

Friday Flyer

Friday 17th January 2025

Headteacher Update

It has been a pleasure walking around school and seeing the effort the children are making in their learning from converting percentages in Year 6 to writing simple sentences in Reception. The highlight for me as I visited lessons this week was undoubtedly Y4 and Y6's dance lessons in PE. I heard such a buzz about dancing last week from the Y6s so I was keen to get into their lesson and find out what had got them so motivated to dance. It turns out Mr Smith had had the genius idea of creating a league of football dance teams all competing for the premiership! The collaboration and communication within the teams was matched only by the quality of the routines they put together and the constructive feedback they shared. I can't wait to see their final, polished performances in a few weeks. Meanwhile Y4 have been learning a line dance routine which Mr Smith challenged them to perform to music at different tempos. You can see from the photos just how focused the children were but also how much they were enjoying the sheer joy of dance. Thank you to our Y5 coach recruits who have been supporting Mr Drane and Mr Smith's PE lessons this week while their peers have been at Robinwood.



Meanwhile, up in Alston our Y5s have been rising to all the challenges on offer at Robinwood. Last night I asked Mrs Bell for the highlights so far and she said that she's been so impressed by the children demonstrating our school values, particularly resilience, as they've faced their fears and taken on the giant swing, the trapeze and the zip line. They're coming home with new skills in archery and code breaking and of course the sense of pride in sleeping away from home for two nights and the independence that involves. Well done to all of the children and a massive thank you to the brilliant staff who have accompanied them - well done to Mr McCourt, Mr Tailford, Mrs Bell, Mrs Ogden and Mrs Taylor who have also overcome their fears to participate in the activities alongside the children! We can't wait to welcome our Y5s back and hear their stories.

Best wishes, Claire Johnson
Safeguarding Update

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

SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

- ### 1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING

It's concerning how common for young people to spend hours 'doomscrolling', trawling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious. Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose, instead of endlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people accidentally discovering harmful material.
- ### 2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT

It's important to keep apprised of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching online can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising or a product – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.
- ### 3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS

Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media. It's worth spending time with children to help them find something suitable and enjoyable. Perhaps you'll even discover a joint interest, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child. As part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.
- ### 4 REDUCE SCREENTIME

Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capacity to monitor screentime; they also record how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and support children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.
- ### 5 FILL THE VOID

Monitoring and reducing screentime can create a lot of free time to fill, and young people can even face withdrawal symptoms when made to step away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider what offline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young users will permanently cut down on their screentime, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.
- ### 6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS

One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day where they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver specifically timed notifications to draw them back in. To avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.
- ### 7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body norms to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish reality from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.
- ### 8 DIGITAL DETOX

Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox', from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screentime and less exposure to potentially harmful content. Alternatively, rather than avoiding the app entirely, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead, keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.
- ### 9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – or if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screentime reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.
- ### 10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"

Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many schools that are moving towards being 'phone free' due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones continuously. It's important to explain to young people why managing screentime is important. Set out the benefits and ensure they have all the relevant information, so it's not just seen as a punishment.

Meet Our Expert

John Insley is a senior leader in a Birmingham secondary school and has vast experience in leading schools over the past 15 years – including the development of computing curriculums across primary and secondary schools, writing e-safety policies and supporting schools with computing and e-safety advice.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/top-tips-for-safety-on-social-media>

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OPAL Requests

Our OPAL offer at lunchtime is ever growing and we are so grateful for the toys you have donated so far. We are now looking for Duplo base plates and dolls' clothing if you have any that your children no longer play with.





Attendance for this week is summarised below

Nursery (Acorn)	93.8%	Year 3 (Pine)	95.3%
Reception (Chestnut)	99.7%	Year 4 (Alder)	87.1%
Reception (Pinecone)	97.7%	Year 4 (Yew)	97.0%
Year 1 (Holly)	98.7%	Year 5 (Oak)	99.0%
Year 1 (Ash)	95.3%	Year 5 (Beech)	95.5%
Year 2 (Sycamore)	94.7%	Year 6 (Elm)	97.7%
Year 2 (Willow)	98.3%	Year 6 (Birch)	92.0%
Year 3 (Maple)	99.4%	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?

