

# Friday Flyer

Friday 7th February 2025

## Headteacher Update

What a busy and exciting week we have had in school! 3rd to 9th February marks Children's Mental Health week and while the children's wellbeing is at the forefront of our minds and practice in school every week, we have taken the opportunity this week to spend some additional time talking about how to promote our mental health. The children have had the opportunity in assemblies to explore what affects their mood and feelings, both positively and negatively, and the changes they experience in their bodies when in each state. This is so important as it helps the children to recognise the signs when they are not feeling as resilient and steps they can take to feel better. We learned a breathing technique to help us in moments when we feel overwhelmed or worried and imagined ourselves breathing in courage and breathing out worry.



We've had a number of visitors in school this week. Our Year 5 and 6 Shakespeare cast were fortunate to work with a director from the Shakespeare Schools Company who gave them some insider tips to bring out the best in their performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream which they'll be performing at Northern Stage in March. What an incredible opportunity for our budding actors!

Our dining street was filled to the rafters yesterday with grandparents and elderly guests from our local community as Y1 hosted their Seniors' tea party. This is one of the highlights of our Y1 curriculum and is part of the children's global unit on social justice. The film 'Up!' is the stimulus for children to learn about the role they can play in supporting the older generation and in the organisation of the tea party, they understand how they can help with issues such as loneliness.

The school was transformed from our usual sea of jade uniform into rockstars as far as the eye could see! Thank you to everyone who helped us mark NSPCC Number Day by putting together such creative (times table) rockstar outfits. As well as spending the day immersed in maths, the children have learned about the important work of the NSPCC and in particular, Childline. If you would like to support the charity please follow [this link](#).

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](https://nationalcollege.com).

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING APPS

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

When looking at options for supporting a child's mental health, the sheer volume can be overwhelming. There are many wellbeing apps available, but unfortunately not all are trustworthy. It's important to evaluate which resources are suitable, reliable and effective. This guide lets you know what to consider before installing such an app, to determine just how useful it's going to be.

### QUALITY & RELIABILITY

Mental health apps can be a useful starting point when looking for wellbeing advice and strategies and can be a useful extension to the in-person services available. However, they aren't a substitute. Information on the quality of some of these apps is scarce. They may look cute and child-friendly, but have they been designed by a mental health professional? Furthermore, do they have research to back up their content?

### PLACE RESPONSIBILITY ON CHILDREN

Some apps add the words 'kids' or 'children' to their title or use cartoon icons to make them more appealing to young people. When signing up for some of these apps, some will speak to the parent directly, saying something along the lines of "Your child is good to go. Let them take it from here". It's important to remain involved in the child's mental health journey, so regular check-ins are recommended.

### DISREGARDING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Young people who feel anxious and have trouble sleeping may download a mindfulness app to help. While this is a good strategy initially, it's not addressing the root of the problem. A child could simply try managing these symptoms themselves (as opposed to speaking out and seeking professional help), which could potentially worsen their anxiety in the long run.

### LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Mental health or wellbeing apps are useful tools for the short term, teaching users several helpful habits to manage their condition – such as keeping an illness diary, improving nutrition and practising mindfulness exercises. As every person is unique – and children especially will grow and develop in different ways – these apps struggle to tailor themselves to users' individual needs. For example, many apps don't distinguish between the ages of users and can offer extremely generic advice.

### DATA SECURITY

As with any other app – not just those for mental health and wellbeing – it's wise to check out the privacy policy before downloading it. Some of these applications may share data with third parties for numerous reasons (such as targeted advertisements), and if a user is sharing personal and sensitive information within the app, they probably don't want it ending up elsewhere without their consent.

### IN-APP PURCHASES

Many apps will provide their most basic features for free but will require you to pay for other aspects – such as a more tailored experience or access to additional resources. This could be a one-off fee or a regular subscription. Consider whether this is actually required. Is it benefiting the child, or could they receive the same support from a medical professional?

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CHECK THE CREDIBILITY OF THE APP

Before you download a mental health and wellbeing app, investigate the developers. Have they consulted with qualified mental health professionals to create their resource? Also check whether the app is affiliated with any government or mental health organisations, as these are solid indicators of legitimacy. Reviews can also be a useful signpost to the app's quality. There are many good apps out there, but there are just as many that miss the mark.

### SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Trusted mental health and wellbeing apps designed by qualified, reputable organisations can be used alongside the personalised advice and support of fully trained professionals. These apps should never be considered a substitute for counselling or other tailored medical help. If you have real concerns about a child's mental wellbeing, you should seek appropriate advice from a suitable source, such as their GP – or Childline, who can be contacted by calling 0800 1111.

