

Dear Parents and Carers,

February 2026



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. Similarly, thank you to everyone who came to the Year 5 and 6 sewing afternoon. It was extremely well attended and the Y5/6 team really appreciated the support.

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 first place, which is the school's best result ever and will now compete in the County Finals in Durham on 6th March.



Boys' 5 a side Football

The boys' 5 a side team last night represented Derwentside against teams from Chester-Le-Street, Durham and Darlington. Well done to the boys and their coach, Neil Hole and Mr McIntosh. It was a tough competition but they represented us well!

Tanfield's Got Talent

All who attended **Tanfield's Got Talent** had a great night last 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 have offered to talk to the Y5s and Y6s about their careers! So far Mr Potter has talked to the classes and we have Mr Sparkes, Mrs Lee and Mrs Gladstone-Heighton lined up for future talks.



Our Y4, choir and woodwind and guitarists performed at the Gala Theatre, in Durham, on Wednesday. Y4 sang 6 songs with Brandon Primary and they played 2 songs on the ukulele. They were supported by the choir and guitarists and woodwind players. It's a great, if nerve wracking, experience for them performing in a large theatre. I know the parents are so proud of their efforts!

Heel and Toe Recycling Bin – Heel and Toe children's charity are based in Pelton and provide a range of therapies to children with disabilities in the North East. We are pleased to be able to support them with a recycling bank near the main entrance.

They can accept:

- Wearable adult and children's clothes
- Shoes
- Bags and accessories

They do NOT accept:

- Damaged clothing
- Pillows
- Duvets and curtains
- Or branded school uniforms



Online Safety - Children's Commissioner for England, Rachel de Souza, has asked for schools to circulate a guide to parents: [What I wish my parents or carers knew: A guide for parents on managing children's digital lives.](#)

Upcoming Events

FREE Top-Up Swimming Lessons & FREE Swimming This February Half Term (See attached flyer)

Durham County Council is offering free top-up swimming lessons this February half term for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils who are not yet meeting the National Curriculum swimming and water safety requirements. This is generally children who do not feel confident swimming 25 meters.

What's on Offer?

- Free top-up swimming lessons for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils eligible for Free School Meals, available at four local swimming pools during the February half term. Lessons focus on building confidence, developing swimming skills, and helping pupils work towards National Curriculum outcomes.
- FREE recreational swimming for **all** children and young people aged 18 and under throughout the February half term, available at all 10 Durham County Council swimming pools.

Sports Festivals/Competitions

We are really enjoying the sports offered by the Chester Le Street Schools Sports Partnership. These are combination of festivals for everyone and competitions. As new dates have been released, including for Reception, we have added them to the Dates for the Diary below.

Author Visit - James Harris is a local author who has written children's stories and picture books. He will be in to talk to the children on Monday 2nd March to celebrate World Book Day and will host a series of workshops. His website is <https://www.theunbelievablejamesharris.com/> if you are interested.

Book Fair - We will be holding our annual Book Fair from Thursday 5th 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.

Parent Meetings – Tuesday 3rd / Wednesday 4th March.

On Tuesday, an email was sent out to all parents, except Mrs Dunham's Rising 3 children, with the link to book your Parent Meeting appointment. 62% 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/>

SATS Revision Materials.

The first wave of revision orders have been sent home with the children. The deadline for the second order is **Monday 2nd March**. If you need another order form, your child can ask for one from their teacher.

Parent Coffee Afternoon to Support Children's Well-Being – On Monday 16th March, at 2.15pm, Lou Vardy from the Emotional Well-Being and Effective Learning (EWEL) team will be available in school for conversations/advice around children's anxieties and worries. This is a great opportunity to speak with her, Mrs Brotherston, Mr Mansfield and Mr Temple as well as chat with other parents/carers. Coffee and biscuits guaranteed! All are welcome. If you'd like to come in for a chat, it would be lovely to see you.

Captain Chemistry will be working with different classes between 25th - 27th March to add to our Science curriculum. This has been funded by the Friends, using the money you helped through last year's Asda fundraising so thank you!



