



Ellingham CE Primary School

Friday Flyer

18.9.2026

Executive Headteacher's Update

What a fantastic week we have had at Ellingham! It has been lovely to see the children really enjoying themselves in school and with the weather being so kind to us, we have been able to get outside and make the most of the sunshine too. We never quite know how long that will last, so it has been great to see the children enjoying it!

When I have been in school this week, I have really enjoyed walking around the classrooms and seeing how engaged the children are with their learning. The questioning and discussion taking place has been fantastic and we really do have a very articulate group of children who are keen to learn, ask questions and challenge themselves, while also having plenty of fun along the way. Lots of smiles and lots of laughter — exactly what we want to see!

We have had a particularly interesting week in terms of our Church of England work. On Monday, we welcomed Mr Rusby from the Diocese, who spent time working alongside Mrs Senior and myself as we prepared for our SIAMS inspection, which will take place during this academic year. It was a really valuable opportunity to reflect on our school's spirituality, our Christian vision and the language we use around our values. Most importantly, we want to ensure that these values are lived out every day and help our children develop into kind, confident and responsible citizens of the world.

On Wednesday, Mrs Aynsley, who works at Belsay Primary, also visited Ellingham to offer guidance and support around our SEND provision. It is fantastic to be able to draw on expertise from across our four schools and share knowledge and experience to ensure we continue to provide the very best support for all of our children. You may see Mrs Aynsley around school a little more over the coming weeks and months as we continue to develop this work.

We finished the week with our Celebration Assembly and as always it was fantastic to recognise the achievements and efforts of our children. A huge well done to all of this week's winners — you were all thoroughly deserving!

Have a wonderful weekend everyone, enjoy the sunshine while it lasts and we will see you all again on Monday, ready for another fantastic week!

Mr Shaw

Next week I am planning to be in school on Wednesday and Friday.



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Safeguarding

Ellingham is committed to keeping all children safe. Our staff regularly participate in safeguarding training and are fully aware of how to keep our pupils safe and what signs to look out for. Our pupils know they can share any concerns and we have robust policies and procedures in place which underpin safeguarding. It is our paramount priority to keep all children healthy and safe.

Remember our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in school are
Mrs Senior and Mr Shaw

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators HELPING NEURODIVERGENT CHILDREN NAVIGATE THE ONLINE WORLD

Neurodivergent people tend to be early adopters of technology, and many influential innovators in this space are neurodivergent themselves. It's therefore likely that a neurodivergent child or young person may be drawn to the online world from an early age. This isn't a concern in itself, but understanding both the benefits and potential risks is essential. Here are ten key considerations to support safe and positive online experiences for neurodivergent children.

- 1 TREAT ONLINE LIKE THE REAL WORLD**
You wouldn't allow a child to cross a road without guidance – you'd hold their hand, use a pedestrian crossing, and model safe behaviour. In the same way, a neurodivergent child's first experiences online should be supported by an adult who can guide and explain safe and responsible digital behaviour to them from the outset.
- 2 MODEL RESPONSIBLE USE**
Children learn from what they see, so show all children, regardless of neurotype, what responsible internet use looks like. Reflect on your own use of social media and AI. Consider how often you use them and your own understanding of these platforms. Talk openly about when and why you use these tools, helping all children develop a balanced and informed approach.
- 3 KNOW YOUR LIMITS**
Current government guidance suggests no solo screen use before the age of five, with a maximum of one hour per day for five- to five-year-olds. Screen time can support communication and connection when shared with a carer. However, passive watching can affect neurodivergent children's attention and language skills. Focus on the type of content they watch, encouraging slower-paced and meaningful material rather than fast-paced, overstimulating content.
- 4 CONSIDER AGES AND STAGES**
For older children and teenagers, agreed limits are important. Screen time can be beneficial, but it should form part of a balanced lifestyle. Neurodivergent children may find online communication easier than real-world conversation, supporting their social interaction. However, it shouldn't be their only option. Encourage a range of activities, including creative play, physical exercise, and opportunities for real-world connections.
- 5 KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN**
Discussions about online safety should begin early and continue as children grow. However, neurodivergent children may worry about getting things wrong or being misunderstood, viewing these kinds of conversations as a performance or a task rather than a dialogue. If a child shows signs of a problem – such as a screen or inappropriate content – they need to feel able to speak to a trusted adult without fear of judgement or consequences.
- 6 BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE**
You aren't expected to be an expert, but it's important to stay informed about the platforms, games, or apps neurodivergent children use in order to provide practical support. Social media platforms have age limits, and many apps and games offer parental settings that can control access. Schools and families should work together to understand these tools, helping neurodivergent children use them safely while keeping up to date with new features and changes.
- 7 SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES**
Children and young people often know more about current technology than adults, meaning it's important to recognise that controls may be bypassed. Clear, predictable boundaries should be set, based on trust and consistency. Involving children in discussions that affect them helps them feel heard. This is particularly important for neurodivergent children, who may respond strongly to perceived unfairness.
- 8 UNDERSTAND AI CONTENT**
The internet now includes large amounts of AI-generated content, including images, videos, and articles. These can be difficult to identify. Children should be encouraged to question what they see and check the information using trusted sources. Neurodivergent children may interact with content that is harmful, meaning adult guidance is important in helping them recognise when it's real and reliable – and when it isn't.
- 9 EXPLAIN AI LIMITATIONS**
AI isn't the same as a search engine. It generates responses based on prompts and patterns, and its accuracy depends on how it's used. Sometimes, it produces incorrect or unrealistic information, known as 'hallucinations'. Both adults and children need to understand this and learn how to check information carefully using reliable and trusted sources.
- 10 CLARIFY AI RELATIONSHIPS**
AI can feel conversational and personal, but it's not capable of real relationships. It learns from patterns in user input rather than human understanding. Some neurodivergent children may experience a sense of connection with AI chatbots, perceiving them as real social interactions. It's therefore important to explain that these are simulated conversations and aren't a substitute for real, human relationships.



