06.02.26

Executive Head Teacher Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are delighted to share the wonderful news that Chloe Senior has welcomed a beautiful baby boy to her family- Gregory Graham Senior.
We wish them all love, happiness and much family fun!

Despite the gloomy weather, there has been lots of fun and enthusiastic learning in school - as well as lots of mud and puddles outdoors.

It's hard to believe that we are now into February, with half-term rapidly approaching. Looking ahead, this is the UK National Year of Reading, so we will, as usual, be celebrating World Book Day (Thursday 5th March), so there is still plenty of time to find a favourite book and be creative in coming-up with a costume idea.
It's also fine not to dress up, but just keep reading -that's compulsory!!

Thanks to Mrs Dodds for all her efforts in providing research information, resources and support for staff in delivering the upcoming 'Talk Tactics' oracy project.
Developing our pupils' oracy skills is crucial in preparing them for future success.
This project is particularly focused on developing group talk skills and strategies.
This forms part of our school commitment plan.

Best wishes,

Diane Lakey

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING SAFE USE OF AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly woven into young people's digital lives. It can offer some educational benefits and day-to-day assistance; however, it also raises concerns about misinformation, privacy, fairness, and safety. This guide provides parents and educators with practical strategies to support young people to navigate AI tools responsibly, and to use them safely and with discernment.

1 DEMYSTIFY WHAT AI REALLY IS

Children encounter AI in most online places, including games, streaming platforms, and school tools. Explain that AI uses patterns from past data to make decisions, but it doesn't think or feel like humans. Use age-appropriate examples, like how recommendations on YouTube or Netflix work, to build understanding and prevent false beliefs about AI being all-knowing or alive.

2 TALK ABOUT RISKS OF MISINFORMATION

AI can create convincing false information, including deepfake videos, photos, and fake 'facts'. Encourage children to think critically about what they see and read. Teach them to double-check information using reliable sources, to look at images and videos carefully, and to ask an adult if something doesn't seem right.

3 DISCUSS DATA AND PRIVACY

Explain that AI systems learn by analysing lots of data, sometimes including personal information. Help young people to be mindful of what they share online and why protecting personal data matters. Model good habits like reading app permissions together or reviewing what's collected by voice assistants like Alexa or Siri.

4 ENCOURAGE CREATIVE USE OF AI

Support children, when using AI tools, to explore ideas, make art, or build projects. This fosters confidence, imagination, and independent thinking. When children use AI creatively, rather than just passively consuming it, they are more likely to stay engaged and make thoughtful choices.

5 USE AGE-APPROPRIATE AI TOOLS

Not all AI platforms are suitable for children. Choose tools designed for education or creativity, with clear safety policies. Review terms of use and privacy settings, and help children use them in age-appropriate ways. For example, some chatbot tools mimic conversation but should only be used with guidance and boundaries in place.

6 USE AI TOGETHER

Exploring AI tools together can help adults understand how they work and spot potential issues. Try co-writing a story with an AI writing assistant or experimenting with an AI art tool. This encourages curiosity, helps you stay informed about the latest AI tools, and allows you to reinforce safe and respectful use while modelling critical thinking.

7 SET BOUNDARIES FOR AI USE

Establish when, where, and how AI tools can be used, just as you would with any digital technology. For example, you might agree not to use AI tools to complete school assignments without permission, or to avoid unsupervised use of voice assistants. Consistent boundaries help manage overuse and misuse.

8 WATCH FOR OVERRELIANCE

Some AI tools, like homework help apps, may be tempting shortcuts. Encourage children to use AI to support their thinking, not replace it. Celebrate effort and process over perfect answers. Reinforce that mistakes are part of learning and that relying too heavily on AI can limit real understanding.

9 TEACH DIGITAL ETHICS AND LITERACY

Help children explore how AI works, where it might be biased, and why ethical thinking matters. Building digital literacy alongside ethical awareness ensures children engage with AI critically, not just conveniently. Help young people to understand that not all people use AI for legitimate purposes; some use it for malicious reasons. Encourage questions about fairness, representation, and who benefits from certain tools; talk about algorithms, echo chambers, and the impact of automation on daily life.

10 STAY CURIOUS AND INVOLVED

AI is developing rapidly, and staying informed helps you support the young people in your care. Follow trusted sources for updates and keep the conversation going. If a child brings up a new AI trend or tool, take the opportunity to learn about it together. Showing interest builds trust and strengthens digital resilience.

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Ellingham CE Primary School
Friday Flyer

Attendance

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Splash	100	97.2
Space Base	100	95.9
Earth Works	85.7	87.9
Time Zone	95.6	91.5

Did you know? Each pupil has 175 non-school days a year to spend however they like. The table below shows the significant impact of absence over time.

