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Friday Flyer

Friday 18th September 2026

Headteacher Update

I want to start this week's Friday Flyer by focusing on last weekend when so many of our children ran the Mini and Junior Great North Run. I was very proud to see so many familiar faces on the Quayside when I was watching my own children in their races on Saturday and then was completely blown away by the sheer number of racers when we gathered everyone for a photo with their medals on Monday. One of our school values is resilience and these children certainly had an excellent experience of developing their resilience as they took part in the run. They have been so proud to tell me about how far they ran and how they pushed themselves to get to the finish line even when they felt exhausted. What a brilliant experience for them to be part of.

Assembly this morning looked a little different as each class joined the School of Kindness online live assembly to talk about how we want our school year to look and the sort of community we want our school to be. The assembly capitalised on our school's mantra of '**be the change you want to see in the world**' and helped the children to see that their actions, however big or small, can make a difference. We looked at the values that are important to us like kindness and respect and thought about how important resilience is in expanding our comfort zones. The School of Kindness is collecting stories of kindness from across the country; if your child has done an act of kindness please submit their story here. Please let me know if you make a submission so we can celebrate this in school too - I'd love to surprise the children with a shout out in our happiest minute of the week in our Friday assemblies!

Best wishes,
Claire Johnson

Safeguarding & Wellbeing

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ATTENDANCE MATTERS
every student, every day

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		**97.3%**	
Reception Chestnut	**96.3%**	3 Pine	**99.7%**
Reception Pinecone	**94.7%**	4 Alder	**97.3%**
1 Holly	**99.3%**	4 Yew	**94.3%**
1 Ash	**96.7%**	5 Oak	**96.0%**
2 Sycamore	**98.7%**	5 Beech	**99.4%**
2 Willow	**96.7%**	6 Elm	**97.2%**
3 Maple	**100%**	6 Birch	**95.5%**

Whole school (cumulative from Sept)	**97.4%**

98% - 100%	**Excellent Attendance**
95% - 97.9%	**Good Attendance**
92% - 94.9	**Caution - Below National Average**
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 9.15 am** 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 8.55 am 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.

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Career Spotlight

PELE TRUST PRIMARY
CAREERS

CAREER FACT

Around **98,000 people in the North East work in skilled trades** – that's about **1 in every 10 workers!**

From **electricians and plumbers to mechanics and engineers**, skilled tradespeople use their hands, brains and problem-solving skills every day.

What could you design, build or fix?

STEM PERSON OF THE WEEK

Wakil Shahzad

Professor of Advanced Energy

Wakil designs and tests technology that produces clean water from air. He is creative and develops ways to solve problems that traditional methods cannot fix. Wakil is passionate about solving global challenges like providing clean water and creating new cooling equipment that uses less energy. He is open-minded and willing to explore unexpected directions in his research to find the new solutions.

Creative Passionate Open-minded

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Opal Needs You!

We would love to receive footballs that are still in good condition

Please chat to your child before making any donations to help them understand that the balls will be shared and won’t belong to them.

Thank you!

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This Week in Nursery

At the start of the week, we made some delicious **oat and banana bites** ready to take with us to Forest School on Wednesday. The children really enjoyed helping to mix and prepare them, and they were very excited to enjoy their homemade treats during our Forest School adventure.

We absolutely loved our first visit to the forest of the new school year! There was so much to explore and discover. The children enjoyed:

- Having fun on the swing
- Climbing the ladder and trees
- Beginning to tidy the vegetable patch and discovering some potatoes
- Getting creative in the mud kitchen
- Foraging for natural materials to bring back to nursery

We collected lots of wonderful natural treasures to use back at school in our **mud kitchen** and our **outdoor nature dough area**. The children showed fantastic curiosity as they explored the forest, worked together and discovered what was growing around them.

It has been a wonderful start to our Forest School adventures, and we can't wait to see what we discover next!

Mrs Kenyon

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This Week in Reception

Another fantastic week in Reception this week, beginning our maths learning together and practising lots of phonics ready to start Phase 1 phonics next week. We have started morning jobs this week and the children have worked so hard finding their coloured group and completing a new job each day. We have also been working hard to use our whiteboards and pens correctly, working on our pencil grip and control and beginning to write our names. It would be lovely to see the children practising this at home too! In maths we have been doing lots of sorting and spotting similarities and differences, including finding pairs of objects. In the woods today we continued our maths learning by organising different groups of natural objects!

Mrs Wilds & Miss Storey

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This Week in Year 1

What an exciting and busy week Year 1 have had! In Forest School, the children unleashed their creativity by crafting magical 'Guardians of the Forest' out of clay, using natural materials to give their unique sculptures individual personalities. In Science, we explored the four seasons, discovering how the world around us changes throughout the year. Meanwhile, in Maths, we have been sharpening our number skills by counting confidently both forwards and backwards all the way to 20.

