



20th February 2026



Right of the Fortnight

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With next week being half-term, I think it is only right that we focus on **Article 31**: Children have the right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of activities. We hope that the children have a relaxing half-term with their families and come back refreshed for the term ahead.

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Respectful Parking

Just a timely reminder about parking outside of school. Our Community Ambassadors worked with the police a couple of weeks ago and actually, the situation has worsened. I have had several complaints now from parents who are reporting that cars are parked so far on the path that they are having to walk the children on the mud. I do want to remind you that this is a safeguarding concern and we all have a duty of care to ensure children are safe coming to and leaving school. After half-term, I will be monitoring the situation more closely and will report to the police if necessary. Please be respectful and keep all our children safe.

Dear Parents,
Although it has been a longer than usual half-term, it has flown by and I can't believe we are half way through the academic year already. The children have enjoyed focusing on particular Rights this week and have enjoyed sharing their knowledge with you all, whether this was at the assemblies, through social media or by them talking to you at home. The Valentine's discos were a huge success and I know the photos on social media show just how much they all enjoyed it. We will endeavour to keep you fully informed of our upcoming events through the newsletter, our website and the app.

National Careers Week 2nd – 6th March

Each class will dedicate time to explore the world of work and job opportunities in our local community. Children will think about the things that they're interested in and identify potential careers when they're older. Our older children will consider the challenges they will face and the people that can help them achieve their careers related goals. Classes (Yr2-6) will have the opportunity to work with NERAP (North East Raising Aspiration Partnership) to explore a variety of career opportunities in the Northeast on the 18th March.



20th February 2026

World Book Day Thursday 5th March

On Thursday 5th March 2026, we will be celebrating World Book Day! Reading is highly valued in our school, so we are asking children and staff to help us celebrate by dressing up as their favourite book character. There will be a special assembly where prizes can be won for the most creative character costumes. Throughout the day, the children will not only share their favourite stories but will also take part in lots of fun-filled activities to celebrate and promote a love of reading. To encourage every child on their reading journey, they will receive a £1 book token which can be exchanged for one free World Book Day 2026 book or £1 off a book costing £2.99 or more.

Parent discussions – week beginning Monday 16th March

We are looking forward to parent meetings in a couple of weeks' time to share with you the children's successes and targets so far this year. We do like to meet with every parent and can offer either an afternoon or an after-school appointment on your preferred date. The whole school evening appointments run from 3.20pm - 6pm on the afternoon of Monday 16th March and the afternoon appointments will be held in this week also. It is really important that we get to have these discussions with everyone and, as always, we will do our very best to accommodate parent needs. **Where possible, we will timetable sibling appointments close together if Monday 16th is chosen.**

You will be able to book your preferred time via the app when we return to school and teaching staff will organise appointment times the following week.

Waste Week 2nd – 8th March

Waste Week is back from 2-8 March 2026, and this year is all about helping schools take action on food waste!

In England, new food waste collection rules came into effect on 31 March 2025, requiring schools to separate food waste from general waste. But food waste is a global issue—understanding how to reduce, manage, and recycle food waste is essential for all schools.

We will be joining in the campaign to help support us in reducing food waste in school.



20th February 2026

Dates to remember so far...

March

Thursday 5th - World Book Day

Monday 9th - Reception & KS1 Mother's Day Crafts 1.45pm-3pm

Tuesday 10th - Y3 & Y4 Mother's Day Crafts 1.45pm-3pm

Wednesday 11th - Y1 Class Assembly 9.15am

Wednesday 11th - Y3 Mining Art Gallery Visit

Wednesday 11th - Y5 & Y6 Mother's Day Crafts 1.45pm-3pm

Friday 13th - Sunday 15th - Y5 & Y6 Winmarleigh Residential

Monday 16th - Whole School Parent Discussions

Tuesday 17th - Tag Rugby Event (invited children)

Wednesday 18th - Exploring Careers Day (Y2 - Y6)

Friday 20th - Adam Bushnell in school

Friday 20th - Comic Relief

Monday 23rd - Y2 Ferryhill Library Visit

Monday 30th - Nursery Stay and Play

Tuesday 31st - Reception Class Assembly 9.15am

Tuesday 31st - Reception Stay and Play

April

Wednesday 1st - Easter Egg Competition

Wednesday 1st - Last day of term

Thursday 2nd - PD Day

Monday 20th - Return to school

Science Week 6th – 15th March

Science Week this week has a theme of 'Curiosity? What's your question?'. The whole school will be taking part in a variety of investigations and experiments throughout the week. The children always enjoy this week and look out for plenty of photos on our social media sharing what we have been up to.

British
Science
Week



After-School Clubs

Clubs will start week beginning 2nd March and you will be able to book your child a place using the Compass App. Places may be limited in some clubs so book early to avoid disappointment.

Monday - Film Club with Mrs Armstrong (Rec - Y6)

Wednesday - Language Club with Mr Provan (Years 3-6)

Microbit/coding Club with Mr Blood (Years 3-6)

Choir/Singing Club with Mrs Stamper (Rec - Y6)

Thursday - Dance with sports coach (Y1 and Y2) 20 places

Eco/Gardening with Mrs White (Y2 - Y6)

Mother's Day Crafts

As mentioned in the last newsletter, we are going to do craft afternoons so you can enjoy spending time with your children making some Mother's Day related crafts.

