last week I managed to write about the buzz among the children about the Randomiser Club without actually sharing any information about it! For those of you hanging on a cliff, I thought I'd share an update as we had the first two sessions this week and they were a resounding success! The Randomiser Club is named simply because the games the children play are chosen at random - Lucy, Kaiya and Izzy take suggestions from the children and then randomly choose which game they'll play from Duck Duck Goose to tag to What's the Time Mr Wolf and many more. The Year 6 girls have done a fantastic job of setting up and running the club and I'm tempted to offer them contracts to join the lunchtime supervision team! The girls told me:

"We like doing the club because lots of children have told us they enjoy it. It's a really happy time! The younger children have given us lots of compliments which makes us feel really good. We like to include everyone, even if they haven't signed up."

This week, of course, we have had a particular focus across school on the 80th anniversary of VE Day. In assembly at the start of the week we thought about how values such as respect, kindness, empathy and this month's value of integrity help prevent conflict and the children gave thoughtful and considered answers which gave me hope about our leaders of the future. We had a moving singing assembly yesterday when the children sang two war-time songs beautifully: It's a Long Way to Tipperary and We'll Meet Again. Through the songs they were able to explore how the soldiers and families at home may have felt. The Year 6s attended a special VE Day virtual event which gave further context to their learning around World War 2 from the autumn term.

Billy W told me:

"The thing that hit me the most was that 70 to 80 million people died in the war. If you read out the name of every person who had died, it would take you over two years to get to the end of the list. It shows how dangerous war is and how sad it is. It's so sad for their families who would have got a letter saying they died in action."

Liam added:

"Many people joined that war thinking it would be just a short term commitment, maybe two to three months, and in reality it turned out to be a 6 year war when many people unfortunately died."

Freya built on this, saying:

"War is conflict where people fight over disagreements and I think if everyone could be kind and respectful to each other and show empathy by putting themselves in someone else's shoes, the world would be a much more peaceful place."

Best wishes, Claire Johnson

PTA News

Easter Scavenger Hunt

Thank you to all of our lovely families who took part in our Easter Scavenger Hunt over the holidays! We have received fantastic feedback from both parents and children, who all agreed it was a lovely activity to enjoy together as a family. Every entrant received a sweet treat, and the winning entry was drawn last week—congratulations to Ruby in Year 1, who was delighted with her prize!

A huge thank you also goes to our wonderful PTA, and especially to Cheryl Strutt, for organising such a fantastic event for our children.



Safeguarding & wellbeing

Tips for Parents: Guiding your child to Use Social Media Safely from [Smoothwall](#)

Parents today are more concerned than ever about their children's social media habits, striving to balance the advantages of digital connection with the challenges it presents, such as cyberbullying and privacy concerns. To help your child navigate social media safely and responsibly, here are some essential tips.

Understanding your child's social media experience

Do you ever wonder what your child encounters when they scroll through their social media feeds? The online world is dynamic and ever-changing, making it important for both parents and teenagers to be well-prepared for the opportunities and challenges that come with social media use.

By actively engaging in your child's digital life, you can encourage a healthy balance in their social media habits while ensuring their online safety in an evolving digital landscape.

Guidance for Parents

The pros and cons of social media

Social media serves as both a tool for creativity, learning, and socialisation and a potential source of harm. Children may face issues such as excessive screen time, cyberbullying, inappropriate content, and online predators. Parents and teachers must stay informed about these risks.

Are they ready?

Before allowing your child to create social media accounts, assess whether they are prepared to engage responsibly. This involves understanding digital citizenship-critical thinking, ethical online behavior, and recognising potential dangers.

Encourage open conversations

Honest and judgment-free discussions are crucial. Understanding your child's motivations for using social media helps set the stage for responsible use. It's also important to discuss the consequences of misuse and set clear expectations.

Be proactive

Parents can better guide their children by familiarising themselves with popular apps, understanding their features and risks, setting usage boundaries, and using tools like Qustodio to monitor screen time and activity.

Keeping your children safe online

Social media offers valuable opportunities for connection, learning and entertainment, but it also comes with risks. Features like disappearing messages can encourage risky behavior, while location-sharing options may expose users to potential dangers. So, what can parents do to ensure their teen stays safe online?

Preparation is key. Before allowing social media use, ensure your child understands how to navigate the digital world safely. Do they know how to recognise fake accounts? Can they block and report harmful content? Are you familiar with these features yourself?

Take the initiative to download and explore the apps your child wants to use. Familiarise yourself with the privacy settings and reporting tools so you're equipped to offer guidance when needed.