Days of school add up to lost learning						
Days in school	190	186	180	175	171	170
Percentage attendance	100%	98%	95%	92%	90%	<90%
	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Caution	Cause for concern	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.

What are the risks of missing a day of school?
'Being in school is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing and wider development. Pupils with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE results. The higher a pupil's attendance, the more they are likely to learn, and the better they are likely to perform in exams and formal assessments.' The Education Hub - Department for Education

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Splash Class

This week, we have continued our journey around the world, visiting North America to look at Brown bears. We have been using our world map to place all our bears in the right countries and finding homes for all our animals on our world map rug. We have a new cafe in Splash called Barnaby's and we have been working hard to make playdough food to sell.

Outside was super muddy this week and we all enjoyed some slippy slidy mud. It took a long time to get clean afterwards!

Space Base Class

This week, we have been working incredibly hard. In PE, the children have been working in teams to create an identical copy of an object that was hidden in a den. They ensured they took turns and listened carefully to one another.

Over the past few weeks, the children have created their own aeroplanes and are very proud of the work they have produced.

In English, our key focus has been writing information texts about the Wright brothers. The children completed research to ensure their information texts included lots of facts.
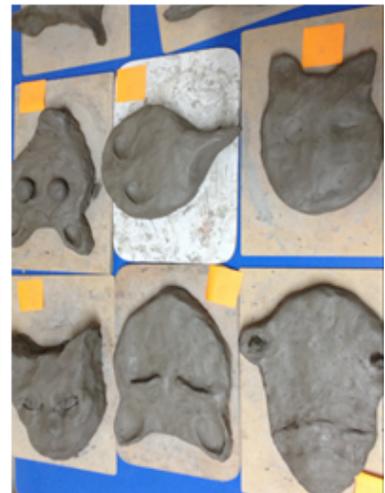
Over the past few weeks, we have also had a strong focus on oracy. The children put these skills to the test by directing a team mate to a place in the classroom using only words, with no hand actions allowed. The children loved this.

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Key Stage Two: Time Zone and Earth Works

In Art, we created the clay base for our Modroc masks, representing animals important to the Egyptians and Maya, including the cat, the jackal, the jaguar and the snake.

In Time Zone French, we consolidated and practiced our vocabulary skills by translating the story of Petit Chaperon Rouge (Little Red Riding Hood) and playing a dominoes vocabulary game.

In our Science unit on Forces, Time Zone investigated buoyancy, comparing the weight of objects in and out of water, and water resistance using plasticine shapes.

In Science in Earth Works, we investigated the use of natural and human-made rocks around school by conducting a rock survey.

Time Zone have had the opportunity to examine *genuine* Maya artefacts! Mr Dowman made a trip to the lands of the ancient Maya in his time machine and collected a variety of objects. We have been thinking about what each item tells us about the Maya.

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 10th February	KS2 Dye Workshop led by Duchess' Community High
Monday 16th - Friday 20th February	Half-term holiday
Monday 23rd February	**Teacher Training Day- school closed to pupils**
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day - come dressed as your favourite book character, make sure the costume is suitable for outdoor play.
Thursday 12th March	Parents Evening - details have gone out via Parentmail.
Friday 13th March	Mothers Day treats in school 2 pm-3 pm. More details to follow.
Monday 16th March	Easter RE project for KS1 and Reception
Friday 20th March	Red Nose Day - wear something red if you would like to and donate to this wonderful charity.
Friday 27th March	Interactive Science at Alnwick Playhouse for KS2
Wednesday 1st April	Billy Goats Gruff at Alnwick Playhouse for Nursery - Y2

Please remember, Breakfast club is available from 8.15am if anyone needs to drop off a child earlier. Please book in advance if possible. £2.50 includes cereal or toast.

Nursery fees and After School clubs have now been invoiced for this term through your Parentmail accounts. If you are using tax free childcare accounts to pay either of these, please let us know so we can trace the payment.

Please be aware that from April 2026 our Nursery and Wellies&Wonder rate will rise slightly to £6.00 an hour.
A morning session until 12.00 noon will be £19.50
A morning session until 1.00 pm will be £25.50
A full day session until 3.15 pm will be £39.00

A school lunch can be purchased for £2.50 or a healthy lunch can be brought from home.

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Stars of the week
Names:

Splash: Monty for trying hard with listening.

Space Base: Evelyn for taking pride in her work.

Earth Works: Harry for his enthusiastic participation in our science investigations.

Time Zone: Thomas for persevering with difficult maths all week.

Welcome to the world Gregory. 💙⭐

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