"If children aren't in school, it doesn't matter how effective or well-supported teaching and learning is, we will not see better outcomes for young people. That holds back our society, widens social and economic divides and leaves us all worse off." Catherine McKinnell

This week in Nursery

Acorn class have welcomed a total of 11 new children for their full allocation of hours this week, staying for lunch and enjoying some carpet sessions in addition to their Discovery Time. They have all settled well and we are now a full nursery with 52 children!



This week in Reception

Our global theme this half term is Sustainable Development and we have shared our core text, 'The Polar Bear's Home'. We have enjoyed finding out all about polar bears, creating Arctic collages comparing the Arctic to Ponteland and role playing. We have also been thinking of animals closer to home as we have made bird feeders using lard, fruit and even mealworms - we hung our bird feeders in the forest this afternoon.



This week in Year 1

Year 1 have been hard at work again this week doing lots of fantastic jobs. In maths we have been working with different resources to help us find out one more than and one less than different numbers. We have been using cubes, number lines and, of course, lots of verbal counting. The 20s game has been a big favourite this week!

In literacy we were so excited to have received a letter from Carl, the gentleman from our core text *Up*, asking us for ways to help him combat his loneliness now that Russell has headed off to high school. The children have been exploring the features of a letter and have written their very own responses back to him!



For our Rainbow Challenges this week the children have been constructing umbrellas for Paddington using various waterproof materials (and testing them out!), creating Autumnal pictures using pastels and chalks and working out some tricky maths problems showing their calculations using cube towers.

Have a lovely restful weekend Year 1!



Mrs Rogers and Miss Storey

This week in Year 2

Year 2 has been reading a new book. We've only revealed a page of the book at a time so we've had lots of discussion around predictions and what is happening on each page. This week, we made a forest out of tinfoil as the book title is 'The Tin Forest'. In the story a man makes a forest using metal waste from his garden to create a lovely forest for himself. We used inspiration from the illustrations in the book to help us create our animals and plants.



Miss Briggs and Mr Massey

This week in Year 3

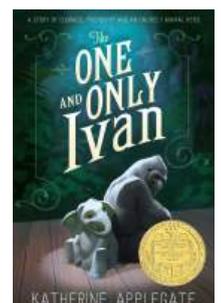
This week we have been very busy and we have been very independent and collaborative in our work.

We worked well in partners and small groups to learn about gorillas to support us in our writing of a Non Chronological report. We were given specific areas of information to identify for example 'Diet', 'Habitat' or 'Appearance' and used comprehension and discussion skills to select the most appropriate information and feed this back to our peers.

We have also worked to recall our knowledge of South America before using an atlas to identify its countries and some capital cities. With this information we were then able to identify where the Amazon Rainforest is located.



Miss Mears and Miss Choudhury



This week in Year 4

Year 4 has been a hive of industry this week! We are so impressed by the effort shown across all of our lessons. In Maths, we have continued our topic on multiplication and division and have discovered what happens to the digits in a number if we multiply or divide by 10 or 100. Our place value charts and Base 10 came in very handy to help us visualise this. In English, we have analysed the features of some non-chronological reports, conducted our own research into Mount Everest, planned some paragraphs ready for our writing next week, and considered how best to lay our information out to make it engaging for the reader. In Science, we considered what makes something living or non-living, and designed information posters around the life processes acronym *MRS GREN*. They look brilliant!