### READ THE PRIVACY POLICY

Look into the app's terms of service – especially its privacy policy. Do so by yourself first, then go over it with the child who is considering using the app, to ensure they know what data will be collected and how exactly it will be used. Use all of this information to make an educated decision on whether or not to download that particular app.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Mental health and wellbeing apps can be useful for writing down feelings, tracking your own health and other such activities. These can help if the problem is short-term and temporary – such as a child getting stressed about approaching exams – or if you're currently waiting for professional support. Nonetheless, it is important that children aren't solely reliant on the app and have a safe space to talk about their feelings and experiences in the real world.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/mental-health-apps>



### Attendance for this week is summarised below

Nursery (Acorn)	96.5%	Year 3 (Pine)	97.7%
Reception (Chestnut)	97.3%	Year 4 (Alder)	95.5%
Reception (Pinecone)	94.7%	Year 4 ( Yew)	97.0%
Year 1 (Holly)	95.3%	Year 5 (Oak)	98.7%
Year 1 (Ash)	100%	Year 5 (Beech)	95.2%
Year 2 (Sycamore)	94.7%	Year 6 (Elm)	90.3%
Year 2 (Willow)	99.3%	Year 6 (Birch)	97.0%
Year 3 (Maple )	98.1%	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

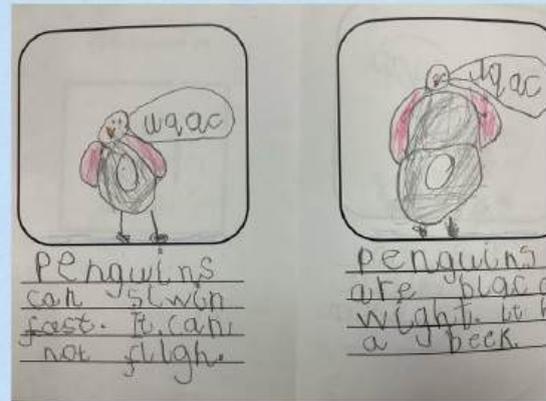
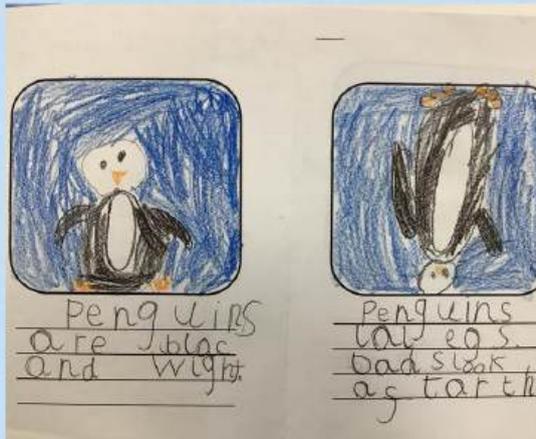
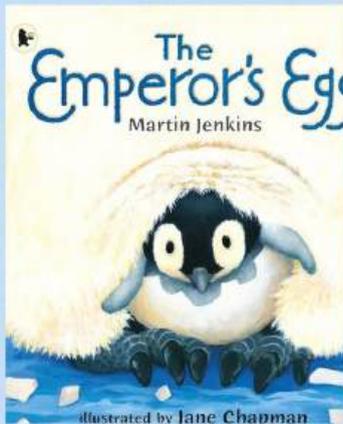
## This week in Nursery

Acorn class enjoyed celebrating their own special Number Day this week, by dressing up as their favourite colour number block! We sequenced the numberblocks and made our own repeating patterned numberblocks to take home :) We LOVE Numberblocks!



## This week in Reception

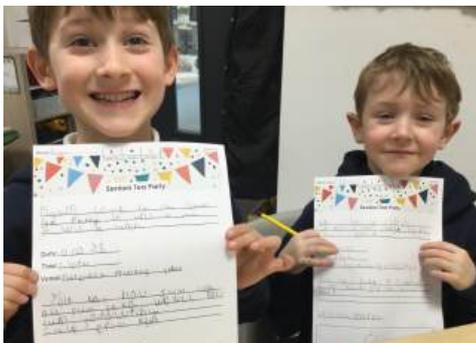
This week in Reception we shared our spine book 'The Emperor's Egg' and we have been learning all about penguins. We have written some super fact files and learned a new skill, drawing with oil pastels. We used them to carefully create fantastic observational drawings of penguins.