Maintaining open communication is essential. Learning why your child wants to use social media can provide insights into their online behavior and help address potential risks. By fostering trust, you position yourself as a supportive resource they can turn to if they encounter problems online.

Remember, you're not in this alone! There are a range of resources available to help parents and educators support children in managing their digital lives.

FAQs

What is the right age for my child to start using social media?

There's no universal answer, as readiness depends on your child's maturity level and ability to handle online responsibilities. Many platforms have age restrictions, so be sure to check their guidelines.

Are there tools to help manage my child's social media use?

Yes! Apps like [Qustodio](#) allow parents to track screen time, block inappropriate content, and monitor online activity, providing an added layer of security.

How can I supervise my child's social media use without violating their privacy?

Using parental control tools like Qustodio can help, but it's also important to have open discussions with your child about online safety. Instead of constant surveillance, schedule regular check-ins to talk about their online experiences, address any concerns, and guide them in making responsible choices. Staying informed about the latest social media trends and security settings will also help you support your child effectively.



Attendance for this week is summarised below

Nursery (Acorn)	97.6%	Year 3 (Pine)	98.8%
Reception (Chestnut)	89.6%	Year 4 (Alder)	93.5%
Reception (Pinecone)	96.7%	Year 4 (Yew)	98.3%
Year 1 (Holly)	92.5%	Year 5 (Oak)	89.9%
Year 1 (Ash)	100%	Year 5 (Beech)	95.7%
Year 2 (Sycamore)	95.8%	Year 6 (Elm)	95.0%
Year 2 (Willow)	97.5%	Year 6 (Birch)	97.9%
Year 3 (Maple)	89.9%	Whole school Cumulative from Sept	96.0%

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](#)

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
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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

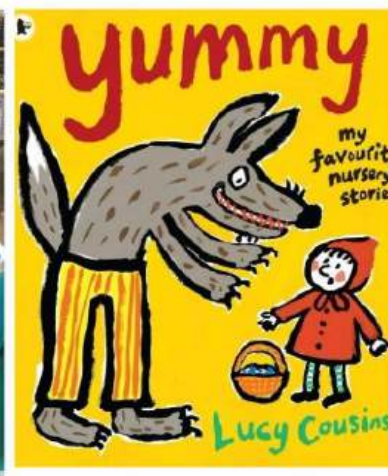
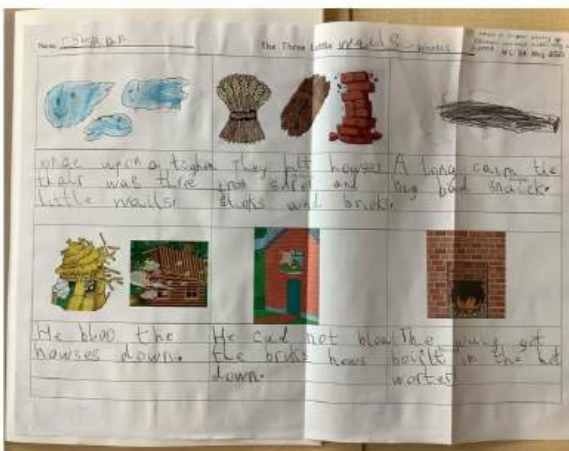
This week in Nursery

Nursery have said a happy bye-bye to the chicks after carefully looking after them for two weeks. The children have enjoyed learning about the different foods that they can eat, feeding them toast and even worms! We will miss them but we are happy they have now gone back to the farm to find their forever home .



