



Newsletter: 7th November 2025

Dear Families.

A huge thank you for all your support. We raised £230 at the Autumn Disco for Fr David Smith's Charity Muhoroni Community Project in Kenya. It is great that we can continue to support this fantastic community.

World Faith Week

Over the course of each academic year, we spend time exploring world faiths.

As part of our World Faith Week celebrations, this term, pupils at St Patrick's have been learning about **Judaism**. Rooted in traditions that go back thousands of years, Judaism teaches values such as justice, kindness and community.

Children explored key aspects of Jewish life, including the importance of the Torah, the weekly celebration of Shabbat, and the significance of festivals like Hanukkah and Passover. They also learned about the synagogue as a place of worship and the role of symbols such as the Star of David and the menorah.

This learning supports our mission to "Follow in Christ's Footsteps" by promoting understanding and love for all people as well as exploring our British values of tolerance and respect. These values are extremely important in a world where unity, compassion and mutual appreciation help build a brighter future for everyone

Reception Intake 2026

If your child is eligible to start school in the Reception year (September 2026), please follow the link below to apply:

[Primary school places - Durham County Council](#)

We would be delighted to welcome you to our wonderful school. If you would like to arrange a visit, please contact the school office — we'd love to show you what makes St Patrick's such a special place to learn and grow.

Kind regards
Mrs Burgess

General News

Faith in Action

In July 2025, 24 children proudly received their Pin Level Awards from Catholic Youth Ministry. Once again, we are delighted to share that Year 6 will be engaging in Faith in Action sessions with Mrs A, continuing their journey of learning and reflection.

St Patrick's Christmas Craft Fair

St Patrick's Church Christmas Craft Fair will take place on **Saturday 22nd November, 12:30pm–3:30pm.**

This wonderful community event will feature: 20 local craft stalls, live music, raffles, tombolas, a bake and preserves sale, a children's craft area, hair braiding and a fantastic face painter. Santa will also be visiting between 1pm and 2pm! It promises to be a brilliant day, full of festive fun for all ages.

If you're able, donations of chocolates, sweets and small prizes or gifts for the children's area and tombola would be very gratefully received. Please bring any donations into school by **Wednesday 19th November.** We want to do our part to help make sure St Patrick's Church continues to be a vibrant part of our community. Money raised on the day will help raise funds for our parishes.

To make the event extra special, children from all our parish schools have been invited to open the fair with a few Christmas carols. If your child would like to join in with the carols, please complete the following form by **Friday 14th November.**

<https://forms.office.com/e/4tCQuq38Ts>

Please come along, bring family and friends and help spread the word by sharing the event information. Let's make this a wonderful community celebration and an even bigger success than last year!

Parish newsletter

Please click [here](#) to view this week's parish newsletter for St. Patrick's and St. Joseph's parishes. Here you will find news about upcoming parish events and news.

General News

Rugby

We've had an action-packed week at St Patrick's with a fantastic focus on rugby! The week began with a rugby festival, where Y5 pupils had the opportunity to showcase their teamwork, resilience and sporting spirit in a fun and friendly environment.

Later in the week, we welcomed a specialist rugby coach into school to lead additional sessions in Y5 and Y6. These were energetic, engaging and full of opportunities for children to develop their skills in passing, tackling (non-contact) and strategic play.

Y5/Y6 Boys' 7a-side Football Matches

Our football team played amazingly in their first games of the Football League, winning two of their games and narrowly losing the other. Everyone played brilliantly!



Road Safety

Today, we were pleased to welcome Amy Smith, from the Road Safety team at Durham County Council, to lead a special assembly. She delivered some essential messages to help our pupils stay safe when walking, cycling or travelling near roads.

The assembly reinforced key safety tips such as **Stop, Look, Listen, Think**, the importance of being visible and how to cross roads safely. Pupils listened attentively and engaged thoughtfully, showing great awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe.

We are grateful to Amy for her time and for helping us all remember how to be responsible and safe pedestrians and road users.

Please support our children by taking extra care when dropping and collecting children from school during usual school hours. Please ensure that you park away from school and walk onto site when dropping or collecting from breakfast club or wraparound care.

Thank you, for working with us to keep everyone safe.

General News

Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal

A heartfelt thank you to all the families and staff for your generous contributions to the **Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal**. It's been wonderful to see our school community come together to make a difference to the lives of others.

It was wonderful to see our Friends of St Patrick's getting stuck in to wrap and prepare the boxes, working alongside our great Mission Team.