PIC•COLLAGE

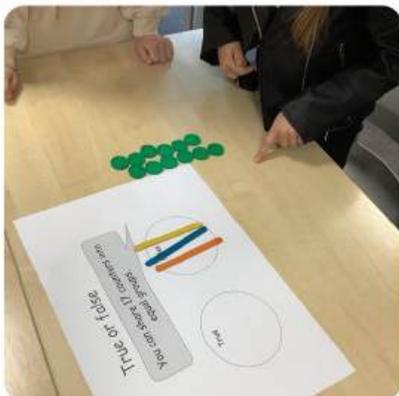
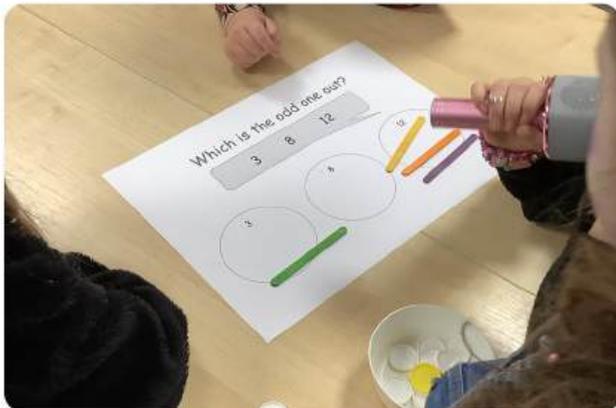
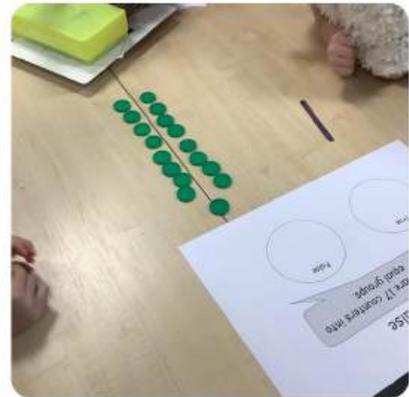
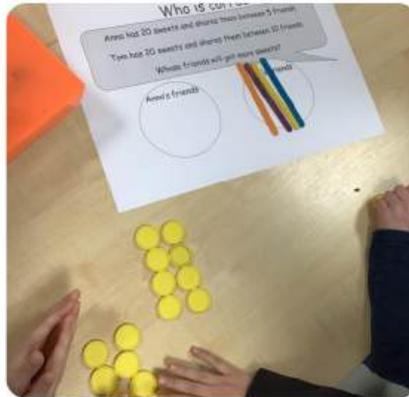
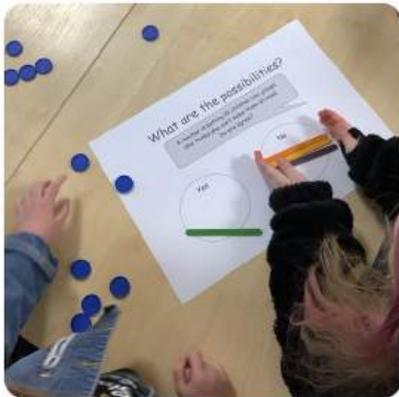
## This week in Year 1

This week, the children planned, organised and hosted the Seniors Tea Party where we welcomed grandparents, family members and friends into school for an afternoon of fun. The children prepared sandwiches, made decorations, decorated cakes, practiced singing and dancing to perform at the party. They even used their English lessons to plan and write invitations to give to their special guests. We enjoyed a game of Bingo, refreshments and a fabulous performance from the Year 1 children. Thank you to all the guests who attended, we hope you had a fun-filled afternoon!



## This week in Year 2

As part of Rock Stars Day we solved problems in groups. We used our oracy skills to discuss what we thought and then built on and challenged each other's ideas. We used counters as proof of our answer or to help us find a solution.



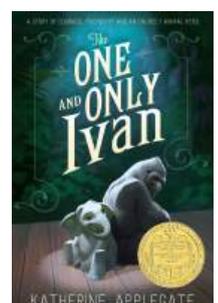
Miss Briggs and Mr Massey

## This week in Year 3

Year 3 have had an amazing time in science this week! We even danced along to the popular skeleton dance song, which made learning so much fun. We explored the roles of different bones in the human body and discovered their functions. One of our favourite activities was writing the scientific names of bones on post-its and sticking them on the correct part of our friends' bodies—what a laugh! It was such a creative way to learn, and we all had a fantastic time!



