

Friday Flyer

Friday 23rd October 2026

Headteacher Update

This week saw the culmination of our Black History Month work with workshops from Bigfoot Arts for our KS2 children. Years 3, 4 and 5 all attended the Hidden Figures interactive drama performance yesterday where they were taken on a journey through history, learning about prominent Black figures in British history and deconstructing stereotypes. Our Year 6 pupils participated in an actor-in-role drama workshop where they explored Generation Windrush which links to their work this term on World War 2. In my assemblies with both KS1 and KS2 this week we acted out the Bristol Bus Boycott and the children were horrified to learn that back in 1963 when the boycott took place, there were no laws against discrimination. I'd like to thank the Friends of Ponteland Primary School for funding the Bigfoot workshops which enhanced the work we have done in school.



We've managed to squeeze a lot into four days as we have also held our STEM week and hosted one of our favourite visitors: Captain Chemistry. All classes in school have benefited from Captain Chemistry's scientific expertise, from nursery who explored slime to Y6 who had the pleasure of dissecting owl pellets! Each year group also participated in a Design and Technology challenge to make a tower which gave them the opportunity to explore balance, structure and stability, with Early Years children comparing narrow and wide bases, KS2 pupils investigating the strength of different materials, LKS2 children testing frame shapes and UKS2 experimenting with string to support structure and stability. The children showed determination and tenacity and we're pretty sure we have some future engineers in the making.

I hope you all have a lovely half term and look forward to welcoming the children back to school on Tuesday 3rd November following our Monday training day.

Best wishes,

Claire Johnson

Safeguarding & Wellbeing

Over the school holidays, children's screen time naturally increases. The following guide may be useful in helping keep your child safe when accessing YouTube.

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.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about YOUTUBE

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows YouTube. The Google-owned site lets anyone upload videos to be shared around the world, and as a result, it's an incredible resource with instant free access to material covering every conceivable topic. But with over 500 hours of video uploaded every minute, not all of it will be appropriate for young eyes.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate content. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but it can also lead to binge-watching and screen addiction – especially if 'autoplay' is active. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

RADICALISATION

YouTube's algorithm tends to promote content that's getting the most traffic – a lot of which can be quite extreme. This can be fine for harmless topics, but YouTube isn't regulated like television, and that means that conspiracy theories, fake news and hateful ideologies can occasionally surface to warp impressionable minds all too easily. Remember – the more they watch, the more they'll be recommended.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as message other users directly. Connecting with strangers online can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, cyberbullying and – in the worst cases – online predators. If a child is creating content themselves, this can increase the likelihood of them becoming a target.

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends and challenges, some of which are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may cause physical or emotional harm: children who watch or copy them. The painful 'salt and ice challenge' – where people use these two ingredients to burn their skin – is just one of many examples.

SNEAKY SCAMMERS

The comments sections of popular content creators regularly have scammers posing as that influencer, attempting to lure users into clicking on their phishing links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and often offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users aren't who they claim to be.

Advice for Parents & Educators

APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

For older children, Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate material (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence, and sexual content) to underage viewers. To prevent children from changing across age-inappropriate content on the platform, we would recommend enabling Restricted Mode on each device that they use to access YouTube. It's worth also turning the auto-play feature off, to prevent YouTube's algorithm automatically recommending something inappropriate.

18 CENSORED TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows parents and carers to monitor what their child is watching, uploading, and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches, and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives a parent or carer oversight of how their child uses sites like YouTube and helps to ensure that they are only accessing appropriate content.

MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them under 18. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course. You may want to keep an eye on how children interact with this material – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand what they're interested in. Remember that creators often share content outside of YouTube, so don't ignore their web presence elsewhere!

CONSIDER YOUTUBE KIDS

It's possible to sidestep most inappropriate content completely via Google's own YouTube Kids app for Android handsets and iPhone. This lets you filter content by "preschool" (4 and under), "younger" (ages 5 to 8) and "older" (ages 9 to 12). This isn't a perfect substitute for personal supervision, as the app's filtering system is automated, and Google can't manually review all videos.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that a child is subscribed to can be hidden. If the child is only uploading videos set as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.

LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases. For example, users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch. If you'd like to avoid children purchasing content online, limit their access to online payment methods. Many parents have discovered the hard way that a child happily consuming a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

[@wake_up_weds](https://twitter.com/wake_up_weds) www.thenationalcollege.com [@wake.up.wednesday](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwkeupweds) [@wake.up.weds](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwkeupweds)

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Release date: 26.01.2023 Last reviewed: 31.05.2024



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		93.7%	
Reception Chestnut	98.8%	3 Pine	96.8%
Reception Pinecone	100%	4 Alder	92.1%
1 Holly	96.3%	4 Yew	99.6%
1 Ash	87.9%	5 Oak	99.2%
2 Sycamore	88.8%	5 Beech	99.2%
2 Willow	99.2%	6 Elm	95.7%
3 Maple	90.4%	6 Birch	94.8%

Whole school (cumulative from Sept)	97.0%
---	--------------

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.