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Attendance

As parents and carers we want to share our attendance figures because it is you who can make the big difference. Our children are entitled to a full and balanced education and at Belsay we feel we provide one of the best experiences possible.

Current Whole School attendance is 95.68%.

Our NEW target for Whole School Attendance is 97%.

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Splash	100	95.2
Space Base	100	95.4
Earth Works	100	91.7
Time Zone	100	93.8

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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Wellies & Wonder

This week we had an amazing time collecting conkers at the big conker tree in Ellingham village. We did lots of learning about the language of size and position, and talked about trees and how they grow. It was a lovely day for everyone.





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Splash and Space Base

Splash and Space Base have had an exciting week!

Space Base have been looking at the book *The Day the Crayons Quit*. The children have loved this book and have enjoyed writing their own letters in first person, pretending to be a crayon. In PE, both classes have been focusing on the theme of 'being at the circus'. The children have enjoyed taking part in different tasks and travelling in different ways, such as pretending to be a clown and a lion.

Splash had a brand new café added to their classroom as part of their continuous provision. The children loved playing in the café and have been fantastic at taking orders and delivering them to their customers.





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Earth Zone

Modelling the Earth, Sun and Moon

In our Earth and Space Science unit, we explored the Earth, Sun and Moon. Working with a partner, we discussed our ideas about the shape and relative sizes of the Earth, Sun and Moon and made models of them in playdough. We added post-it notes explaining why we had made the models those particular shapes (every group had made the models roughly spherical) and sizes. We then presented our ideas and models to the rest of the class and came to a consensus, before exploring the facts about the true sizes and shape of these spherical bodies.

Numbers in French

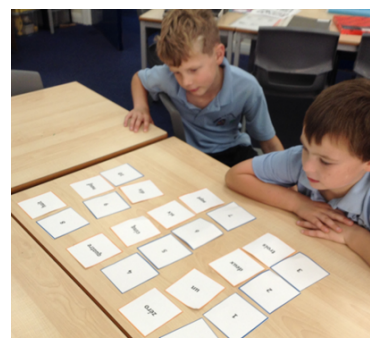
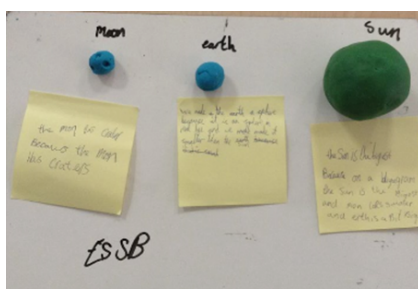
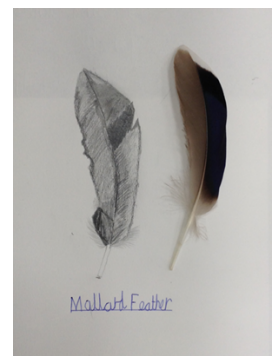
In 3-4, we played 'match up' to practise our numbers 0-10 in French and consolidate our vocabulary.

Art: Drawing from Nature

We practised different shading techniques, such as cross-hatching and stippling and then used them in our drawings of feathers, to good effect.

Geography

We learned about the major rivers of the UK, and the course of our longest river, the River Severn. We used OS maps to trace the course of our local rivers, the Aln and the Coquet, from their sources to their mouths and identified tributaries and meanders along their courses.





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Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 23rd - Friday 25th September	Robinwood Residential trip for Earth Works and Time Zone
Monday 5th October School photographs	Nursery and Wellies & Wonder children are welcome. Details will be given closer to the time.
Thursday 15th October	Harvest Festival
Thursday 22nd October	Whole school flu immunisation. If you haven't already registered your child please speak to Kathy.
Friday 23rd October	TEACHER TRAINING DAY
Monday 26th October - 30th October	HALF TERM
Monday 2nd November	TEACHER TRAINING DAY

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.

**Toasty Tuesday will take place on the last Tuesday of each month.
50p for a slice and toast. All proceeds to Daft as a Brush Cancer Care.**



Stars of the Week



Splash: George, for sharing toys with his friends.



Space Base: Evelyn, for having a great attitude to learning in all her subjects.



Earth Zone: Serena for her outstanding use of figurative language when writing setting and character description; she really brought the book to life and also for her amazing effort with her times tables.