

Dear Parents and Carers,

February 2025



As we approach half term, I thought it would be good to celebrate some of our successes since the new year and let you know about various events coming up. Thanks to all the parents who were able to attend the Pre-School Stay and Play sessions held recently. The children always love showing how busy they are in school and how much they enjoy it.



We are in the process of applying for some funding to allow our current Y4s and Y5s to travel to Germany in June 2026. A parental survey has been sent; please complete this as it will support our application. Thank you.

Swimming Gala

Our Key Stage 2 children competed in the Derwentside Swimming Gala. They took part with great enthusiasm, competing very well and being great sports. They finished in second place, which is the school's best result in years!



Lego Robotics



Three of our Y6 children took part in a Lego Robotics competition organised by Nissan. On the day they had to perform a variety of coding activities as well as giving a presentation of the work they have done. The team have had to persevere in the face of various challenges both in their preparation and on the day. This was recognised by the judges as they awarded them the 'Rising Stars' award for showing potential as future coders.

Boys' 5 a side Football

The boys' 5 a side team recently won a competition at Greenland and are now Derwentside's representatives in the County semi-final which will take place in Washington on Tuesday. Well done to the boys and their coach, Ben. Good luck for the semi-finals!



All who attended **Tanfield's Got Talent** had a great night on Wednesday. Here are some of the performers. We were treated to a great variety of talents and all children should be really proud of what they achieved on the night.

Careers

A big thank you to the parents and members of the school community who came to talk to the Y5s and Y6s about their careers! They were really interested to hear what the adults of Leon, Amelia, Darcey, Pippa, Bruno, Raven and Frey had to say.

Upcoming events:



Our Y4, choir and woodwind and guitarists will be performing at the Gala Theatre, in Durham, on Wednesday. Y4 will sing 6 songs with Brandon Primary and they will play 2 songs on the ukulele. It's a great, if nerve wracking, experience for them performing in a large theatre. I know parents will be looking forward to hearing them.

High 5 – Our High 5 Teams (girls and boys) will be competing at Brandon Primary on Friday. They'll play against other local schools to try to win the trophy.

Liz Million Visit - Liz Million is a local author / illustrator. She will be in to talk to the children on Monday 3rd March to celebrate World Book Day and will host drawing workshops. An email has been sent about her 2 'How to draw' books that she will be selling.

Book Fair - We will be holding our annual Book Fair from Thursday 6th March (World Book Day). Children will each be given a £1 off vouchers that can either be used at the Book Fair or in local shops. More details to follow for this.

Charity Non-Uniform – Friday 7th March.

This term our school will be supporting the local charity, Farplace Animal Rescue. This is a charity close to the children's hearts and one which won our recent school poll by a clear majority. The charity has land, woodland and fields that are used for both wildlife habitats, ponds and horse rescue. They offer a range of specific animal habitats and wildlife experience zones.

On Friday 7th March, the School Council would like to encourage children to come with animal-related pyjamas, onesies or outfits to support this. Some might even want to wear face-paints!



Please see the Dates for the Diary below which outlines the activities coming up in the next few weeks, including a date for the Howtown Slideshow (28th March). **Any new or changed dates are in green.**

Staffing We are very pleased to say that Miss Lydia James will start working at the school as a Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) after February half-term. She will join us from a school in Washington.

Parent Meetings

On Friday, an email was sent out to all parents, except Mrs Dunham's Rising 3 children, with the link to book your Parent Meeting appointment. 61% of parents have already booked for appointments so if you've not done so yet, please do as soon as possible.

<https://tanfieldleacommunity.schoolcloud.co.uk/>

The School have set 3 priorities for this school year. Here is an update on those.

1. **To develop writing through Talk for Writing** – Staff have had training on this and children are enjoying rehearsing Story Maps so they can write stories well by themselves.
2. **To develop assessment for Foundation subjects** – Staff have developed ways for assessing Music and Art/DT, in addition to the written subjects.
3. **To improve play opportunities through OPAL** – Thank you for your donations of equipment to support with this. Tyres 2 U have helped us with more tyres. We have also opened water play areas, the Cozy Cottage as well as adding new scooters and other equipment.

Hand Hygiene

Staff regularly remind children about the importance of washing their hands. Please remind your child about the importance of good hand hygiene to minimise the risk of illnesses being spread.

