



Ellingham CE Primary School Friday Flyer

20.03.26: Executive Head Teacher Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

Huge thanks to Josie for organising another wonderful 'Tea and Treats' for Mothers' Day! Thank you to all who came and made it so special for our children.



We love our brilliant, new Wellies&Wonder shed. Thanks to the amazing volunteers who built and sited it for us- you are stars!!

Best wishes,

Diane Lakey





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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.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TECHNOLOGY ATTACHMENT

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

In today's digital age, children are increasingly forming emotional and habitual attachments to their devices. With 96% regularly accessing the internet and nearly half engaging in live streaming or content sharing, their online presence is greater than ever. This guide explores the phenomenon of technology attachment in young people and offers expert advice on fostering healthier digital habits.

WIRED FOR REWARD

Children's brains are particularly sensitive to reward-based stimulation, and some digital platforms, especially those offering quick-hit content like short-form videos, are designed to exploit this. The instant gratification of likes, comments, and rapid scene changes triggers dopamine releases, making these interactions highly addictive. Over time, this may contribute to changes in attention patterns and a reduced inclination towards activities that involve prolonged focus or delayed gratification, such as reading, problem-solving, or creative play.

NIGHT-TIME TECH HABITS

Screen use late into the evening can disrupt natural sleep patterns by suppressing melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep. Children engaging with stimulating content may experience delayed bedtimes, lower sleep quality, and increased fatigue during the day. Additionally, fear of missing out (FOMO) on online interactions can cause anxiety and resistance to logging off, creating a cycle of late-night engagement and tired mornings.

SHAPED BY SCREENS

For many children, digital spaces have become a key arena for identity exploration and expression. Social media encourages them to curate their image carefully, with likes, comments, and shares serving as social validation. This environment can tie self-esteem to online feedback, making children vulnerable to comparison, self-doubt, and pressure to present a perfect version of themselves, even when it doesn't reflect reality.

DIGITAL WORLD DANGERS

The internet can expose children to unfiltered content, some of which may be inappropriate, misleading, or harmful. Cyberbullying, exposure to idealised lifestyles, and online predators are all risks children face, often without fully understanding the consequences. Misinformation can shape distorted worldviews, while constant comparison to others can erode self-confidence. Without guidance, children may internalise these digital dangers, impacting their emotional and mental health.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY BUILDS

Devices often become digital comfort blankets. In moments of boredom, anxiety, or loneliness, children may instinctively reach for screens to self-soothe. This reliance on digital distraction limits their ability to develop healthy coping mechanisms, such as mindfulness, conversation or physical activity. As the habit builds, their dependency may displace real-world experiences and emotional resilience.

FRIENDSHIPS & FILTERS

Technology transforms how young people socialise, often replacing face-to-face interaction with text-based or image-based communication. While messaging apps and social media enable connection, they may also limit emotional expression and the development of essential interpersonal skills, such as tone recognition, empathy, and reading body language. As a result, some children may become less confident with exchanges in person and more reliant on digital personas to navigate friendships.

Advice for Parents & Educators

READ THE ROOM

Pay attention to behavioural changes that may signal unhealthy tech attachment. This includes mood swings, increased secrecy about online activity, withdrawal from family time or hobbies, and visible distress when separated from devices. These cues can indicate deeper emotional reliance or even exposure to distressing content. Early recognition allows for proactive support and meaningful conversation.

DON'T WAIT, REACH OUT EARLY

If a child's relationship with technology starts affecting their emotional wellbeing, school performance, or social connections, don't hesitate to seek help. Open up discussions with teachers, pastoral staff, or digital wellbeing professionals. Early intervention is key, and a supportive network can provide tools, resources, and reassurance for both children and adults navigating this evolving digital landscape.

SHAPE DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Create a balanced digital environment with clear guidelines on when and how devices can be used. This includes screen-free zones (e.g. bedrooms, dining tables), app restrictions, and time limits. More importantly, involve children in these decisions and explain the reasoning behind them, even reflecting upon your own digital use so they can see it's something we all have to manage. Turning boundaries into a dialogue, not just directives, helps build trust and encourages self-regulation.