Online safety

We will give regular updates throughout the year regarding the need for vigilance with online safety. Please alert us to any concerns you may have.

Please see the following guidance and advice from National Online Safety.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about FORTNITE

Fortnite was launched back in 2017, but it remains massively popular – with more than 650 million active players. That's partially due to the competitive nature of its player-vs-player combat, its pop culture crossovers and its constantly shifting map. Significant updates are rolled out with each new version of the game – known as 'chapters' – and within these sit shorter 'seasons'.

AGE RESTRICTIONS
PEGI 12

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Fortnite is free to download and play, but it does offer various additional purchases – cosmetic 'skins', music tracks and LEGO items – which don't really impact on gameplay but can cost a significant amount. These items are bought with in-game currency, V-Bucks – earned through completing the Battle Pass (which also costs V-Bucks) and can also be purchased from the game's store for real money.

ALWAYS ONLINE

There's no single-player offline mode in Fortnite: it can only be played online. Internet access can sometimes be an issue when you're not out and about (both in terms of connectivity and using up data), so you may find that dedicated young Fortnite players are often less enthusiastic about trips away – such as days out and holidays – than you might expect.

CROSSPLAY AND PARTY CHAT

Fortnite is popular with many gamers of various ages. 'Crossplay' lets friends play with each other, regardless of whether they're on an Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo Switch or PC – while the 'party chat' feature allows players to talk to each other during the game. This can, however, put youngsters at risk of hearing inappropriate language from other players in the heat of virtual combat.

IN-GAME COSTS

Fortnite is free to download and play, but it does offer various additional purchases – cosmetic 'skins', music tracks and LEGO items – which don't really impact on gameplay but can cost a significant amount. These items are bought with in-game currency, V-Bucks – earned through completing the Battle Pass (which also costs V-Bucks) and can also be purchased from the game's store for real money.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

At its core, there's no avoiding that Fortnite is about shooting other players to eliminate them from the contest. That said, there's no blood or gore. The violence is rendered in a cartoonish style, and there are frequent cartoon touches to lighten the mood, such as fishing mini-games and dancing emotes. Machine guns, shotguns and other weapons often look and behave realistically, however, so discretion is advised.

POP CULTURE REFERENCES

Part of Fortnite's appeal is its ongoing crossovers with other popular franchises, ranging from movies and TV shows like Family Guy and Avatar: The Last Airbender to comic book characters like Spider-Man in other games, such as Street Fighter. This means you could have children asking questions about the monster from Alien or Darth from The Watcher a little sooner than you otherwise might have.

FREQUENT UPDATES

The game's developers release content in 'seasons' that usually run for around ten weeks. Each fresh update sees items added to the in-game store, changes to the environment's map and a different theme or story theme (such as 'rescue', 'pirates' or 'party'). These regular renewals help to hold players' interest – but also give young gamers plenty of reasons to keep coming back.

Advice for Parents & Educators

MATCH GAMING TIMES

Younger players tend to play Fortnite with their friends. With that in mind, it could be worth speaking to the parents and carers of a child's social group and coordinating their gaming around certain times of day. Safety in numbers is obviously a factor here, but it will also help children feel that they're getting adequate opportunities to socialise with their friends online.

SET SPENDING LIMITS

Fortnite's retailing store is a not-so-subtle mechanism for coaxing players into buying sought-after items before they disappear for weeks or months. This could lead to surprise transactions on bank cards if children are tempted into an impulse purchase. Parents could consider getting a prepaid card for the child or ensuring that purchases require adult authorisation. This can be done through parental settings on a console or account settings in the Epic Games app on PC.

USE UPDATES AS REWARDS

Fortnite's seasonal updates are free, but each also brings the option of a 'battle pass' – unlocking exclusive rewards for playing the game and completing set challenges. The passes cost around £8 and are also available as part of larger bundles. The purchase of passes can be an effective reward to young Fortnite fans for good behaviour or academic performance, or as an incentive for completing chores like tidying their room.

BE WARY OF SCAMS

The immense popularity of Fortnite with younger audiences – that are generally more trusting – means there's no shortage of scammers looking to fraudulently obtain passwords and other personal data through techniques like phishing. As the developers point out on many of Fortnite's loading screens, they never ask for a player's account password outside of the game: make sure only young player knows this.

