

Friday Flyer

Friday 20th March 2026

Headteacher Update

Neurodiversity is something we embrace every day in our school and I am always very proud to see our children accept, support and celebrate each other's differences. This week marks [Neurodiversity Celebration Week](#) around the world and we again welcomed Shelley Farnham from [Complex Connexions](#) into school to lead 'Brilliant Brains Love the Beat' assemblies focused on how rhythm can support brain regulation and learning. The children learned that rhythm and beat are powerful tools for the nervous system: rhythm provides a sense of predictability, which helps bring steadiness to both the brain and body. It stimulates listening and vestibular (balance) centres in the ear, helping children feel more grounded and better able to regulate their emotions. Using rhythm 'wakes up' the listening brain and balance system, helping the children focus and prepare to learn.

We discussed how brains can feel different ways at different times and categorised three states that can sometimes make learning difficult:

- Fizzy: Over-excited or restless.
- Floppy: Lacking energy or focus.
- Furious: Feeling angry or overwhelmed.



The assemblies emphasised that while these feelings are natural and can be useful in some situations, they aren't always helpful for the classroom. The children learned that by using rhythm, they can help their brains return to a steady state, which is the ideal state for listening and learning. Shelley is an expert in supporting families with neurodivergent children so if this sounds like something your child would benefit from exploring at home, she would be very happy to hear from you.

As you know, we love books at our school and we couldn't let an opportunity pass without exploring neurodiversity through a good story. Each class enjoyed the book 'The Brain Forest' by Sandhya Meynon, which follows a mother and son as they explore a 'Brain Forest', discovering that no two brains are exactly alike and our uniqueness is to be celebrated. The children then decorated their own leaf, sharing one thing they are great at or love talking about and one thing that helps their brain work best, such as 'quiet time', 'moving my feet' or 'instructions written down'.

Our focus on movement will continue next week as we have our Danceathon to raise money for the Great North Children's Hospital on Wednesday! Please could all children come to school wearing the usual **PE kit** for the day. Please share our [sponsorship link](#) far and wide!

Finally, Eid Mubarak to all our families celebrating Eid-al-Fitr today!

Best wishes, Claire Johnson

Safeguarding & wellbeing

Please click [here](#) for more information about some specific neurodifferences.



Neurodiversity Celebration Week

“Neurodiversity may be every bit as crucial for the human race as biodiversity is for life in general. Who can say what form of wiring will prove best at any given moment”

- Harvey Blume, Journalist

www.neurodiversityweek.com





At primary school, children who attend nearly every day in Year 6 (95–100% attendance) have 30% higher odds of reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to similar pupils who attend 90–95% of the time. Please work with us to help your child’s attendance stay above 95% throughout their time in primary school.

Attendance for this week is summarised below

Nursery (Acorn)	96.8%	Year 3 (Pine)	99.0%
Reception (Chestnut)	99.3%	Year 4 (Alder)	97.1%
Reception (Pinecone)	97.0%	Year 4 (Yew)	98.7%
Year 1 (Holly)	98.0%	Year 5 (Oak)	94.8%
Year 1 (Ash)	97.0%	Year 5 (Beech)	97.3%
Year 2 (Sycamore)	99.3%	Year 6 (Elm)	100%
Year 2 (Willow)	96.7%	Year 6 (Birch)	97.6%
Year 3 (Maple)	96.7%	Whole school Cumulative from Sept	95.6%

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

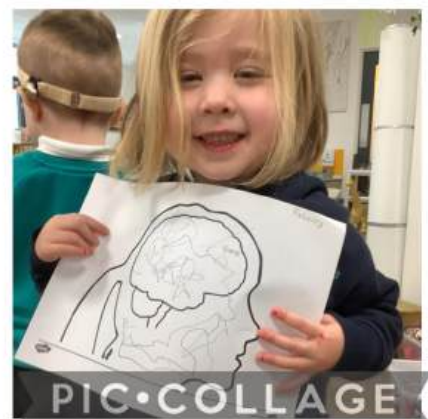
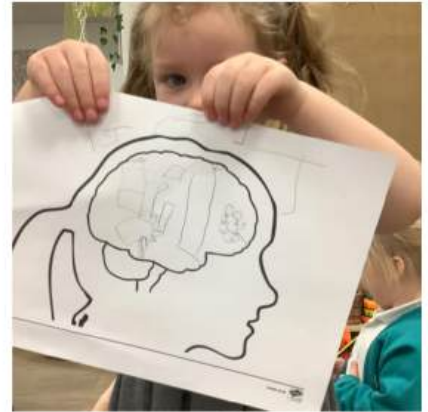
Absence Procedures

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.

This week in Nursery

Nursery have used the whole Neurodiversity Week school text, The Brain Forest, to talk about what their brain likes. We know our brain is in our head and found out it looks a bit like a cauliflower! We practised some sensory circuits before our job time by doing ten star jumps, rolling play dough and then some calming breaths.