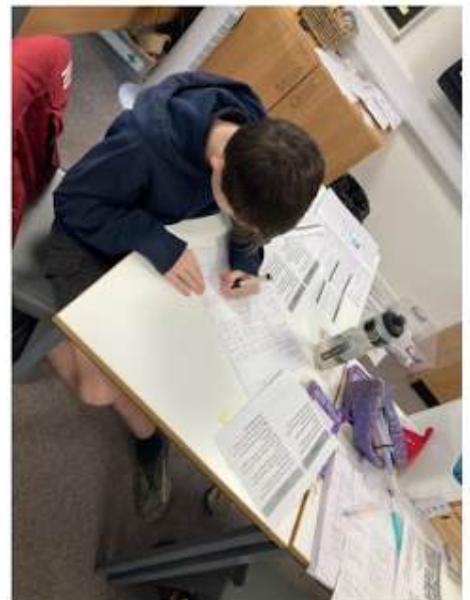
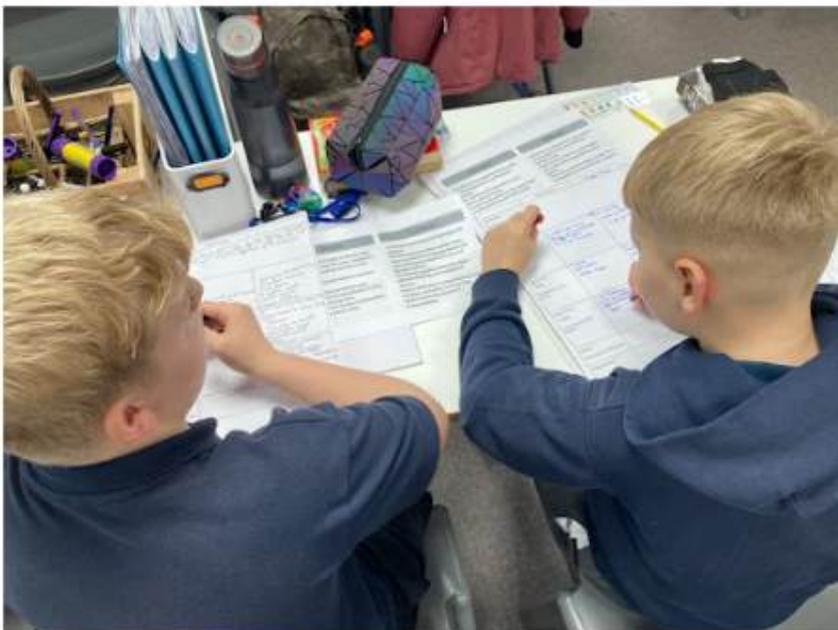
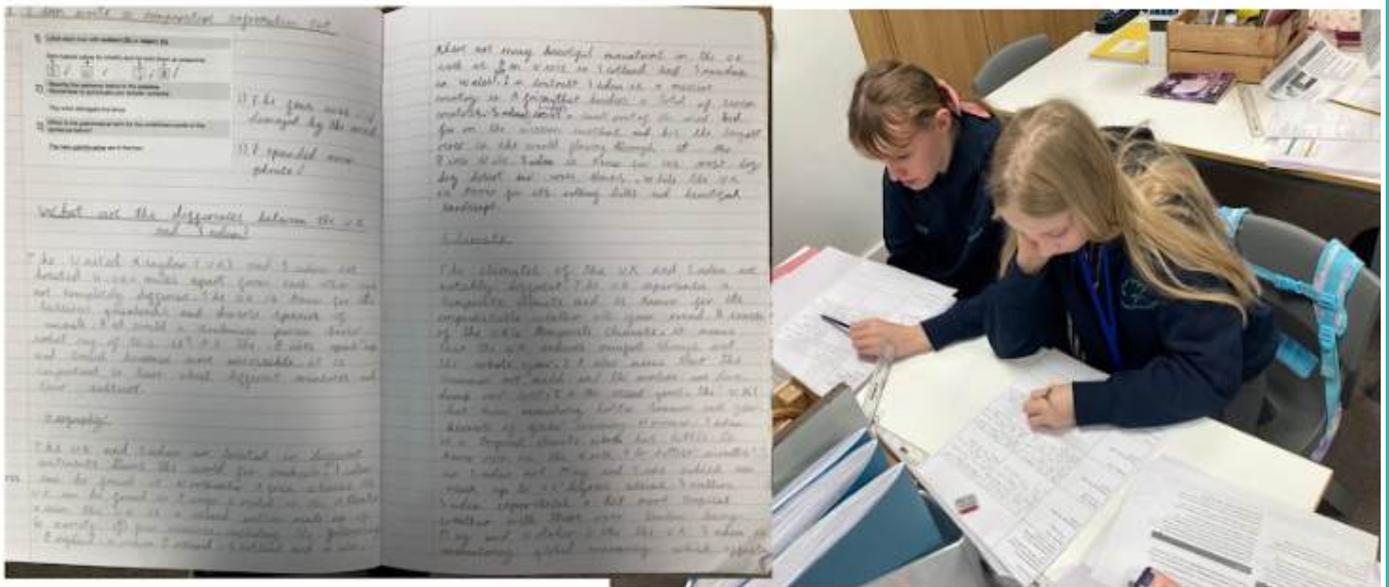


