



Newsletter: 30th January 2026

Dear Families,

We were delighted to recently receive this email from Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, praising the work of our school!

Thank you to our fantastic staff, wonderful pupils and for your support. What we do, we do for our children and our families, but it is lovely for our school community to receive such recognition.

A message from Bridget Phillipson



Dear Mrs Burgess,

Congratulations to you and your team on the excellent outcomes the disadvantaged pupils at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Dipton achieved at the end of the 2024/25 academic year. Your school's performance places it among the very best nationally, and this is a significant achievement.

This success reflects the dedication of your staff and the hard work of your pupils. It shows what can be achieved when ambition and commitment come together. Thank you for everything you do to give children the best possible opportunities to succeed.

Your school's achievements demonstrate what is possible, and I hope you will continue to share your experience and best practice with others.

Your sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bridget Phillipson".

Bridget Phillipson

Secretary of State for Education

Have a lovely weekend!
Mrs Burgess

General News

Valentine's Event

Back by popular demand....

Children at St Patrick's are inviting grandparents, elderly neighbours and elderly parishioners only to a special event in school. We would love for you to join us for a lovely afternoon of arts & crafts, games, tea and coffee in our school hall on Friday 13th February 2025 from 1:15pm to 3:00pm.

We think it would be wonderful to spend time together, share stories and enjoy some fun activities.

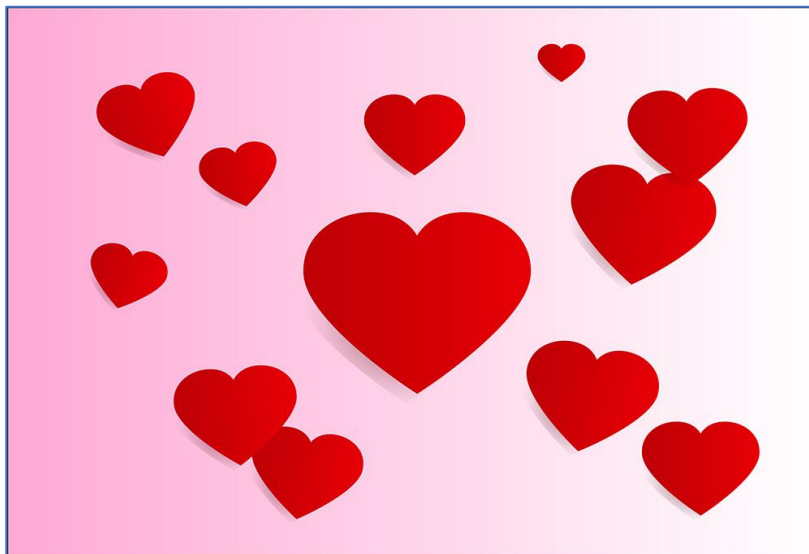
Whether making things, playing games or just having a nice chat over a warm cup of tea, we would be so happy to have you with us.

Please complete the following attendance form on their behalf by Friday 6th February 2026.

<https://forms.office.com/e/syN0Z02iJb>

We look forward to meeting them and having a wonderful afternoon together!

Warm wishes, St Patrick's Mission Team



General News

Year Five Theatre Trip

Our Year Five had a fantastic trip to the theatre yesterday to see the play *Weird* at Newcastle Theatre Royal.

Weird is a new musical that reimagines Shakespeare's Macbeth through the eyes of the three witches, The Weird Sisters. The show features an unforgettable soundtrack filled with pop anthems.

We were very lucky to be allocated free tickets as part of a scheme to make theatre more accessible to a wider range of audience.

Thank you, so much to everyone involved, in this initiative.

Everyone had a brilliant time.

St Joseph's and St Patrick's 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.

No After School Club on Tuesday 17th February

Due to whole staff training, our after-school club will not run on Tuesday 17th February. We're sorry for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.