This week in Reception

Continuing with our minibeast theme, we have shared our non-fiction book, Bug Hotel. We designed our own bug hotels and then in the forest this afternoon we collaborated to create a five-star retreat for the minibeasts. We were kindly donated lots of materials from parents and gathered natural materials in the forest to create 'rooms' for our visitors. We can't wait to see how many guests have checked in next week!



This week in Year 1

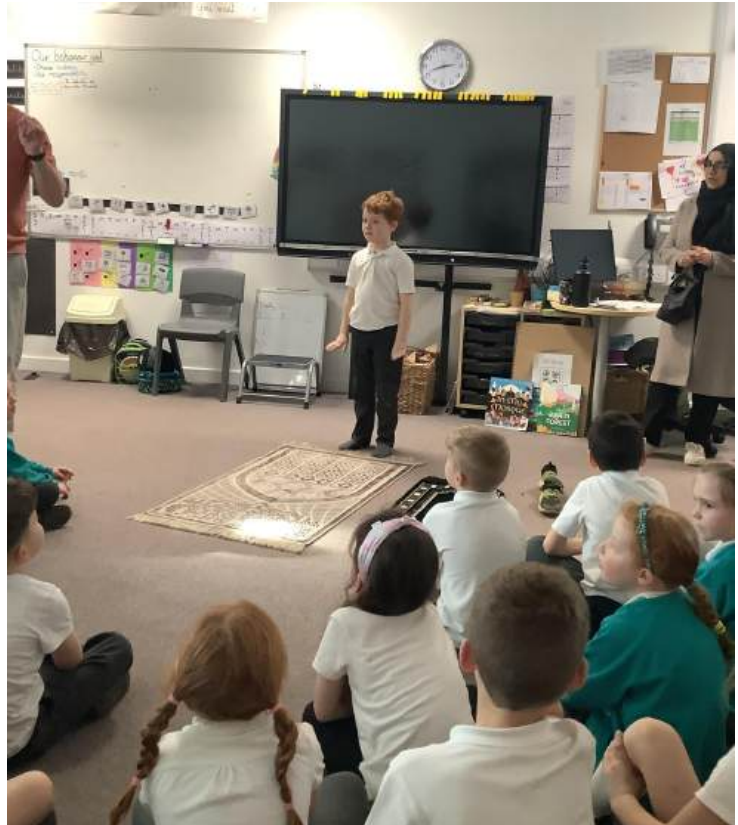
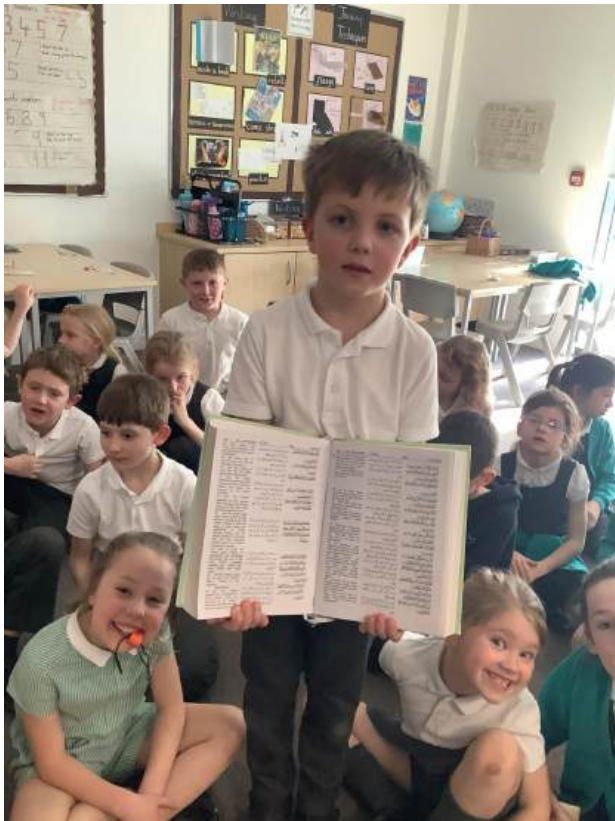
We have had such a busy week in Year 1! We have had lots of practical maths measuring weight and volume, in Literacy we have been using adjectives to describe Grandad's Secret Giant when he was hidden in the classroom and in Geography we have been looking at our local environment and the different places in Ponteland that we might visit. All week we have been supporting and celebrating Neurodiversity Week. The children have been so respectful and caring when discussing how we celebrate our differences, and today we have finished the week's celebrations with World Down Syndrome Day where we have made friendship bracelets using the colours of World Down Syndrome Day, and added charms for something extra special.



PIC•COLLAGE

This week in Year 2

We were fortunate enough to finish our work on learning about Islam by seeing a Quran and Janamaz. We learned about the discipline needed to fast during Ramadan and how Muslims pray 5 times a day while facing Mecca. We learned lots about the way Muslims show respect to the Quran and Janamaz and even heard about some of the stories from the Quran. This was all timed perfectly with Eid starting today! Happy Eid!