The staff are busy preparing all of the resources and we look forward to seeing you in the week beginning **Monday 9th March**.

Newsletter



20th February 2026

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

FOSTERING A SENSE OF BELONGING

Helping children feel like they belong is vital for their emotional wellbeing, academic success, and overall development. A true sense of belonging reduces anxiety, builds confidence, and supports resilience. These ten tips are designed to help parents and educators create inclusive, caring environments where children feel accepted, safe, and valued.

- 1. USE EVERYDAY MOMENTS**
Belonging is built in the small moments, like when a child shares a story, or when they help a friend. These interactions don't need to be lengthy to be meaningful. Consistent gestures of acceptance and warmth show children they are important, making them feel safe, valued, and ready to learn.
- 2. INVOLVE THEM IN RULE-MAKING**
Inviting children to help create rules or classroom agreements is a sense of shared ownership and respect. Give them a voice in how they learn and behave. This empowers children, builds confidence, and reduces anxiety. Encourage children to share their ideas and feelings, and make sure they are heard.
- 3. VALIDATE ALL EMOTIONS**
Acknowledging a child's emotions, whether positive or negative, shows them that you care. They are not alone. It's okay to feel sad, angry, or nervous. This validation helps children feel safe to express their feelings and learn to manage them.
- 4. HIGHLIGHT HIDDEN STRENGTHS**
Not every child is a star in every subject. Look for hidden talents and strengths in every child. Praise their effort and progress, not just their achievements. This helps them feel valued and confident.
- 5. SHOW CURIOSITY ABOUT CULTURE**
Ask respectful, open questions about a child's culture, traditions, and beliefs. Show genuine interest and respect. This helps children feel proud of their heritage and builds a sense of community.
- 6. BELONGING BUDDIES**
Pairing children with a peer they might not typically interact with, encourages them to share ideas and support each other. This builds confidence and helps them feel like they are part of a team.
- 7. AVOID LABELS AND COMPARISONS**
Avoid labeling children as 'shy' or 'naughty'. Instead, focus on their behavior and the context. Avoid comparing children to each other. This helps them feel accepted and supported.
- 8. MAKE TIME FOR ONE-TO-ONES**
Spending regular one-to-one time with each child shows they are important. This helps them feel safe and valued, and gives you a chance to build a strong relationship.
- 9. REFLECT THEIR INTERESTS**
When a child shows interest in a topic, follow up on it. This shows them that you care and that their interests are important. This helps them feel valued and confident.
- 10. EMPHASISE 'WE' OVER 'THEY'**
Use inclusive language like 'we' instead of 'they'. This helps children feel like they are part of a team. This helps them feel safe and valued.

Meet Our Expert
Anna is the world's largest DASH library for educators. The National College has recommended that all education establishments go about developing their websites and social media presence. Our three departments have all grown and taken up a variety of new standards, some new, some old, and built a culture of improvement.

#WakeUpWednesday **The National College**

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

WhatsApp is a free messaging app owned by Meta, allowing users to send text and voice messages, share multimedia, make video calls, and chat in groups. While end-to-end encryption, using the sender and receiver's phone numbers, this may offer privacy, but it also comes with risks that parents and educators need to be aware of.

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WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- GROUP CHAT PRESSURES**
Group chats can create pressure to conform to group norms, leading to exclusion or bullying.
- SCAMS TARGETING YOUNG USERS**
Scammers often use WhatsApp to target young users, using fake profiles and messages to trick them into giving away personal information.
- DISAPPEARING AND HIDDEN MESSAGES**
WhatsApp offers features like disappearing messages, which can be used to hide inappropriate content or cyberbullying.
- EXPOSURE THROUGH CHANNELS**
WhatsApp has an optional feature that allows users to follow content from public figures or organizations, exposing them to potentially harmful content.
- UNWANTED CONTACT AND LOCATION SHARING**
WhatsApp can be used to harass or stalk users, and location sharing can be used to track their movements.
- COMMERCIAL AND AI CONTENT**
WhatsApp can be used to promote commercial products or services, and AI-generated content can be used to trick users into giving away personal information.

Advice for Parents & Educators

- REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER**
Help young users check and update their privacy settings, including who can see their profile, status, and group information.
- TEACH HOW TO SPOT SCAMS**
Encourage children to report suspicious messages, especially those claiming to be from a friend or family member, and to avoid clicking on links or downloading attachments.
- BE OPEN ABOUT HIDDEN CHATS**
Discuss the risks of disappearing messages and encourage children to be open about their online activities.
- TALK ABOUT ADVERTISING AND AI**
Explain that WhatsApp can be used to promote products or services, and that AI-generated content can be used to trick users.

Meet Our Expert
Dr. David Bullard is an online safety specialist, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety programs for schools. He has written numerous reports and articles on online safety and is a frequent speaker at conferences.

#WakeUpWednesday **The National College**