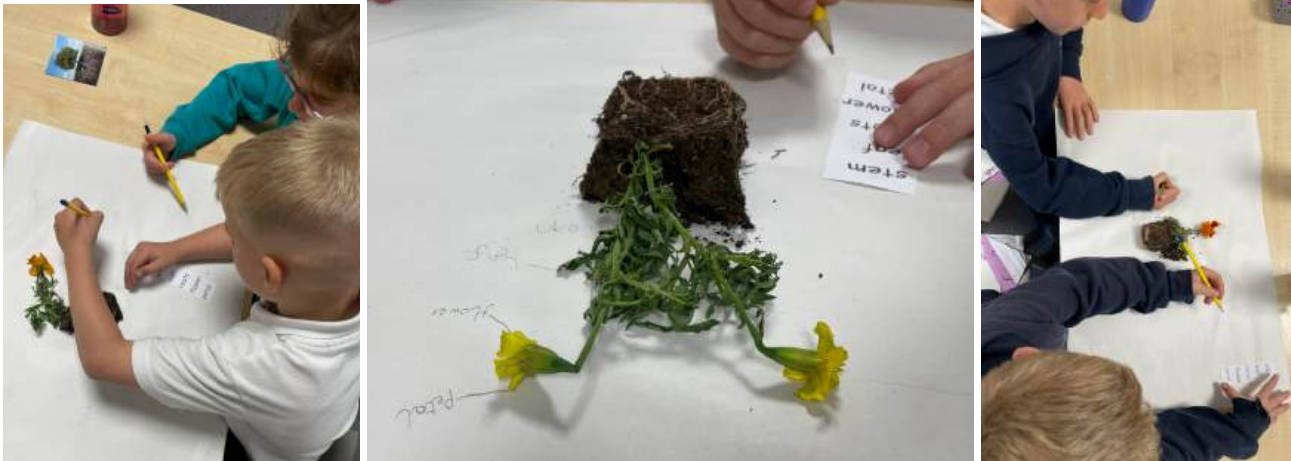
This week in Reception

This week we have started our new core text, Yummy, which is a collection of traditional tales with a 'gruesome' twist. Our first story was The Three Little Pigs and we have been super scientists, making predictions as to which would be the best material to make houses for the pigs with before testing them with the big bad hairdryer! We have also been story innovators and created some brilliant versions of the story, used puppets to act out the story and even built mini brick houses with cement!



This week in Year 1

In Science this week we have been furthering our observations with plants, and more specifically, learning about the different parts and what their purpose is. The children were able to label their own plants and discuss their purposes with their peers; creating their own diagrams and using their new vocabulary. They were able to compare their plant to their previous learning about trees and know that although they look very different, their parts serve very similar purposes.



In Maths this week, we have been looking at arrays and doubles. The children have been creating their own arrays and understand the language of columns and rows, and know that it is easier to recognise amounts within a group when it is organised. For our doubles learning, they have been creating their own doubles, finding their own double number and recognising patterns in doubles amounts.




Mrs Rogers and Miss Storey


This week in Year 2



In Science, Year 2 have been learning about seeds following last week's lesson on parts of a flower. We explored them using our oracy skills, describing what they looked and felt like. We talked about how a seed germinates and begins to grow when it is watered and the difference between seeds and bulbs.
















Explore: Look at the objects on your table.

What is **similar**?  similar

What is **different**?  different

It **feels**  

It **looks** 

 small	 big	 rough	 smooth
 round	 flat	 long	 patterned
 yellow	 brown	 green	 black

Miss Briggs and Mr Massey

This week in Year 3

This week in PSHE, Year 3 enjoyed learning all about healthy eating and nutrition. We recapped the five food groups and the seven nutrient groups, and discussed how each one helps our bodies stay strong and healthy. The children explored how good nutrition plays a key role in preventing health problems. We also learnt about obesity and tooth decay, including the types of foods and habits that can lead to these conditions. As part of our learning, we took part in a fun activity where we looked at pictures of different foods. In groups, we sorted them into three categories: foods we can eat every day, on some days, or just once in a while.