Road safety

Please help keep our children safe: park sensibly when dropping off and collecting and do not stop or park near the School Crossing Patrol.

Please keep the area clear directly outside school at all times.

Please do not let your children run ahead into school grounds via the church entrance as cars may enter and leave from this area. Pedestrian access is via the alley beside the yard.

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 MENTAL HEALTH MISINFORMATION ONLINE

A research study by Ofcom revealed that children aged 9-15 increasingly use online platforms like TikTok for mental health advice, with 50% relying on social media for information. Unverified medical content online is concerning, with the potential to cause confusion, anxiety, or incorrect self-diagnoses. This guide provides expert strategies to help parents and educators tackle misinformation effectively and ensure safer digital experiences for young people.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

POPULAR ONLINE SOURCES

Platforms like TikTok and Instagram are two of the main sources of young people's mental health content. Videos and posts frequently feature unqualified influencers, contributing to misinformation, myths, and oversimplifications. While appealing to young audiences, this unverified content can distort perceptions, and create unrealistic expectations and misunderstandings about mental health conditions.

RISK OF SELF-DIAGNOSIS

Social media's misleading content encourages young people to self-diagnose complex mental health conditions inaccurately. Misdiagnosis can exacerbate anxiety, cause unnecessary worry, or delay essential professional intervention. This has the potential to escalate manageable conditions into more significant mental health issues requiring comprehensive clinical support.

LACK OF FILTERS

Social media platforms struggle to filter misinformation effectively, allowing false content to spread widely and quickly. Without proper guidance, young viewers may not discern fact from fiction, potentially internalising inaccurate beliefs about mental health. This can negatively influence their decisions about seeking professional help or managing mental wellbeing.

IMPACTFUL PAST TRENDS

Historically, online mental health misinformation has led to harmful trends, including inappropriate coping strategies or sensationalised symptoms. For example, past TikTok trends on self-harm or anxiety 'hacks' have spread damaging advice, underscoring the risk when misinformation is not promptly addressed or corrected by knowledgeable adults.

MISLEADING CLINICAL TERMS

Online trends often include the misuse of clinical terms, such as 'trauma' or 'OCD', making serious conditions seem trivial or inaccurately understood. Such misinformation can diminish empathy, and lead young people to misunderstand mental health complexities, potentially preventing them from identifying real mental health issues in themselves or others.

REPLACING PROFESSIONAL HELP

Frequent reliance on digital content can deter young people from seeking professional mental health care, substituting expert support with unverified online advice. This substitution can prolong issues, complicate recovery, and reduce the effectiveness of future professional interventions, ultimately impacting overall mental health and wellbeing negatively.

Advice for Parents & Educators

MONITOR ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Regularly review and discuss a young person's online activity, providing appropriate guidance on discerning accurate content. Tools such as parental controls or co-viewing content can help mediate exposure to harmful misinformation, facilitating safer digital habits and informed critical thinking about mental health.

SCHOOL-HOME COLLABORATION

Strengthen collaboration with educators to integrate digital literacy into the school curriculum, emphasising misinformation awareness. Jointly delivered education sessions on identifying and responding to misinformation can significantly improve pupils' ability to critically assess mental health content, supporting their mental wellbeing effectively both online and offline.

IDENTIFY RELIABLE SOURCES

Teach young people to critically evaluate mental health content by checking credentials, source authenticity, and evidence-based information. Encourage them to refer to trusted medical or educational platforms and to consult healthcare professionals for clarification. This reduces young people's reliance on potentially harmful or misleading online sources.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Foster a non-judgemental environment where young people feel comfortable discussing online content. Regularly talking about their online experiences and perceived mental health concerns helps clarify misunderstandings, mitigates misinformation, and builds trust, thereby enhancing their resilience and digital literacy. Model situations where you have sought advice from accurate sources and not solely relied on social media for health advice.