ENJOY FORTNITE TOGETHER

Fortnite also offers split-screen gameplay, meaning that two people can play simultaneously on the same console or computer. This can be a good option for siblings or for when a child's friends visit, but it also offers an opportunity for parents and carers to do something fun with their child, while also making sure they're playing the game safely. Who knows? You might even teach them a thing or two!

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and experts site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A long-time gamer, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

November Wellbeing Activities

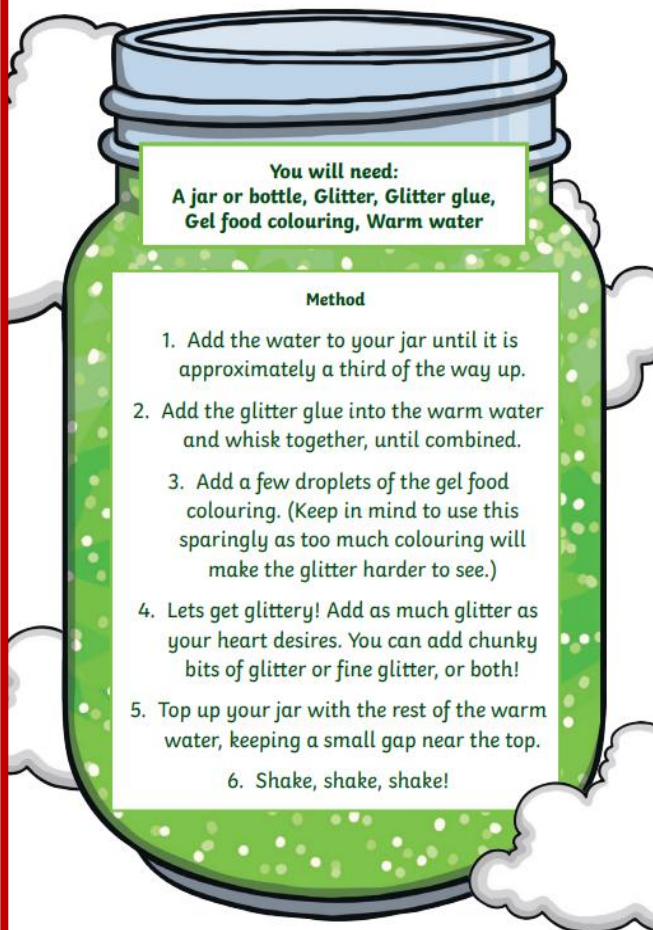
I am loved.

I am thankful.

Acts of Kindness November Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1 Share something you are grateful for with a friend or family member.	2 Help tidy your classroom or home.	3 Donate books or toys to a local charity.	4 Offer to help someone.	5 During a family meal, ask everyone to share the best part of their day.		
6 Write a note to someone to show them that you care.	7 Write a thank-you note to someone who helped you.	8 Tell a joke to make someone laugh.	9 Introduce yourself to someone you haven't met before at school.	10 Help prepare a meal with your family.	11 Be kind and take time to reflect.	12 Draw a picture and give it to someone special.
13 Give someone a compliment to help them feel better about themselves.	14 Wish the first person that you see an amazing day.	15 Do something nice for someone who is special to you.	16 Help a teacher without being asked.	17 Find a positive quote and share it with someone.	18 Play a boardgame or do a puzzle with your family.	19 At the end of the day, write or draw one great thing that happened.
20 Set yourself a goal to achieve today.	21 Share your toys with a friend or sibling.	22 Recycle.	23 Make a card for someone special.	24 Encourage someone that you see is struggling.	25 Be a friend to someone in need at school.	26 Teach someone something you are good at.
27 Do a chore to help someone in your family.	28 Do something that you love to do.	29 Write down something you are grateful for.	30 Ask your teacher how their day is going.			

Calm Down Jar Sensory Bottle



You will need:
A jar or bottle, Glitter, Glitter glue, Gel food colouring, Warm water

Method

1. Add the water to your jar until it is approximately a third of the way up.
2. Add the glitter glue into the warm water and whisk together, until combined.
3. Add a few droplets of the gel food colouring. (Keep in mind to use this sparingly as too much colouring will make the glitter harder to see.)
4. Lets get glittery! Add as much glitter as your heart desires. You can add chunky bits of glitter or fine glitter, or both!
5. Top up your jar with the rest of the warm water, keeping a small gap near the top.
6. Shake, shake, shake!