Mrs Tailford, Mrs Rogers and Mrs Blyth

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This Week in Year 2

In Science we have been learning about humans and how they grow. This week, we tried to answer the question 'Do we all grow at the same speed'. We decided to put ourselves in age order and then check our shoe size. We found that older children do not always have bigger shoes and are not always taller.

Mr Massey and Mrs Nowosielska

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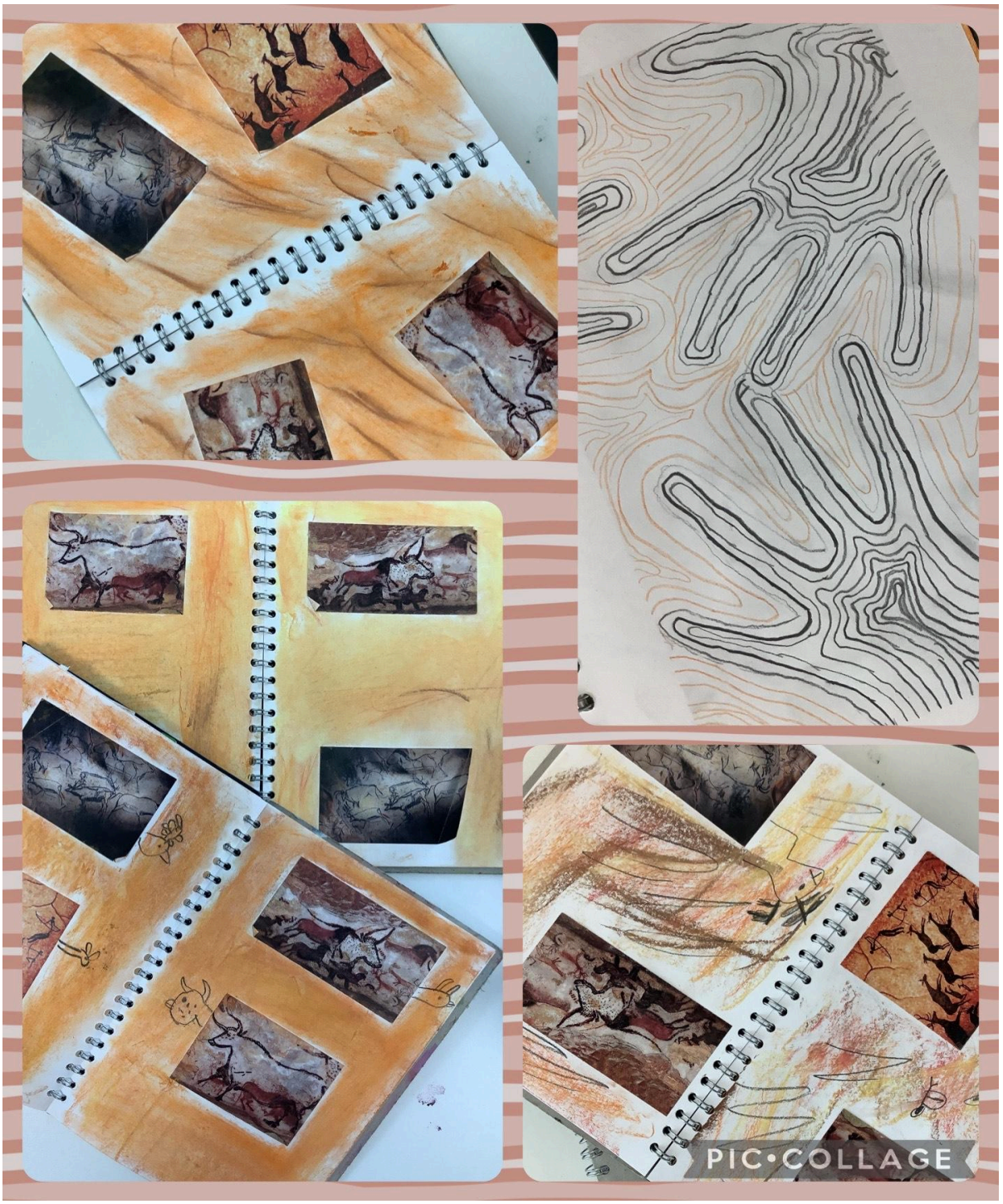
This Week in Year 3

We have been beginning the very mammoth task of exploring Stone Age cave paintings during our art lessons. So far we have come to understand that cave art was possibly one of the ways people living in the prehistoric period would be able to communicate and document their daily life. We were also able to explore some images of common recordings and found that there would be images showing hands, animals and weapons. We are really looking forward to seeing how our prehistoric year 3 artists continue to develop their chalk skills using earthy tones to build their own designs.