Meet Our Expert

Anna Bateman is Director of Halcyon Education Ltd, Director for Wellbeing and Family Services at Leigh Trust, and lead expert for mental health at The National College. Anna specialises in strategic mental health solutions for schools, supporting educators and families to improve resilience, emotional literacy, and overall wellbeing for children across the UK.

#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College

January Wellbeing Activities

I am loved.

I am thankful.

Positive Affirmations January Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
2 I am loved.	3 I am open and ready to learn.	4 I believe in myself and my abilities.	5 I am worthy.	6 I am creative.	7 I am unique.	8 I believe in my dreams and goals.
9 I am helpful.	10 I can do hard things.	11 I can make a difference.	12 I am free to be myself.	13 I am confident.	14 I always try my best.	15 I am curious.
16 I am kind.	17 I ask for help.	18 I like challenges.	19 I am a good friend.	20 I am doing the best I can.	21 I am honest.	22 I make good choices.
23 I learn from my challenges.	24 I am a good listener.	25 It is ok if I make mistakes.	26 I stand up for what I believe in.	27 I am patient and calm.	28 I can try again.	29 I am generous.
30 I see the good in myself and others.	31 Today is going to be a great day!					

Calming STRATEGIES

take a deep breath

count to ten

draw or doodle

read a book

hug a cuddly toy

listen to calm music

drink some water

play with modelling dough

build a tower with blocks

make a yoga pose

blow bubbles

sing a song

Shortbread Biscuits



Makes approximately 20 shortbread biscuits.

Ingredients

55g of caster sugar
180g of plain flour
125g of butter

Equipment

Oven
large mixing bowl
wooden spoon
fork
wire cooling rack
fridge
rolling pin
biscuit cutters
baking tray

Method

1. Heat the oven to 190c or gas mark 5.
2. Beat the butter and the sugar together until smooth.
3. Stir in the flour to get a smooth paste.
4. Turn on to a work surface and gently roll out until the paste is 1cm / 1/2in thick.
5. Cut into rounds or fingers and place onto baking tray. Sprinkle with caster sugar and chill in the fridge for 20 minutes.
6. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes, or until pale golden-brown. Set aside to cool on a wire rack.



Head Teacher's Awards

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

Reception	Being Ready To Learn	Rosie U	For her fantastic attitude and concentration in school.
Year 1	Being Ready to Learn	Amber	For listening carefully during Phonics this week.
Year 2	Being Respectful	Grace	For being such a polite, kind and hard working member of our class.
Year 3	Being Ready to Learn	Emilia	For always listening to feedback to improve her work.
Year 4	Being Ready to Learn	Theo	For always being ready to share an answer or idea.
Year 5	Being Ready to Learn	Harriet	For always working hard in class and for trying her best at all times.
Year 6	Being Ready to Learn	Leland	For working with more independence in maths.

Class Teacher Special Mention Awards

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

Reception	Joshua	For lovely manners in school.
Year 1	Nathan	For working hard knowing his doubles within 20 through practicing at school and at home.
Year 2	Isabelle	For trying so hard in maths and practising quick recall of addition facts.
Year 3	Brooke	For always demonstrating a fantastic attitude to learning.
Year 4	Lyla	For excellent improvement in formal methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
Year 5	George	For always showing kindness towards others.
Year 6	Lucas	For a real effort to improve presentation and handwriting.



Summary of upcoming events

Sunday 1 st	St Patrick's families join parish for Mass 9am. All welcome.
Monday 3 rd – Friday 7 th	World Faith Week - Sikhism Week
Thursday 5 th	Y5/Y6 Boys' 7a-side Football Match at Greenland School 4pm
Monday 9th - Friday 13th	Children's Mental Health Week
Tuesday 10th	Safer Internet Day
Friday 13th	Valentine's Arts & Crafts Afternoon for grandparents, elderly neighbours and elderly
Friday 13th	SEN drop-in session 2.30pm-3.15pm with Miss Clish SENDCo
Wednesday 18th	Ash Wednesday Mass 9.30am. All welcome
Thursday 19th	Y3/Y4 Virtual Fitness via Teams am