Remembrance Day



Poppy Day Biscuit



Ingredients

300g plain flour
200g butter
100g sugar
Optional splash of milk

Equipment

Mixing bowl
Wooden spoon
Baking tray

Decorating

Chocolate buttons
Icing sugar
Red food colouring
Water

Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 180°C and grease a baking tray.
2. Place the flour, butter and sugar into a bowl and mix together. If it seems a little dry, add a splash of milk to loosen the mixture.
3. Form the dough into a ball and place on a lightly floured surface. Roll out the dough to your required thickness.
4. Use a circular cutter to press out the biscuits.
5. Place in the oven for 10-15 min until they start turning golden or brown around the edges.
6. Place on a cooling rack until completely cooled.
7. Meanwhile, mix red food colouring with your icing sugar and a little water. Mix until you get a thick icing to spread easily but not so it will run off the biscuit. Add more icing sugar if the mixture is too runny, or more water if it is too thick.
8. When the biscuits have cooled, use a teaspoon to carefully spread the icing on the biscuit. If possible, try and make a poppy shape.
9. Place a chocolate button in the centre of the poppy.
10. Let the icing set a little before eating. Enjoy.

Head Teacher's Awards

The following children have received a head teacher's certificate this week:

Reception	Being Ready To Learn	Sara	For trying so hard with her blending.
Year 1	Being Ready to Learn	Edie Mae	For coming into school ready to learn this week and really trying hard in phonics.
Year 2	Being Responsible	Robin	For always trying hard to listen carefully and complete all tasks.
Year 3	Being Ready to Learn	Mark	For always having a smile on face every morning and being excited to learn.
Year 4	Being Ready to Learn	Logan	Always ready straight after break for his next lesson.
Year 5	Being Ready to Learn	Alya	For working hard on adverbial phrases.
Year 6	Ready to Learn	Logan	For completing lots more tasks within the allotted time.

Class Teacher Special Mention Awards

The following children have received a Class Teacher Special Mention certificate this week:

Reception	Filip	For coming into school every day with a beautiful smile and fantastic manners.
Year 1	Sydney	For working hard on her phonics this week.
Year 2	Jory	For coming to school with a smile on her face and being a friendly member of our class.
Year 3	Robin	For adding 2-digit and 3-digit numbers confidently.
Year 4	Theo	For offering some great ideas on how to learn your times tables.
Year 5	Samuel	For challenging himself in class.
Year 6	Jack	For being ready and willing to contribute to answer questions and contribute to class discussions.



Summary of upcoming events

Monday 10 th – Friday 14 th	Anti-Bullying Week – <i>Power for Good</i>
Monday 10 th	Odd Socks Day
Monday 10 th	Playground Pals - Mentoring Training led by Chloe Dickinson 'Investing in Children' 1-3pm.
Tuesday 11 th	Remembrance Celebration of the Word Assembly 9am led by Y6. All welcome.
Wednesday 12 th	Y3 Hancock Museum Trip
Wednesday 12 th – Friday 14 th	Y5 Emmaus Village Residential Retreat
Monday 17 th	Playground Pals - Mentoring Training led by Chloe Dickinson 'Investing in Children' 1-3pm.
Tuesday 18 th	Little Acorns Meeting 9-10.30am. Led by Caroline Daly SEND & Inclusion Advisory Team. Invited carers
Tuesday 18 th	Y5 Games Afternoon at Dipton Manor Care Home
Wednesday 19 th	Y3/Y4 Athletics Festival at Consett Leisure Centre am
Thursday 20 th	Open the Book Assembly. All welcome.
Friday 21 st	SEN drop-in session 2.30pm-3.15pm with Miss Clish SENDCO
Saturday 22 nd	Parish Christmas Craft Fair 12.30pm-3.30pm

[Please click here to view our Diary of Events for the rest of the Academic Year](#)

Parent/Carer Information

STANLEY FAMILY OF
CATHOLIC CHURCHES

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

Get Ready to Sparkle and Shop!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22ND

ST PATRICK'S CHURCH
DIPTON

12:30PM - 3:30PM

Our community Christmas Craft Fair is just around the corner, offering unique, handmade fabulous gifts, beautiful decorations, and festive fun for all ages.

Please bring cash, not all stall holders have card machines.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- 20 Local Craft Stalls
- Live Music
- Raffle, Tombolas
- Baked Goods, Tea Room
- Children's Craft Area
- Face Painter
- Santa Visiting between 1pm and 2pm
- Lots more

SAVE THE DATE!

Christmas Tree Festival
13th & 14th December 1-4pm