Mr Tailford and Miss Mears



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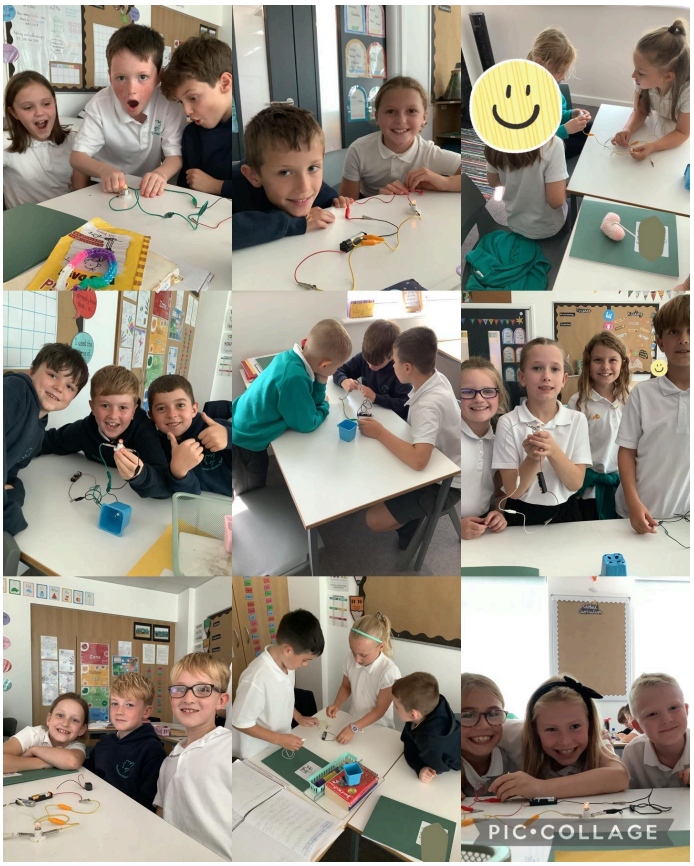
This Week in Year 4

Year 4 have had an electrifying week in science! Building on their work from last week, where they learned about mains and battery power and weighed up the pros and cons of each, the children stepped into the role of electrical engineers.

Working in teams, the pupils explored how electricity flows and successfully built their own simple circuits. Many groups took their learning even further, challenging themselves to construct more complex circuits incorporating switches, buzzers, and motors!

Beyond the technical skills, it was fantastic to see such brilliant collaboration, teamwork, and positive energy across the entire year group. Well done, Year 4!

Mrs Bell and Miss Davis



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This Week in Year 5

!READ ALL ABOUT IT!

This half-term, we are exploring the text *'Street Child'* by Berlie Doherty.

This week, Year 5 continued our new way of thinking about reading.

Each week, we explore different skills that help us become sharp, savvy readers.

Our first mission was *skimming* and *scanning*. A technique that makes longer texts far less daunting. Skimming is all about zooming over the page to catch the big idea, while scanning is like going on a hunt for those all-important key words to help make sense of the text.

The children enjoyed practising these skills and were amazed at how much they could understand without reading every word (parents: don't worry - they'll *still* read their books properly at home!).

Once they were used to that, they put their new talents to work in smaller groups, hunting down key ideas and pulling together quick-fire summaries like reading pros.

All in a day's work for Year 5 detectives!

Mr McCourt and Mr Orme

The Geography of the UK and Newcastle

Introduction
The United Kingdom (UK) is made up of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. Each part of the UK has its own landscapes, weather patterns, and important cities. One of the most famous cities in the north-east of England is Newcastle upon Tyne, usually just called Newcastle.

Location of the UK
The UK is an island nation in north-west Europe. It is surrounded by water: the North Sea to the east, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the English Channel to the south, and the Irish Sea between England and Ireland. Its position means that the climate is often mild but also very changeable, with wet and windy weather quite common.

Physical Geography
The UK has a wide variety of physical features.
- In Scotland, there are tall mountains such as Ben Nevis.
- Wales is home to Snowdonia National Park.
- England has rolling hills in the south and flat farmland in the east.
- Northern Ireland is famous for the Giant's Causeway, a coastal rock formation.

Rivers also play an important role in the landscape. The River Thames flows through London, while the River Tyne flows through Newcastle.

What do you notice about the structure of the report?

ding this week?

Find and copy the name of the river that flows through Newcastle.

What are the four countries that make up the United Kingdom?

Genre: Non-Chronological Reports

Skills we'll learn
- Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction
- Identify how organisational and presentational devices contribute to meaning

Newcastle's Location
Newcastle is in the north-east of England, on the north bank of the River Tyne. It is around 100 miles south of the border with Scotland and about 280 miles north of London. Its position near the coast means that it has a history of shipbuilding and trade.