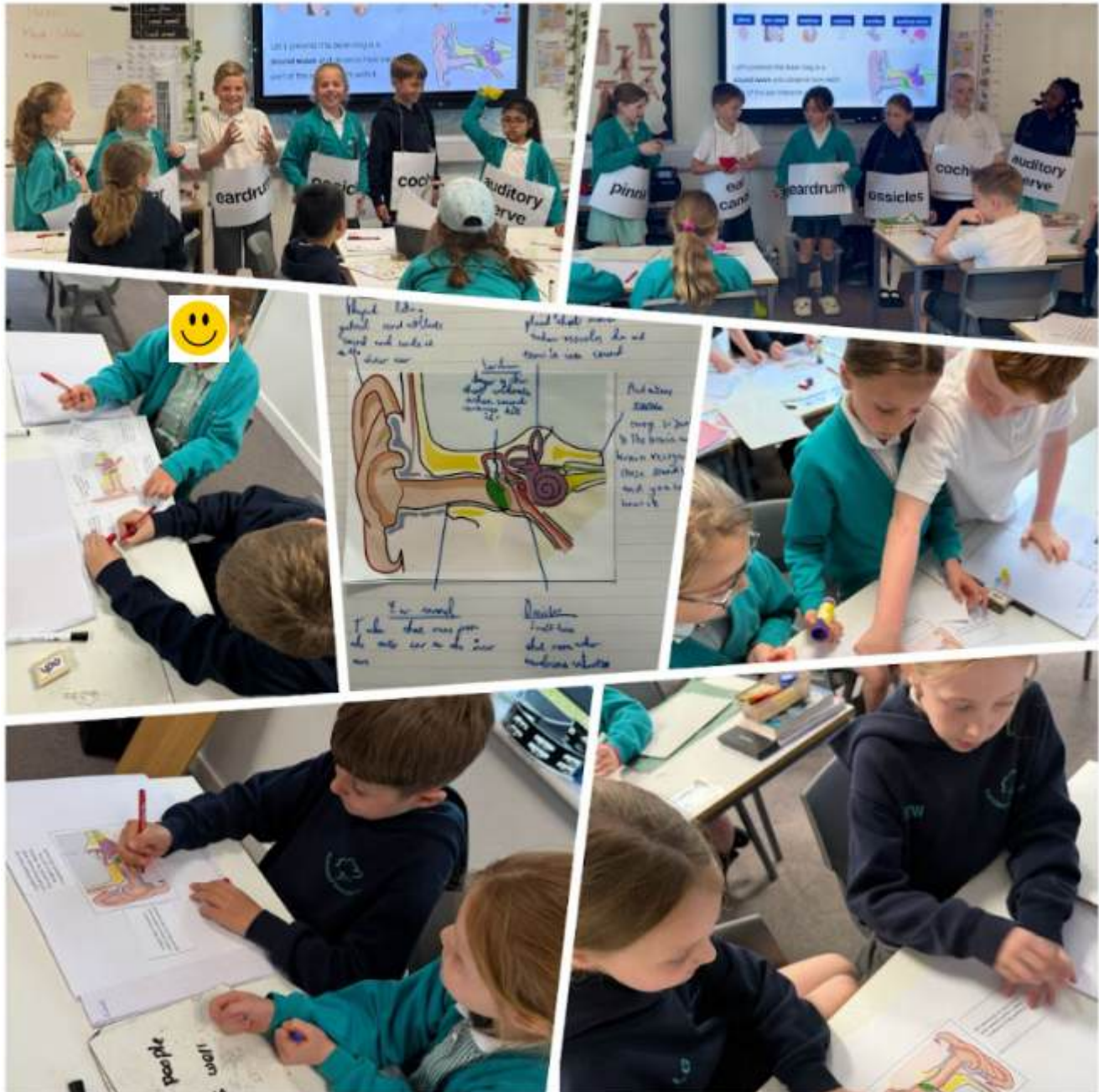


Miss Mears and Miss Choudhury



This week in Year 4

This week, Year 4 has continued to explore the sound topic in Science. We learnt all about the role of the ear and what the different parts do. We acted out how a sound wave travels from the source to the ear. The children were able to use some really complex vocabulary such as cochlea, ossicles and auditory nerve. Quiz us at home- we know you'll be amazed!



Miss Davis, Mrs Maccoy and Mrs Bell

This week in Year 5

Oh Maya Goodness

We launched our history topic of the Maya Civilisation by visiting our wonderful outdoor timeline so we could see when they were at their peak. We have learned that they are unique in that they were still a stone age civilisation whereas others such as the Romans had moved on to using iron or bronze. The Maya were fantastic astrologers and came up with their own calendar; they even invented the concept of 'zero' and were one of the first civilisations to make hot chocolate. We look forward to learning more about the amazing Maya!



This week in Year 6

As this week saw the 80th anniversary of VE Day, year 6 took part in a virtual assembly hosted by a brilliant history teacher named Mr Dilly. We learned about some of the key events that led up to VE day, how the war impacted on people across the country and what we can learn by studying this momentous day in British, European and world history. The children all understood the key message that remembrance is a mark or respect for those who lived through it but also a way to ensure we never forget to stand up for what is right in the year 2025 and beyond. We finished with 2 minutes of silent reflection which was perfectly observed and gave the children a chance to really digest and think about everything they had learned.



Dates for your diary in 2025



12th May - 15th May 2025	KS2 SATS Week
Wc 26th May 2025	Half Term
2nd June 2025	School resumes
3rd June 2025	Year 6 - Northumberland Zoo Trip (Packed lunches needed)
25th June 2025	Year 1 - Gibside Trip (Packed lunches needed)
23rd - 27th June 2025	Year 6 France Trip
18th July 2025	Last School Day. Close at 1.30pm

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
- Dressing up item

Shop items: till, fruit and veg baskets etc
Metal pots and pans Children's Gardening Tools



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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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
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