Celebrating Oracy

This June, we're celebrating *Oracy* across the school and developing our libraries as part of the National Year of Reading. Throughout the week, children will talk, discuss, share, and debate their favourite stories—and families are warmly invited to join us and celebrate oracy together. More details to follow!



OPAL play at our school continues despite the wet weather and every day is a welly day so that the children can still access most of our areas. This half-term we will be placing a box at the front entrance to collect small world toys (dolls, cars, action figures, teddies). We are also trying to increase the variety of large wheeled resources available to children. This includes buggies, wheelchairs and suitcases if you have any you wish to donate, please take them to the school office. Thank you in advance, we really appreciate your donations.

After Care – Attached to the Newsletter is a poster for After-Care. These photos show some of the activities the children get up to. Please see the poster or the website for more details.



Please see the Dates for the Diary below which outlines the activities coming up in the next few weeks. **Any new or changed dates are in green.**

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

1. **To develop high quality teaching through a shared understanding of good practice** – Staff have so far discussed how to model explanations better and how to give feedback.
2. **To improve attainment in Writing** – Staff have worked on assessing writing and continuing to improve practice using the Talk for Writing approach.
3. **To use the 'Moving the Box' project in order to raise attainment across the 17 areas of learning in Early Years** – Staff have attended training on this and are working intensively to improve outcomes in Early Years.

INSET Days

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

We wish you all a happy half-term break when it comes.

Best regards,
Mark Temple
(Head Teacher)



Spring 2026

Friday 13th Feb	Year 3 and 4 Trip to Beamish Museum
Friday 13 th Feb	ATTITUDES TO LEARNING SHEETS TO BE SENT OUT THIS WEEK Pre-School and Reception to receive an update including voice of child and parent
HALF TERM	Monday 23rd February to Friday 27th February
Monday 2 nd March	Back to school
Monday 2nd March	Author James Harris coming in for World Book Day
Tuesday 3 rd March	Parent Meetings – after school – times to be confirmed at time of booking
Wednesday 4 th March	Parent Meetings – after school – times to be confirmed at time of booking
Thursday 5 th March	World Book Day (We will not be asking children to dress up as book characters.)
Friday 6 th March	Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation–We will be collecting Easter Eggs for this.
5th – 9th March	Book Fair
Tuesday 10 th March	Swimming block 2 for Y3/4: 3K and 4Mac
Friday 13th March	1D to attend Invasion Games Festival PM 12:30 pm - 2:15 pm
Friday 20 th March	DATA SHEETS TO BE GIVEN OUT TO PARENTS Rec to Y6
Wednesday 25th March	Y6 Rugby Skills Festival 12:30 pm - 2:15 pm
Wednesday 25th – 27th March	Captain Chemistry coming in to work with different classes.
Thursday 26 th March	CLS SSP Football Tournament at Meadowfield
Tuesday 31 st March	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. FRIENDS TO DO COFFEE AFTERNOON THIS AFTERNOON IN LOWER SCHOOL HALL
Thursday 2 nd 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 3rd April	Start of Easter Holidays
EASTER HOLIDAYS	Friday 3rd April to Friday 17th April
SUMMER TERM 2026	
Monday 20th April	Back to school
Tuesday 21 st April	Swimming Y3/4 Block 3 starts: 3/4D and 3K
Tuesday 21st April	PM: 3K Multi-Sports Festival (Rearranged date)
Thursday 23rd April	PM: 3/4D Mini Tennis Festival
Weds 29th April (now confirmed)	Pre-School Trip to Hall Hill Farm
Friday 1 st May	Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family
Monday 4th May	May Bank Holiday
Tuesday 5th – 8th May	School Assessment for Early Years to Y5
Mon 11 th – 15 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.
Thursday 15th May	PM: 1HB to Year 1 Disney Festival
Monday 18th May	Year 1 and 2 parents/carers are invited to a rocket building afternoon
Tuesday 19 th May	Art Exhibition - celebrating the children’s artwork
Tuesday 19 th May	Little Fingers Music programme for Pre-School until the end of term. Also Mrs Geach’s class to do Little Fingers from 19 th May to 16 th June.
Wednesday 20th May	PM: Year 2 Striking and Fielding Festival
Thursday 21st May	Staff INSET Day– School is closed to children.
Friday 22nd May	Staff INSET Day – School is closed to children.
May Half Term	Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May
Monday 1 st June	Back to school
1 st June to 13 th June	Y4 Multiplication Tables Check – Test period
Monday 1 st June	SPORTS WEEK Skipping Activity Session today
Tuesday 2 nd June	Active Morning for all children from Y1 to Y6
Tuesday 2nd June	Y5/6 Athletics Competition
Tuesday 2 nd June	Y6 Swimming block restarts