INSET Days

Unfortunately, we do not have any INSET days in May this year. This is due to the County's regulations on how many INSET days schools can take. For the following year (2025-26), the school know how popular

the INSET days are in May so we have set INSET days for Thursday 21st May, Friday 22nd May as well as Monday 20th July 2026. The school's holidays can be found [here](#).

Entrance and Exit

Can I remind you again about entering school and exiting please?

We have a one-way system in operation.

This reduces congestion and makes it easier for everyone when moving in and out of school.

Other than a small minority of adults who have requested, for medical reasons, that they need to reduce their walking, ALL adults and children should enter by the main entrance gate (the lower entrance) and leave by the exit between the School House and the Activity Den.

Increasingly we have adults and children coming in via the exit and other adults who are leaving via the entrance. This can cause congestion and is easily avoided if everyone can keep to the one-way system. It's also not fair on the majority of adults who are following the system and are then having to avoid adults coming the wrong way.

In addition to this, adults should not be congregating at the Exit by the Activity Den. If you want to meet your child, please come on the yard and wait for them there.

If you have adults coming to school who do not see this newsletter, could you please explain the system to them. Thank you.

Toddler Group – This is to let you know that a baby and toddler group runs in Tanfield Lea Community Centre from 9.30 to 11am on Wednesdays in term-time. The cost is £2 per child, including a drink and snack.

Family First Newsletter – Here is a link to a Parenting newsletter, which may be of interest:

<https://familyfirst.co.uk/issue1-25>.

We wish you all a happy half-term break.

Best regards,
Mark Temple
(Acting Headteacher)



Dates for your Diary	
Spring 2025	
Tuesday 18 th Feb	Y3 Multi Skills Festival + ABCs @ Burnopfield
Tuesday 18th Feb	2 – 3pm Parental engagement - Y5/6 parents invited in for Anderson shelter building
Tuesday 18th Feb	3.15 Boys' 5 a side team to play semi-final in Washington
Wednesday 19 th Feb	Gala Theatre, Durham booked for Y4 performance – all children to take part. Rehearse in the afternoon and then perform at night. <i>Y4 to be central to this plus our musicians and choir.</i>
Friday 21st Feb	Y5 and Y6 girls v girls/boys v boys High 5 competition @ Brandon
HALF TERM	Monday 24th February to Friday 28th February
Monday 3 rd March	Back to school
	Parent/Children questionnaire to go out this half term
Tuesday 4 th March	Parent Meetings – after school – times to be confirmed at time of booking
Weds 5 th March	Parent Meetings – after school – times to be confirmed at time of booking
Early March	Book fair
Thursday 6 th March	World Book Day (We will not be asking children to dress up as book characters.) <i>Liz Million, an author/illustrator, will visit the school this week.</i>
Friday 7th March	Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family <i>After a poll by School Council, the children decided they want to support FarPlace Animal Rescue. Pajamas, onesies or other animal-related clothing to be worn.</i>
Weds 12 th March	Full Governing Body meeting
Thurs 13 th March	6P – Monokuzuri Caravan
Friday 14 th March	6R – Monokuzuri Caravan

Tues / Weds 18 th /19 th March	Boys' football team qualifiers
Friday 21st March	DATA SHEETS TO BE GIVEN OUT TO PARENTS Rec to Y6
Tues 25 th March	Possible boys' football finals
Friday 28 th March	Y6 Howtown Slideshow 9am. Parents welcome.
NEW DATE: Monday 31 st March	Y3/4 Trip to Segedunum Fort
Friday 4 th April	Non-School Uniform Day – please donate an Easter Egg – one per family
Friday 4 th April	Y1 and Y2 Football Competition @ Tanfield
Tuesday 7 th April	Captain Chemistry to lead Science workshop for 6P, 6R and 5M
Tuesday 8 th April	Y4 Multi Skills Festival (no ABCs) @ Brandon
Weds 8 th April	Captain Chemistry to lead Science workshop for 5Mac
Wednesday 9 th April	Egg Decorating Lower School children to bring decorated egg into school today for competition. Upper School children to bring boiled egg and decorating resources to school to decorate egg – parents welcome to come and work with the upper school children in class on this a.m.
Friday 11 th April	KS2 Easter Celebration – through music and poetry in St. Margaret's Church Parents of children involved are invited to join us for this special service – starting between 1:30 and 1:45. Children able to go home with parents afterwards.
Friday 11 th April	Start of Easter Holidays
EASTER HOLIDAYS	Friday 11 th April to Friday 25 th April