PELE TRUST PRIMARY
CAREERS

CAREER FACTS

Electric Cars

Did you know? The North East is a major centre for electric vehicle and battery manufacturing. The region has 44% of England's employment in battery and accumulator manufacturing.

 **Talk about it at home:** What do you think cars might look like in 20 years?

Career of the week...



Electric Car Designer

Ideas today for a cleaner tomorrow



What do they do?

Electric car designers create new and exciting cars that run on electricity instead of petrol or diesel. They design how the car looks, think about how it works and help make it safe, comfortable and good for the environment.



Where do they work?

They can work in design studios, engineering teams and factories, often with other people like engineers, computer experts and scientists.



Skills they need


Creativity and imagination


Problem solving


Using computers


Working with others


Caring about the environment


Attention to detail

Science to know


Electricity and batteries


Energy and power


Forces and motion

Physics and science help designers to understand how electric cars move and how to make them more efficient.

Level



Usually requires a degree in subjects such as engineering, design or physics (lots of people start by studying these at university).

Why it's important

Electric cars help to reduce pollution and keep our air cleaner. They use less fossil fuel and can be powered by renewable energy like wind and solar power. Electric car designers are helping to make a cleaner, greener and healthier future for everyone!



Big ideas. Real impact. Cleaner air, healthier communities and a brighter future!

This Week in Nursery

This week we've been enjoying the story *Room on the Broom* and letting our imaginations run wild. The children used syringes to investigate what was inside the witches' cauldron, carefully used tweezers to rescue spiders from their webs, balanced pumpkins on their heads, and sorted Halloween pasta. We also used our magic to make a pumpkin explode!

The children got creative by cutting out shapes to complete their pumpkin pictures, developing their fine motor skills along the way. We also had a brilliant visit from Captain Chemistry, who showed us how to make our very own slime! The children were fascinated by the experiment and loved getting hands-on with the gooey, slimy science.

What a fantastic week of exploring, experimenting, creating and learning through play we've had so much fun.



This Week in Reception

🍁 What a Spooktacular End to Our First Half Term! 🎃

What a wonderful week we've had in Chestnut and Pinecone Classes! It was lovely to welcome our parents into our new environments to see how well the children have settled. We are so proud of how confidently the children have embraced their new routines, explored their surroundings and become part of our class families.

Things got a little messy (and magical!!) when we welcomed a special visitor from Captain Chemistry! The children were fascinated as they discovered how to make slime, exploring the exciting world of science through hands-on fun. There were lots of curious questions, amazed faces and, of course, plenty of slime! We finished our half term in *spooktacular* style with a fantastic Halloween disco! A huge thank you to our wonderful PTA for organising such a fun event for the children. We had a brilliant time dancing, celebrating and getting into the Halloween spirit! 🕷️🕸️

We are incredibly proud of all the children and everything they have achieved during their first half term. They have worked so hard, made new friendships and shown such enthusiasm for their learning. Wishing all our Chestnut and Pinecone families a lovely, restful half term break! 🍁 Enjoy spending time together, making memories and having lots of fun. We look forward to welcoming everyone back for another exciting half term of learning and adventures! ❤️



This Week in Year 1

What an amazing STEM week! We blasted off to a brilliant start with Captain Chemistry, designing, building and then launching our own rockets. Over in the forest teamwork was front and centre as we built sturdy bridges using only natural materials. We took on the whole school DT challenge to build the highest tower using only cardboard and paper. We explored chromatography, watching the colours separate during our experiments.

To round off an amazing week, we had a spooktacular time at our Halloween disco. Wishing all of our lovely families a very happy half term.



This Week in Year 2

As part of STEM week, we met Captain Chemistry. He shared some of his skull collection with us and we learned what the different types of teeth told us about the diets of those animals. We also took on an engineering challenge to test the stability of paper towers. We also finished the half term with a spooky disco!



Mr Massey and Mrs Nowosielska

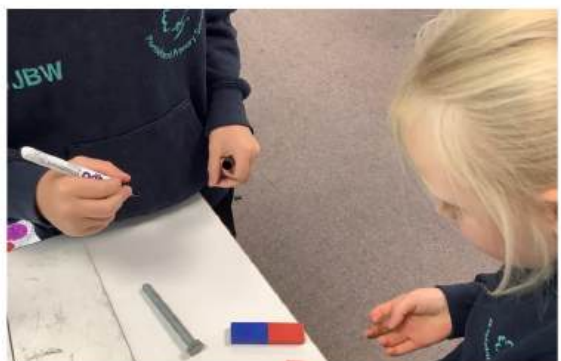
This Week in Year 3

What an exciting week it's been at school! As part of STEM Week, our classrooms have been buzzing with creativity, curiosity, and discovery.