Mrs Nowosielska and Mr Massey

This week in Year 3

It has been another action packed and inspiring week in Year 3! In English, the children completed an impressive 'Big Write,' producing a detailed leaflet on sustainable energy. They wrote passionately about the impacts of climate change and how transitioning to renewable energy sources can help protect our planet. Our Maths have been busy diving deeper into the world of fractions, we have been practicing identifying and explaining the roles of the numerator and the denominator.

In Art, the classroom was transformed into a vibrant jungle. The children used a combination of oil pastels and water paints to create stunning rainforest inspired masterpieces.

Finally, we have celebrated 'Neurodiversity Celebration Week' together. Each child created a personal leaf highlighting a unique strength of their brain, all of which will be added to our wonderful whole school tree display. What a brilliant, inclusive week of learning!



Miss Mears and Mr Shaw

This week in Year 4

Year 4 have had a fantastic week! We have loved exploring the differences between ourselves and the many ways our brains work as part of Neurodiversity Week 2026, which has linked brilliantly with our school value of the month: curiosity.

In maths, we have completed our unit on fractions and have already begun our new learning on decimals. In English, the children have impressed us with their creative and persuasive chocolate bar advertisements. This morning, we enjoyed a wonderful trip to the forest after break time. The children took part in a range of exciting activities, including building enclosures for critters they discovered, starting a lively marching band with pots and pans, climbing trees, creating dens and playing on the forest swing. We can't wait to see what Week 5 brings!



This week in Year 6

We couldn't be more proud of the tremendous effort shown by Year 6 this week as they completed their mock SATs. They have demonstrated our school values of effort and resilience in abundance. The slow starts, shared breakfasts with friends, and extra breaks—helped along by a little sunshine—have all helped us through the week.

Alongside their hard work, the children have also found time to nurture their creative talents. Inspired by our global curriculum topic on oceans, they have been exploring the theme of sustainable seas in art. After studying the work of artists who focus on ocean conservation, the children have begun sketching shells using complementary colours, producing thoughtful and imaginative responses.



Dates for your diary in 2026



Mon 23rd March 2026	Year 6 - France Parents Information Meeting. 5pm in school
Wed 25th March 2026	All Day Danceathon - Come to school in standard PE kit
Fri 27th March 2026	Rocksteady Concert - 1.15pm & 2.15pm
Mon 30th March 2026	Year 6 Trip - Discovery Museum (Packed lunches needed)
Mon 30th March 2026	Year 5 Trip - Woodhorn Museum (Packed lunch needed)
Tue 31st March 2026	Year 3 Trip - Alnwick Castle (Packed lunch needed)
Tue 31st March 2026	Year 2 Trip - Cragside (Packed lunch needed)
Thurs 2nd April 2026	Year 4 Trip - Locomotion Museum (Packed lunch needed)
Thurs 2nd April 2026	Reception Trip - Whitehouse Farm (Packed lunch needed)
Thurs 2nd April 2026	Year 1 Trip - Baltic (Packed lunch needed)
Easter Break 2026	School closed on Good Friday 3rd April 2026
Mon 20th April 2026	School Resumes
Mon 4th May 2026	Bank Holiday Monday - School Closed
Thur 11th June 2026	Reception - Great North Museum Visit (AM only)
Wc 25th May 2026	May Half Term - School Closed
Mon 1st June 2026	School Resumes
Fri 17th July 2026	Last day of school - 1.30pm finish

Autism Family Drop in

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:

Tuesday 24th February 2026, 10am - 12pm:

Hexham Family Hub, Hexham First School, Beaufront Avenue, NE46 1JD

Thursday 12th March 2026, 1pm-3pm:

The Lindisfarne Centre, 30 Lindisfarne Road, Alnwick, NE66 1AU

Wednesday 18th March 2026, 10am - 12pm:

Ashington Family Hub, Alexandra Road, Ashington, NE63 9EF

Tuesday 24th March 2026, 1pm-3pm:

Cramlington Community Hub, Forum Way, Manor Walks, NE23 6YB (next to Concordia)

CANCELLED

Thursday 26th March 2026, 10am - 12pm:

Berwick Family Hub, Ladywell Place, Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 2AE

Monday 30th March 2026, 1pm - 3pm:

Morpeth Golf Club, Loansdean, NE61 2BT

Evening session:

Tuesday 31st March 2026, 5pm - 6:30pm:

Morpeth Golf Club, Loansdean, NE61 2BT

If you have any questions email: adelle.hicks@northumberland.gov.uk

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

After School Club Needs You!

We would love to take any of these off you:

- Loom Bands
 - Complete Jigsaws
 - Chess Sets
 - Dolls House Furniture
- Beads**
Lego & Duplo
Knex



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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 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

Argos

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

20669059