Miss Mears and Miss Choudhury



## This week in Year 4

We have had such a lovely week in Year 4. We celebrated Time to Talk Day, where we discussed some really challenging topics. The children were so mature, empathetic and caring towards their peers and it was a joy to behold so many of our wonderful school values being demonstrated in just one afternoon! We talked about scenarios in which we feel sad/ happy/ anxious and realised how many of us share the same thoughts and worries. We wrote positive affirmations and practiced having meaningful conversations about our mental health.

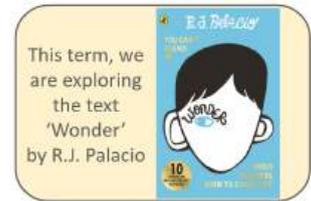
We also celebrated Rockstar Day where we dressed up in glitter, leather and tattoos! We had so much fun, if you do want to donate please follow the link provided for the NSPCC!



Miss Davis, Mrs Maccoy and Mrs Bell

## This week in Year 5

### Talking the Talk



Year 5 have been developing our oracy skills throughout the year and we've used recent geography lessons to showcase our improvement. Our focus topic is biomes; we've really enjoyed learning about all the different biomes and ecosystems around the globe and have looked into the reasons they are fragile - sadly a lot of it is down to us humans!

Over the last week we have written and presented speeches to highlight the importance of keeping local and international habitats protected and we have held 'fishbowl' debates as to whether all biomes are equally fragile.

### Midway Atoll

Scientists are trying to save Midway Atoll because it is home to a bird called albatross. They live there because there are no predators. Well not like an animal but like plastic. Did you know that albatross are killed because of plastic. This is because there are currents in the ocean and then it travels to in between Japan and America in the Pacific ocean. It is a big circle because it keeps going round and round. Did you know if you drop plastic near the UK it will probably end up there?

Albatross



Midway Atoll



- Acid rain that has a negative impact on plant and animal species
- Deforestation
  - Pastoral farming: rearing cattle
  - Arable farming: Soya
  - Logging for timber
  - Roads
  - Hydroelectric power (HEP)
  - Population growth



#### Biome Fragility: Coniferous Forest (Taiga)

Loss of leisure sites - e.g. walking/camping



More carbon emissions - less trees to soak up CO2

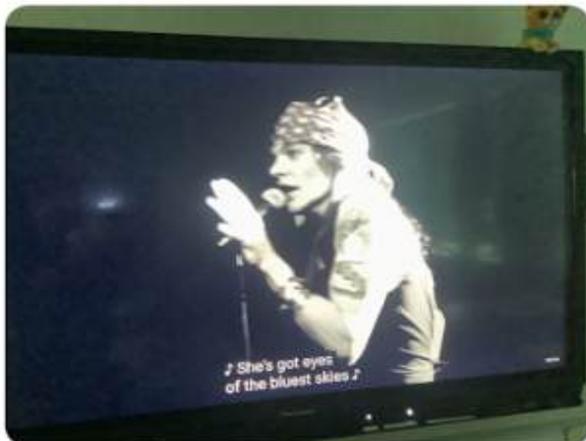
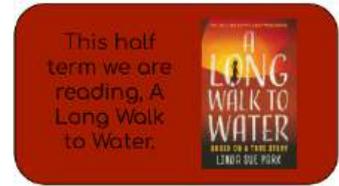


Loss of wildlife e.g. the Siberian Tiger



## This week in Year 6

In year 6 we have loved NCPPC number day and have leaned heavily into the rockstar vibe for the day. We completed a number of challenges, played percentage bingo and had a maths knockout quiz where we crowned two winners who simply couldn't be separated. Finally, we got stuck into some Times Table Rockstars and had a 'Times tables gig' in class. Best of all, Mr Orme got to indulge his passion and blast some great music for a while! A fabulous, fun morning was had by all and there were some fab rockstar outfits on show, too.



Miss Allan and Mr Orme

## Dates for your diary in 2025



18th & 19th Feb 2025	Parents Evening - Reception to Year 6
18th/19th/20th Feb 2025	Nursery Open Week
Wc 24th February 2025	Half Term
Monday 3rd March 2025	Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 4th March 2025	School resumes
Tuesday 25th March 2025	Year Reception Trip - Scotswood Gardens
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

## Upcoming PTA Meetings

Day	Date	Time	Location	Rough Agenda
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](http://www.thinkpharmacyfirst.health)**

**HERE  
TO  
HELP**



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

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 easyfundraising

Help us make a difference when you shop.  
Visit [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)



- 1 Visit [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://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



vikings

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](mailto: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**





**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, NE25 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](mailto:robyn.robinson@northumberland.gov.uk) or [adelle.hicks@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto: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