Miss Davis, Mrs Maccoy and Mrs Bell

This week in Year 6

This half term we are reading the book, *A Long Walk to Water*. Set in Sudan, the novel explores the harsh realities of life in the war-torn country and the incredible resilience of the human spirit. As well as reading the story together, we have been researching the differences between the UK and Sudan in respect of their geography, climate and culture. We have used this information to write some very impressive comparative texts in English.

This half term we are reading, *A Long Walk to Water*.



Miss Allan and Mr Orme

Dates for your diary in 2025



21st January 2025	Year 6 SATs Information Meeting at 16.30
24th January 2025	Reception Year - Polar Bear Day. £1 voluntary donation to WWF
Wc 24th February 2025	Half Term
Monday 3rd March 2025	Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 4th March 2025	School resumes
Tuesday 8th April 2025	Yr6 Trip - Discovery Museum (Packed lunches needed)
14th April 2025	Easter Break
28th April 2025	School resumes
Monday 5th May 2025	Early May Bank Holiday
12th May - 15th May 2025	KS2 SATS Week
Wc 26th May 2025	Half Term
2nd June 2025	School resumes
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 Christmas 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 items
- Shop items: till, fruit and veg baskets etc
- Metal pots and pans
- Children's gardening tools

Thank You!

Upcoming PTA Meetings

Day	Date	Time	Location	Rough Agenda
Fri	17/01/25	19.00	The Station House	PTA social night - all welcome
Wed	05/02/25	17.30	The Hive	Planning upcoming events
Wed	05/03/25	17.30	The Hive	Planning Easter events
Thur	03/04/25	17.30	The Hive	Confirming details of easter events
Wed	07/05/25	17.30	The Hive	Planning summer events



Got an itch? Tummy trouble? Tickly cough?

NHS



**Head to your
local pharmacy.**

Did you know?
Pharmacists across
the North East and
North Cumbria can
offer advice and FREE
treatment for a wide
range of common
conditions* – just like
having a prescription
from your GP!

**Please ask your
pharmacy team
for more details
and eligibility.**

UTI's non pregnant women 16–64 years

Shingles 18 years+

Impetigo 1 year+

Sore throat 5 years+

Sinusitis 12 years+

Infected insect bites 1 year+

Earache 1 to 17 years

Additional conditions can be treated, without the need to visit a GP.
Ask a member of your pharmacy team about the minor ailments scheme.

Step 1

**Go to your local community pharmacy (chemist)
about your illness and they will offer advice.**

Step 2

**If needed, you will be offered treatment and
if you qualify, this will be given free of charge.**

Step 3

A suitable medicine may be offered to you.*

*You qualify for free treatment if you do not pay for your prescriptions.



