



# Ellingham CE Primary School **Friday Flyer**

**13.02.26**

## **Executive Head Teacher Update**

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been an excellent, fun and productive start to the year: the children are a pleasure to work with; our new staff have settled brilliantly into our staff team; we could have just done with a lot less rain and even a few more hours of sunlight. I know you will love finding out about the exciting learning that has taken place this week.

Many thanks to the Alwick Garden and Duchess' High staff who made the Eco Dyeing workshops so engaging and fun!

We are looking forward to returning after the break with our new heating pump and exchanger installed so we can, hopefully, enjoy being cosier wearing fewer layers.

Our teacher training day, on 23rd February, will cover fire safety training and the safe use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) applications to create teaching and learning resources. Staff from Embleton and Longhoughton schools will be joining us at Ellingham.

We wish all of the pupils a well-earned break and hope to see everyone safely back on Tuesday 24th February. Fingers crossed for some improved weather.

Best wishes,

Diane Lakey



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### Attendance

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Splash	90	95.8
Space Base	92.5	95.7
Earth Works	100	88.3
Time Zone	100	91.9

**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 are holding our teddy bear's picnic with our bears. They have treats and games to play, and we are very excited to have them at school with us. We also did lots of number work to help us recognise numbers and write them, and we wrote about our bears and their favourite things.

We had a great PE session in the hall this week, with gym equipment and lots of climbing, jumping and throwing and catching. We learnt to take turns and to look after each other.

Have a lovely holiday and we look forward to some drier weather when we come back to school.





## Space Base Class

It has been a busy final week in Space Base. In computing, we finished our unit on direction with a race using our Bee-Bots. The children had to get to an 'island' in the quickest time possible.

In music, we used drums to show emotion through the speed at which the children played their drums.

In PE, we played a game of 'Capture the Balls.' The children had to work as a team to collect as many balls as possible in their bucket. The only way they could get the balls was by stealing them from the other team.

It has been a joy to watch the children progress throughout this term, and they all deserve a well-earned break.





## Key Stage Two: Time Zone and Earth Works

In Science in Time Zone, we investigated water resistance by making boats of different shapes and timing how long it took them to travel across the water table.



In Art, we covered our clay base plates with Modroc to create our animal masks. A very messy lesson! Everybody handled this new material well and we are looking forward to painting our masks.





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Earth Works followed up on their lesson about the Aswan High Dam in Egypt by generating electricity with their own hydroelectric turbine.



Duchess High School and Alwick Garden came in to run an eco dye workshop with all of Key Stage 2. The children learned about making dyes from plants. They started by potting violets, and then moved on to red cabbage, which they reacted with acid or alkali to change its colour. They then had a go at happazome - making flower prints by whacking flowers with mallets. At the end of the day, they made flower pictures by felting. There will be an opportunity to see their work on display in Alwick Garden in the summer - and all the children involved will get free tickets.



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## Dates for your Diary

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

**Earth Works starts swimming after half term on a Monday. Please return the consent form that has been sent to your Parentmail inbox.**



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The whole school Nursery - Y6 starts Karate lessons after half term. We will run a Karate club after school on a Monday night if there is enough interest. Please speak to Kathy.



## **Stars of the week**

### **Names:**

**Splash:** Wilf for coming into school with a smile.

**Space Base:** Daisy T- For showing great progression with her handwriting.

**Earth Works:** Gwen for oracy skills in our discussion on Egyptian tombs.

**Time Zone:** Harley for working hard to produce a very intriguing non-chronological report.



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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](http://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

On messaging apps, social media and online games, group chats are one of the most popular ways that children connect. Group chats allow messages, images and videos to be shared in one place and help friendships flourish; however, they also come with a number of risks.

### TEASING AND BULLYING

Children of all ages are keen to fit in socially, and group chats can sometimes complicate that process. While group chats can foster connection, they can also give way to mean comments or jokes at someone's expense, especially when others join in for laughs. When bullying happens publicly, in front of friends and classmates, it can intensify the emotional impact – adding to embarrassment, anxiety and feelings of isolation for the child being targeted.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some group chats may include inappropriate language or imagery. Even if a child isn't actively participating in the conversation, they may still be exposed to this content simply by being part of the group. Some apps have disappearing messaging features, where content is only available once or for a few seconds, which makes it harder for children to report something they've seen.

### UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Children often can't control who is added to a group, which can lead to privacy concerns. Sharing personal details in group chats can be dangerous, and children have no control over what others do with the material they send. Some members of the chat might even decide to use such information maliciously.

### EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

Exclusion in group chats is common and can take several forms. Sometimes a new group is created specifically to leave one child out on purpose. In other cases, the chat may happen on an app that a child doesn't have access to, making it impossible for them to join in. This can cause feelings of being left out – even unintentionally.

### PEER PRESSURE

Children may feel they have to constantly stay engaged just to be included and keep up with the conversation. In some cases, they might partake in inappropriate behaviours – like sharing explicit photos, jokes or teasing – just to fit in. Group settings can also encourage children to act in ways they normally wouldn't, or stay silent when they know something is wrong, out of fear of being excluded. Some children may find it difficult to leave toxic group chats.

### VIDEO AND LIVE CHATS

Many popular apps allow children to engage in live streaming with interactive chats or have group video chats. Anyone can be added to these streams, and often children tag peers in the comments and have conversations which are unmoderated. There's a risk of being exposed to inappropriate or violent content and offensive language, either in the group videos or via the group chats.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats can become an arena for children to compete for social status. Help children consider how people might feel if they behave unkindly. If a child does upset someone, encourage them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

### SET SOME GROUP CHAT RULES

Discuss safe group chat practices, such as asking a peer for consent before adding them to a group chat, or leaving a group chat if a stranger is added. Tell children that if they're added to a group they didn't agree to beforehand, it's OK for them to leave immediately.

### BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If a child encounters inappropriate content or feels uncomfortable in a group chat, encourage them to block and report the sender and leave the group. Make sure children know it's OK to leave a group chat if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

### SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Group chats are an excellent way for children to connect and feel like they belong. However, remind them that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their feelings and empower them by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. You can also encourage children to speak up if they witness others being bullied.

### PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

It's vital for children to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Ensure they understand the importance of not revealing personal details – like their address, their school, or photos they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they can't be certain where it might end up or how it might be used.

### SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Being bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be an irritating distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to children that they can still be part of a group chat while disabling notifications. In fact, it would be healthier for them to do so, helping them avoid the pressure to respond immediately.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at BCyberAware, who has developed anti-bullying and cyber-safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government, comparing the internet use and online behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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