SUMMER TERM

	<i>Music Programme to continue with Y1D in Summer 1 and PS/Rec in Summer 2 Swimming for 3K and 3/4B</i>
Monday 28 th April	Back to school
Wednesday 30 th April	Pre-School Trip to Hall Hill Farm (This is not for the Rising 3s as they will do this trip next year).
Friday 2 nd May	Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family
Monday 5 th May	May Bank Holiday
During May	Optional Y2 SATs testing window starts today
Tuesday 6 th – 9 th May	School Assessment for the rest of the school
Mon 12 th – 16 th May	Y6 SATs WEEK It is very important that you do not book a holiday for this week or for the weeks leading up to it. Requests will not be authorised and absence will impact on your child's attainment.
Monday 19 th May	Boys' and girls' football team day
Tuesday 20 th May	Y1 Multi Skills Festival + ABCs @ Brandon
Tuesday 20 th May	Art Exhibition - celebrating the children's artwork
AFTER SATs	Year 6 to go swimming (Date TBC)
Friday 23 rd May	Y3 and Y4 Cricket Competition @ Burnside
	PARENTS: PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE NO TEACHER TRAINING DAYS IN MAY THIS YEAR DUE TO THE HOLIDAY DATES GIVEN BY THE COUNCIL.
May Half Term	Monday 26 th May to Friday 30 th May
Monday 2 nd June	Back to school
2 nd June to 13 th June	Multiplication Tables Check – Test period
Monday 2 nd June	SPORTS WEEK
Tues 3 rd June	After School Sponsored Bike Ride after school for children from Y2 to Y6
Wednesday 4 th June	SPORTS DAYS for all year groups: 9:15 – Years 5 and 6 10:30 – Years 1 and 2 11:15 – Pre-School (Bumblebees only) 1:00 – Pre-School (Ladybirds and Caterpillars) and Reception. Ladybirds to start 15 minutes later today. 2:10 – Years 3 and 4
Thursday 5 th June	Sleepover for Y6 – arriving at school between 6:30 and 6:45
Friday 6 th June	Activity Day for Y5 and Y6 (Including Climbing Wall) Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family
9 th to 13 th June	Phonics Screening Check – Test Week – All of Y1 children plus those Y2 children who did not reach the required standard last year.
Wednesday 11 th June	Full Governing Body Meeting
Wednesday 11 th June	In it Together Conference in Durham for Y3
Wednesday 18 th June	Transition Day for Reception (current Pre-School to move into Reception)
Tuesday 1 st – Thursday 3 rd July	Transition Days for Tanfield School / NDA

Tuesday 1 st July	Transition lesson for all children at Tanfield Primary (10:20 to 11:20)
Tuesday 1 st July	Meet the Teacher meeting – 4:00 p.m. + Creche
Wednesday 2nd July	Y3/4 Parental Engagement Sewing DT
Wednesday 2 nd July	Transition afternoon for children and parents of Pre-School and Reception to learn more about how things work in the new year groups and support their children with this progression. Reception to move to Y1 – Parents to be invited to join us at 1:45 p.m. Pre-School to move to Reception – Parents to be invited to join us at 2 p.m. (If attending this you do not need to attend the ‘Meet the Teacher’ on Tuesday night.)
Friday 4 th July	Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family
Friday 4 th July	Reports go out to all parents
Monday 7 th July	Parent Meetings for those parents who would like an appointment
Tuesday 8 th July	Y2 Multi Skills Festival + ABCs @ Tanfield
Wednesday 9 th July	Y1 and 2 Visit to St Mary’s Lighthouse
Friday 11 th July	Y5 and Y6 girls v girls/boys v boys Athletics Competition @ Brandon
Monday 14 th July	Y6 Leavers’ Meal – 4:15 until 5:45
Monday 14 th July	Bastille Day – all to come in dressed in red, white and blue
Monday 14 th July	Thankyou tea for all who have helped us this year – 2:30 until 3:30 Y5 to prepare and serve.
Tuesday 15 th July	Y6 Dress Rehearsal to the Upper School and some parents – afternoon Y6 Performance – evening – 6 p.m.
Wednesday 16 th July	Upper School visit to Craster/Embleton Beach
Wednesday 16 th July	Lower School Fun Day
Thursday 17 th July	Y2 Moving on Assembly for their parents (9 a.m.)
Friday 18 th July	Y6 Leavers’ Assembly for Y6 and their parents (9 a.m.) Last day of term
Tuesday 2 nd Sept 2025	Back to School