SET THE STANDARD

Children often model the behaviour they see. When adults demonstrate healthy digital habits, such as prioritising face-to-face conversation, balancing screen time with other activities, and using devices with purpose, children are more likely to follow suit. Share your own positive uses of technology and invite children to do the same. This collaborative approach helps demystify tech use and encourages responsible engagement.

Meet Our Expert

Philippa Wraithmell is an award-winning educator, author of *The Digital Ecosystem*, and founder of *EdRuption* and *Digital Bridge*. *Digital Bridge* supports the relationship between families and technology, empowering everyone to be balanced and digitally well. With over 15 years in digital education and wellbeing, she supports families, schools, and governments to build balanced and safe digital cultures.



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Attendance

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Splash	100	94.4
Space Base	100	94.6
Earth Works	98	88.5
Time Zone	93.3	92.2

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



Splash Class

This week, we have loved the sunshine and the warmer weather and have spent lots of time learning outdoors. We went to our big forest for forest school this week, and had a great time climbing, swinging and playing in the trees.

In School, we have been doing lots of junk modelling and enjoying our maths about length with a sock sorting challenge. We wrote about Spring and all the changes we see around us, and enjoyed spotting these in our time outdoors.





Space Base Class

The children have continued to enjoy their Karate sessions, where they've been practicing key skills like focus and discipline. For many in Space Base, this is a brand-new experience, and it's been wonderful to see them embrace the challenge of trying something different.

Once again, Splash joined Space Base for our Thursday afternoon lessons. This week, the children created their own Red Nose Day designs. Using Microsoft Paint, they came up with some incredibly creative concepts that they imagined selling to the public.

In our weekly challenges, the children have loved writing phonic sounds and letters in the sand. Constantly practicing is already having a positive impact on their writing!





Key Stage Two Time Zone and Earth Works

In History, to help us understand the process of mummification, we 'mummified' tomatoes. We will observe any changes to our tomato 'body' next week.



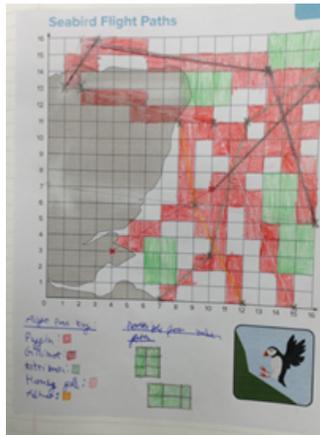
In Earth Works Science, we practised naming the bones of the human skeleton using 'Steve' our model skeleton. Then we investigated the difference between vertebrates and invertebrates, and different types of skeleton: endoskeletons, exoskeletons and hydrostatic skeletons.



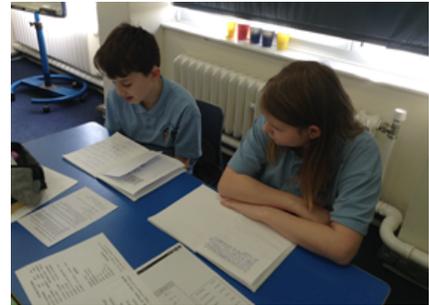


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In Time Zone Science, we learned about the potential impact of wind farms on bird populations and worked as ecologists, mapping the flight path of birds using coordinates and choosing possible sites for wind turbines which would avoid these areas.



In French, we wrote and presented French weather reports.



For British Science Week, we investigated the best design for a paper aircraft, making planes, gliders and helicopters, and had lots of fun flying them.





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Dates for your Diary

Monday 23rd March	Nursery - Y2 Bailifgate Museum.
Friday 27th March	Interactive Science at Alwick Playhouse for KS2
Wednesday 1st April	Billy Goats Gruff at Alwick Playhouse for Nursery - Y2
Thursday 2nd April	Easter Service - Ellingham Church 9.30. Everyone is welcome.
Friday 3rd - Sunday 19th April	Easter Holidays
Monday 20th April	Return to school



Stars of the week

Names:

Splash: Ted - For trying hard in phonics.

Freddie - For enjoying the forest and being super kind and helpful.

Space Base: Otilie- For using great adjectives in her writing.

Earth Works: Louie - For contributions to our science lessons.

Time Zone: Serena - For working very hard on her arithmetic and making brilliant progress.



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Thank you for our new shed.

Lots of love

Wellies&Wonder

Special thanks to our PTA for funding it and Katryna Shell, Toby and Emily and Matthew Debbage for building it! 😊