Human Geography of Newcastle
Newcastle is known for its industry, especially coal mining in the past. Today, the city is famous for its universities, shopping, and football club. The people of Newcastle are often called "Geordies" and are known for their strong local identity.
The city has several well-known landmarks:
- **The Tyne Bridge** – linking Newcastle with Gateshead.
- **St James' Park** – the football stadium where Newcastle United play.
- **The Millennium Bridge** – a modern bridge that tilts to let ships pass.

Weather and Climate
Like much of the UK, Newcastle has a temperate climate. This means it does not get extremely hot or cold, but there is regular rainfall. Winters can be chilly with frosts, and summers are mild, often around 18–20°C.

Transport and Connections
Newcastle is well connected to the rest of the UK. The East Coast Main Line railway links it directly with London, Edinburgh, and other major cities. Newcastle International Airport provides flights to destinations across Europe. Roads such as the A1 also connect the city to Scotland and the south of England.

Conclusion
The geography of the UK is rich and varied, with different regions offering unique features. Newcastle is an excellent example of how a city's location and natural features shape its history, economy, and identity.

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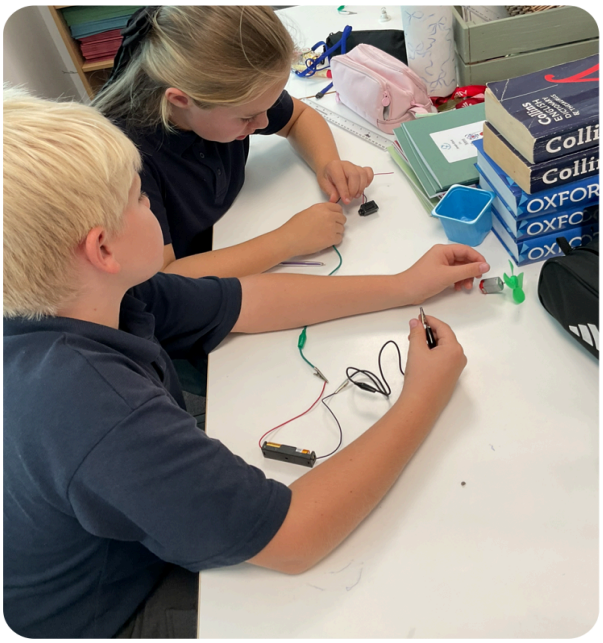
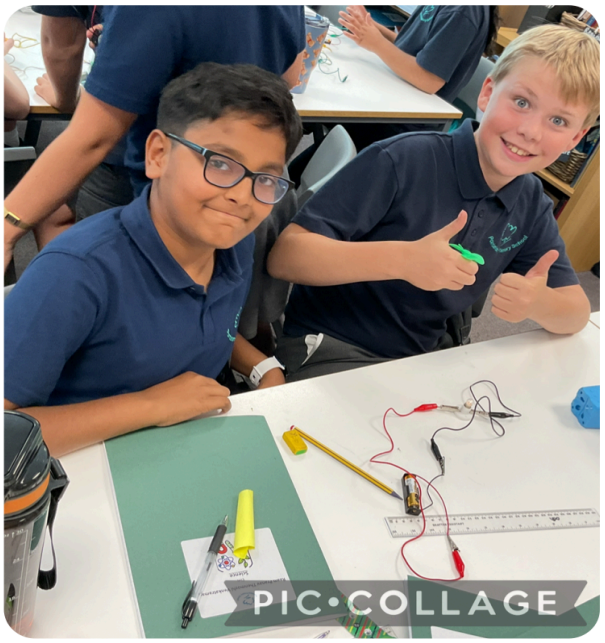
This Week in Year 6

In Year 6, we have officially plugged into our exciting new science topic on electricity! The children have already explored the fundamentals of what electricity actually is, diving into key concepts like voltage, resistance, and current. Building on this new knowledge, they have also rolled up their sleeves to start constructing their very own working circuits, testing how different components interact and putting their scientific theories into practice.

Miss Allan and Mrs Main





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Dates for Your Diary in 2026/2027

Tue 20th October 2026	Yr 6 Trip - Packed lunches NOT needed
Fri 23rd October 2026	Teacher Training Day (school closed to pupils)
W.C. 26th Oct 2026	Half Term
Mon 2nd Nov 2026	Teacher Training Day (school closed to pupils)
Tue 3rd Nov 2026	School Resumes
Fri 18th Dec 2026	Last day of school - 1.30pm finish
Mon 4th Jan 2027	School Resumes

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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:

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

After School Club Needs You!

We would love to take any of these off you:

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

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Can you help the Friends of Ponteland Primary School?

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

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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