Tuesday 2nd June after school	Sponsored Bike Ride after school for children from Y2 to Y6
Wednesday 3rd June	SPORTS DAYS for all year groups: 9:05 – Years 5 and 6 10:30 – Years 1 and 2 1:00 – Pre-School and Reception. Bumblebees stay for lunch. Ladybirds to start 15 minutes later today. 2:10 – Years 3 and 4 This year we hope to hold adult races too!
Thursday 4 th June	Y1/2 (a.m.) and Y3/4 (p.m.) – Outdoor Activities in the grounds
Thursday 4th June	Y5/6 Countdown Cricket Competition
Thursday 4 th June evening	Sleepover for Y6 – arriving at school between 6:30 and 6:45
Friday 5 th June	Activity Day for Y5 and Y6 (Including Climbing Wall which is booked £500) Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family
Friday 5th June	Y5/6 Girls Cricket Competition
8 th to 12 th June	Phonics Screening Check – Test Week – All of Y1 children plus those Y2 children who did not reach the required standard last year.
Tuesday 9th June	PM: 4Mac Cricket Festival
Wednesday 10 th June tbc	In it Together Conference for Y3 (To be confirmed)
Friday 12th June	Y5/6 Stingers Netball Competition
Wednesday 17 th June	Transition Day for Reception (current Pre-School to move into Reception)
Wednesday 17 th June	Alternative Sports Day (if 1 st date rained off)
Wednesday 17 th June	Y6 Boys – Puberty Talk
Wednesday 17th June	After school: Durham Dash competition
Tuesday 23 rd June	Mrs Sparkes' class to do Little Fingers Music programme until the end of the term.
Friday 26 th June	Letters to go out today to all parents re classes for next year
Monday 29th June	Year 1 and 2 trip to Kirkley Hall Zoo
Monday 29th June	Reception Superhero Festival
Tuesday 30th June – Thursday 2nd July	Transition Days for Tanfield School / NDA (now confirmed)
Tuesday 30 th June	Transition lesson for all children at Tanfield Primary (10:20 to 11:20)
Tuesday 30 th June	Meet the Teacher meeting – 4:00 p.m. + Creche
Wednesday 1st 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. (If attending this you do not need to attend the 'Meet the Teacher' on Monday night.)
Friday 3rd July	Non School Uniform Day – please send in a donation for school fund, one per family
Friday 3 rd July	Reports go out to all parents
Monday 6 th July	Parent Meetings for those parents who would like an appointment
Thursday 9th July	PM: Year 3/4 Parental Engagement – Greenhouse building
Monday 13th July	Y6 Quidditch Festival for children who have not represented the school in sport.
Monday 13 th July	Y6 Leavers' Meal – 4:15 until 5:45
Monday 13 th July	Thankyou tea for all who have helped us this year – 2:30 until 3:30 Y5 to prepare and serve.
Tuesday 14 th July	Bastille Day – all to come in dressed in red, white and blue
Tuesday 14 th July	Y6 Dress Rehearsal to the Upper School and some parents – afternoon Y6 Performance – evening – 6 p.m
Wednesday 15 th July	Y2 Moving on Assembly for their parents (9 a.m.)
Wednesday 15 th July	Y6 Performance – evening – 6p.m.
Thursday 16 th July	Lower School Fun Day / Craster Upper School Walk
Friday 17 th July	Y6 Leavers' Assembly for Y6 and their parents (9 a.m.) Last day of term
Tuesday 1 st Sept 2026	Back to School

