



22nd May 2026

Dear Parents,

This term is always extremely busy, with lots of exciting things planned for the children. We have added some more dates onto the calendar on the website and on this newsletter but there will be some additional events that need adding so please keep checking our website and our social media pages.



Right of the Fortnight

With it being half-term next week we will be exploring the following right over the next 2

weeks: **Article 31**

Leisure, play and culture: Every child has the right to relax, play, and take part in a wide range of cultural activities.

**Careers Day – Thursday 2nd July
1:45pm**

In the summer term we plan to hold another successful careers event for our Y5 and Y6 children. Engaging children in discussions about their futures and opening their eyes to the different pathways they can take for a wide variety of jobs and career opportunities is really important to us. We do rely on parents and volunteers to come and talk to the children about their role and the path they took to get there. If you would like to take part or know someone who can, then please let us know. You can email the school at clevescross@durhamlearning.net Thank you.

Playtime Snacks

I just wanted to remind everyone about what is acceptable for a snack at playtimes as we are seeing an increasing amount of unhealthy snacks being eaten. Fruit or vegetables are the ideal healthy snack for playtimes. Breakfast bars are also acceptable but **must not** contain nuts (as we are a nut free school) or chocolate or be chocolate covered. Fruit winders, biscuits, chocolate and crisps are not acceptable snacks. Playtime snack must be separate from packed lunches – children should not be taking things from their packed lunch out at playtimes. Thank you for your support with this.



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Father's Day Crafts – Wednesday 17th June

Following the success of our Mother's Day crafts, we will be holding a craft day on Wednesday 17th June to celebrate Father's Day. We will be doing things slightly different - we will be in our coloured teams so siblings will be together and you only have to attend one session if you have more than one child in school. Red and blue team will be 9:15am-10:30am, green and yellow team will be 1:45pm-3pm. You do not need to book a place on the app. We look forward to seeing you all there!

After School Clubs

Clubs will start week beginning 1st June and will run until 3rd July. 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 -

Trim Trail Club with Mrs Tallentire (Rec - Y6)
20 places

Summer Story Art Club with Mrs Armstrong
(Rec - Y2)

Wednesday -

Rounders Club with Mr Provan (Years 3-6)

Multiskills/ Outdoor Games with Mr Hornsby
(Rec - Y6)

Thursday -

Eco/Gardening Club with Mrs White (Y2 - Y6)

Athletics Club with Mr Blood (Y3 - Y6)



Free Breakfast Club

Our free breakfast club will continue next half-term. If you arrive at school before 8.35am then please pop your child into breakfast club. If they've already eaten at home, they can choose to have some more or just join in with some activities in the hall. It is free for all children from Reception class to Y6. You can use the Compass app to book your child into breakfast club or they can just turn up. We are always trying to vary the food we provide and will listen to suggestions from the children who are attending as well. We look forward to seeing your children there!



22nd May 2026

Dates to remember so far...



June

Monday 1st - 3rd - Y5 & Y6 Belfast Residential
Monday 1st June - YR4 Library Visit
1st - 12th June - YR4 Multiplication Check
Thursday 4th - YR5 Class Assembly
Thursday 4th - Open Afternoon
Friday 5th - Bring a Thing - Non-Uniform Day
Monday 8th - Reception Ferryhill Library Visit
Tuesday 9th - Reception New Starters Parents Meeting
Wednesday 10th - YR5/6 Primary Athletics
Thursday 11th - Y2 Ferryhill Library Visit
Thursday 11th - Nursery Storytime in Nursery
Friday 12th - Bring a Bottle - Non-Uniform Day
Friday 12th - Y1 Parent Storytime in our library
Monday 15th - Y3 Ferryhill Library Visit
Monday 15th - Y4 & Y5 Amazon Animal Workshop
Tuesday 16th - YR4 Parent Storytime
Tuesday 16th - Reception New Starter Visits
Wednesday 17th - Fathers Day Crafts
Thursday 18th - Summer Fair
Thursday 18th - YR5/6 Countdown Cricket
Thursday 18th - Y1 Ferryhill Library Visit
Monday 22nd - YR6 Library Visit & Parent Storytime
Tuesday 23rd - YR5 Parent Storytime
Tuesday 23rd - Reception New Starter Visits
Wednesday 24th - YR5 Big Debate
Thursday 25th - Y3 Parent Storytime in our library
Friday 26th - YR1 Trip to Discovery Museum
Tuesday 30th - Whole School Move Up Morning
Tuesday 30th - Reception New Starters Half Day Visit
Tuesday 30th - Y6 Ferryhill School Transition Day