A special highlight was a visit from Captain Chemistry, who amazed us with his fascinating experiments and helped us explore the mysteries of magnetism. We have also built towers, models of Stonehenge and made fossils, it's been very hands-on!

In addition to all the science fun, we also celebrated Black History Month by learning about inspirational figures such as Katherine Johnson, the brilliant NASA mathematician whose work helped send astronauts into space and took part in a fantastic live interactive Hidden Figures assembly.

It's been a week full of learning, teamwork, and excitement. We wish everyone a wonderful half-term break and a very Happy Halloween!



This Week in Year 4

What a busy and fun-filled final week of Autumn 1 we have had in Year 4! We've enjoyed a brilliant wind turbine building session with Captain Chemistry, where the children got stuck into some hands-on STEM learning. We also had a fascinating Hidden Figures assembly to celebrate and recognise Black History Month, learning about some incredible people and their achievements. In computing, the children have been exploring block-based coding using Google Arcade and had a go at creating their very own Chase the Pizza game. They absolutely loved experimenting with their code and seeing their games come to life! And, of course, excitement for the Halloween disco has been at fever pitch this week! 🎃👻

Thank you for your continued support this half term. Mrs Bell and I hope you all have a lovely, safe and relaxing break with your families, enjoy a well-deserved rest and make some lovely memories together. We look forward to welcoming everyone back for Autumn 2!



This Week in Year 5

STEM Week - What a week!

We've had a great time during STEM Week.

We had a visit from the marvellous Captain Chemistry who helped us make a pH indicator using cabbage juice. Yes, that's right! Cabbage juice! The children saw how it could be used to identify acids and alkalis and were totally transfixed as they were mixed slowly into a solution that gradually changed colour as it went from acid to neutral and then to alkali.

We then finished the week building some paper rollercoasters. The children were abuzz with excitement and it was lovely to see the teamwork and resilience we pride the children on showing in full effect.



This Week in Year 6

What an action-packed four days it has been in Year 6! On Tuesday, the children deepened their understanding of WWII during a fascinating trip to the Victoria Tunnels, where they explored the historic air-raid shelter and heard the moving story of Miriam, a wartime evacuee. To conclude our WWII topic and mark Black History Month, we also took part in a workshop on the Windrush Generation to learn about post-war Britain—with a huge thank you to our wonderful PTA for funding this experience! In science, Captain Chemistry paid us a visit for a fantastic hands-on session dissecting owl pellets to learn about animal diets and habitats. Meanwhile, in DT, pupils have been working hard designing and constructing their very own gothic houses.

It has been an incredible first half term, and the children have worked remarkably hard. Everyone has certainly earned a very well-deserved rest over the break!



PIC-COLLAGE

Dates for Your Diary in 2026/2027



Fri 23rd October 2026	Teacher Training Day (school closed to pupils)
W/c 26th Oct 2026	Half Term
Mon 2nd Nov 2026	Staff Training Day (school closed to pupils)
Tue 3rd Nov 2026	School Resumes
Mon 23rd Nov 2026	Flu Immunisation Day
Wed 25th Nov 2026	Individual Photo Day
Thur 26th Nov 2026	Festive Wreath Making Night 6pm - 9pm (Tickets Needed)
Tue 1st Dec 2026	Reception & Year 6 NHS Heights & Weights
Fri 4th Dec 2026	Christmas Fair
Fri 18th Dec 2026	Last day of school - 1.30pm finish
Mon 4th Jan 2027	School Resumes
13th - 15th Jan 2026	Yr5 at Robinwood
W/c 15th Feb 2026	Half Term
Mon 22nd Feb 2026	Staff Training Day (school closed to pupils)

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:

- 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
- Comics
- Beads





PRE-LOVED SCHOOL UNIFORM



Do you have Ponteland Primary School uniform in GOOD condition that your child no longer wears but could be worn by someone else in our school community?



Please donate your pre-loved, wearable uniform via the donation basket in reception.

Looking for uniform?

Follow this link to let us know what you're looking for. Uniform will be delivered to your child's class.

Voluntary contributions to the FPPS are welcomed.
Donate here or at the money box at reception.



Friends of
Ponteland Primary School





PRE-LOVED SCHOOL UNIFORM



✓ Yes please



✗ No thank you



No frayed or
ripped items



No stained
items



No grey items
needed at
this time

HIGH SCHOOL ITEMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Please donate your pre-loved, good condition
PPS uniform via the donation basket in
reception.



Friends of
Ponteland Primary School





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.**

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, under the minor ailments scheme. Please ask your pharmacist for more details.

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**



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



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