**Find further information at:
www.thinkpharmacyfirst.health**





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

Calling all amazing parents! Join the Ponteland Primary School PTA and make a real difference in your child's education! 🎉

Are you passionate about supporting your child's school and creating a nurturing learning environment? The Ponteland PTA is seeking enthusiastic parents like you to join our incredible team! ✨

By becoming a member of the Parent-Teacher Association, you'll have the opportunity to contribute to your child's school experience in a meaningful way. With your help, we raise essential funds that go beyond the school's budget, allowing us to provide valuable resources and enhance educational opportunities. 🎒 ✨

We understand that time is precious, and every contribution matters. Whether you can spare just one hour or offer more of your valuable time, your involvement will make a tremendous impact. From organising fundraisers and social events to collaborating on exciting projects, there's a role for everyone. 💪 🍷
Here are just a few reasons why joining the PTA is a rewarding experience:

- 1** Active involvement: Be an active participant in your child's education journey by collaborating with dedicated teachers, staff, and other passionate parents.
- 2** Making a difference: Together, we can support the school's growth and help provide additional resources that benefit every child's learning experience. In June 2023, the PTA were able to donate a fantastic £10,000 towards the 2 new climbing frames that have been installed in the playground. More recently, we have been able to fund new football kits. And we love to hear new ideas to keep our fundraising activities fresh and interesting for everyone.
- 3** Building connections: Forge new friendships with like-minded parents who share your commitment to education and community.
- 4** Fun and rewarding activities: Get involved in exciting events, from school fairs and fundraisers to special projects that bring joy to the entire school community. We have the followings events coming up that you could be involved with:
Providing refreshments at various events, for example, end of year assemblies
Pre-loved uniform (an ongoing initiative to recycle usable uniform to assist with the school's sustainability ethos)
Halloween Disco
- 5** Role modelling: Show your child the importance of giving back and making a positive impact by actively participating in their school life.

Join us today and be part of an amazing community dedicated to empowering our children's futures! Together, we can create an extraordinary learning environment that nurtures growth and inspires success.



To express your interest or learn more about the PTA, please reach out to [✉️ pontelandpta@gmail.com](mailto:pontelandpta@gmail.com) or pass your details to school. We can't wait to welcome you!! #PontelandPTA #ParentPower

Turn your daily shopping into everyday magic for us with easyfundraising

You shop, brands donate to us. It won't cost you any extra!



 easyfundraising

Help us make a difference when you shop.
Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk



- 1 Visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk
- 2 Sign up and search for Ponteland Primary School PTA
- 3 Your favourite brands donate between 0.5-15% to us whenever you shop with them, with no charge to you

Shop with 7,500+ brands including:

Booking.com

ebay

M&S

GROUPON



TUI

JOHN
LEWIS



Viking

ASOS



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

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Do you have a child aged 0-19 years? Come along for a cuppa and chat and to meet other parents. No diagnosis needed!

JOIN US ON:

Wednesday 15th January 2025 10am-12 at Alnwick Family Hub
On St Michaels School Site, Howling Lane, NE66 1DJ

Thursday 13th February 2025 1-3pm at Berwick Family Hub
Ladywell Place, Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 2AE

Tuesday 14th January 2025 10am-12 at Hexham Family Hub
On Hexham First School Site, Beaufront Avenue, NE46 1UD
Wednesday 29th January 2025 1-3pm at Haltwhistle Family Hub
On Haltwhistle Primary Academy Site, Park Avenue, NE49 9BA

Tuesday 21st January 2025 10am-12 at Ashington Family Hub
Alexandra Road, NE63 9EF

Monday 3rd February 2025 1-3pm at The Community Hub at Cramlington
Forum Way, Manor Walks Shopping Centre, NE23 6YB (Next to Concordia)

Tuesday 18th February 2025 10am-12 at Morpeth Library
Morpeth Sports and Leisure Centre, Gas House Lane, NE61 1SR

If you have any questions, please contact your local Family Hub or email us at:
robyn.robinson@northumberland.gov.uk or adelle.hicks@northumberland.gov.uk

Understanding children's behaviour



Free online workshops



Find out
what's driving
your child's
behaviour

Come along and:

- Understand feelings and needs behind children's behaviour
- Discover the importance of listening to children, and how it can support meeting their needs
- Explore responding with empathy, and how it can positively influence children's behaviour

Contact Hexham Family Hub to book a space:
01434 601698

More information

Join our virtual
Workshop on:

Tuesday 11th Feb
5 to 6pm

For ages 1 to 12 years

Facilitated by Family
Hub Practitioners