July

Wednesday 1st - Y5 Ferryhill School Taster Day
Thursday 2nd - EYFS Sports Day
Thursday 2nd - Y5 & Y6 Careers Day
Friday 3rd - YR1-YR6 Sports Day
Tuesday 7th & Wednesday 8th - End of Year Performance
Tuesday 14th - Nursery Beach Trip
Wednesday 15th - KS1 Beach Trip
Thursday 16th - KS2 Beach Trip
Thursday 16th - Nursery Graduation & Stay and Play 9:30am
Friday 17th July - Last day of term

Open Afternoon – Thursday 4th

June 1:30pm

A reminder that we are having our open afternoon on Thursday 4th June at 1.30pm where you are all welcome. There will be representatives from our school kitchen with samples of food and the uniform supplier will also be available with samples of our uniform. This is always a popular and well-attended event as pupils love to work with their parents in the classroom. Looking forward to seeing you there!

KS2 SATs



I just want to say a huge well done to all of our Y6 pupils who completed their SATs last week. They all worked really hard, remaining resilient and determined, and we look forward to receiving their results in July.



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT

As the best-selling game in history, Minecraft has made a name for itself by empowering audiences of all ages to harness their creativity. Originally an indie hit, it's become a cultural phenomenon with merchandise, spin-off titles, and wider media adaptations. Even if you don't know your Creepers from your Endermen, this guide will explore the risks of Minecraft in 2026 and explain how to support a safe gaming experience for the children in your care.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

PUBLIC SERVER COMMUNICATION

Many players enjoy Minecraft with others, including friends and unknown players online. In-game text chat is commonly used to coordinate building projects and gameplay, and this can extend to adding friends to voice chat. While often harmless, this creates risks around contact with strangers, and in some cases server hosts may expose IP addresses (if hosting independently), which raises privacy and security concerns.

GRIEFING BEHAVIOUR

Some players deliberately damage or destroy other players' creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying that can undo hours of effort and cause frustration or distress to affected players. Although many servers treat griefing as a serious offence, enforcement varies. Children who prefer to build independently may feel safer working on private worlds or controlled servers.

ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY LOOPS

Minecraft's creative focus can make it easy for players to lose track of time. The cycle of gathering resources and building projects can be highly engaging, which may challenge agreed screen-time limits. If not managed effectively, this can impact children's sleep, schoolwork, and real-world social interaction.

SCARY GAME ELEMENTS

Although often compared to digital construction toys, some gameplay modes include hostile creatures with unsettling sounds and sudden encounters. While there is no graphic violence, younger players may still find zombies, spiders, or dark environments frightening. These experiences can lead to anxiety or reluctance to play, depending on the child's age and sensitivity.

IN-GAME SPENDING

Minecraft requires a one-off purchase after a free trial, usually around £15, but additional spending is possible. Players can buy cosmetic content or subscribe to Minecraft 'Realms' for private servers. Without supervision, children may make unintended purchases. Subscription services and add-ons can also increase overall costs over time if not monitored.

ONLINE INTERACTIONS

Playing with others can introduce broader online safety concerns, including exposure to inappropriate language or behaviour. Some players may attempt to move conversations beyond the game, which can increase risks to children's safety and welfare. Children may not always recognise these situations, meaning guidance and ongoing conversations about safe interactions are essential.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHOOSE SUITABLE GAME MODES

Creative or Peaceful modes remove hostile creatures and reduce the pressure during gameplay. These options allow children to focus on building and exploration without fear of attack. They are also ideal for shared play between adults and children, creating a calmer environment to learn the game and enjoy collaborative projects.

USE PRIVATE SERVERS

Setting up a private server helps control who can join a child's game. Access can be limited to trusted friends through passwords or invitations. This reduces the likelihood of unwanted interactions and gives adults greater oversight. While some options involve a subscription fee, they offer a safer and more controlled multiplayer experience.

DISCUSS ONLINE STRANGERS

Children should understand that not everyone they meet online is who they claim to be. Clear guidance about not sharing personal information is essential. Encourage children to report any worrying or uncomfortable interactions and reassure them that they can seek help without fear of punishment. Open, ongoing conversations help build their confidence and awareness of these issues.

SET SPENDING BOUNDARIES

Agree on clear rules around purchases before letting children play, and use device settings or platform controls to restrict spending within agreed limits. Explaining that in-game currency uses real-world money can help children make informed decisions. Regularly reviewing purchases together can also prevent unexpected costs and encourage responsible behaviour.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes spent 7 years in games media, before moving into the games industry via PR and marketing. A parent himself to a Minecraft-loving son, he understands why it's so important to stay safe online.

The National College

See full reference list on our website

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