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




Parent/Carer Information

County Durham Family Hubs CAMHS Nurse Drop In Sessions

Families are welcome to attend upcoming CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) nurse drop-in sessions at the following Best Start Family Hub locations:

- **Wednesday 28 January 2026**, 9.30am–11.30am – *Willington*
- **Tuesday 3 February 2026**, 9.30am–11.30am – *Wheatley Hill*
- **Tuesday 3 February 2026**, 1.00pm–3.00pm – *Bishop Auckland*
- **Wednesday 11 February 2026**, 12.30pm–2.30pm – *Stanley*

These drop-in sessions may be helpful for parents and carers whose child is experiencing:

-  low confidence or self-esteem
-  low mood
-  worrying or anxious feelings

The CAMHS nurse will be available for general advice and guidance. Please note that updates on open cases or ongoing CAMHS work cannot be provided at these sessions. Any case-specific queries should be directed to the CAMHS team currently supporting your child.

Future session dates and times can be found via the link below:

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/.../Child-and-Adolescent-Mental...>



Parent/Carer Information

Durham All Stars Cricket Half-Term Holiday Camp

During the February Half-Term, Durham All Stars Cricket Club are running a free cricket holiday camp at the Beacon of Light, Sunderland. The camp will take place on Friday 27th February 9.30am-12pm, the camp is open to children aged 5-8 years old and will deliver fun, fast-paced cricket activities in a safe, welcoming environment.

Parents and carers are encouraged to register in advance, as places are limited. The session is completely free when booking with the following discount code: **TNA8L**

Please use the following link to book your child's place:

<https://ecb.clubspark.uk/Book/3bc29833-396f-4ece-b083-765beb9ab89b?venue=DurhamCricketBoardLtdCCB>



Parent/Carer Information

FEBRUARY 2026 HALF-TERM HOLIDAY COURSES



FOUNDATION
OF LIGHT

THE WORLD AT YOUR FEET



REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1069333

**WELLFIELD
SCHOOL, TS28 5AX**

**BEAMISH FOOTBALL
CENTRE, DN9 6PZ**

**MONDAY 23RD -
WEDNESDAY 25TH**

3 DAY
FOOTBALL
9.30AM-3PM |
£45

**MONDAY 23RD -
WEDNESDAY 25TH**

3 DAY
FOOTBALL
9.30AM-3PM |
£45

A PLACE FOR MORE THAN JUST FOOTBALL AND FRIENDS

FEBRUARY 2026 HALF-TERM HOLIDAY COURSES



FOUNDATION
OF LIGHT

THE WORLD AT YOUR FEET

BEACON OF LIGHT

**MONDAY 23RD -
WEDNESDAY 25TH**

3 DAY
FOOTBALL
9.30AM-3PM |
£50

**MONDAY 23RD -
WEDNESDAY 25TH**

3 DAY
HOLIDAY CLUB
9.30AM-3PM |
£50

TUESDAY 24TH

TODDLER
TALES
10AM-12PM |
£15

TUESDAY 24TH

DISABILITY
FOOTBALL
10AM-12PM |
£15

WEDNESDAY 25TH

LITTLE DRIBBLERS/
LITTLE LIONESSES
BIG DAY OUT
10AM-12PM |
1-3PM | **£15**

WEDNESDAY 25TH

MINI BAKERS
10AM-12PM |
6-10 YEARS |
£15

THURSDAY 26TH

JUNIOR BAKERS
10AM-12PM |
10-16 YEARS |
£15

THURSDAY 26TH

BEAUTY AT
THE BEACON
10AM-1PM |
10-16 YEARS |
£15

1.1 COACHING SESSIONS AVAILABLE | 4-5.30PM | **£30**
MONDAY 23RD, TUESDAY 24TH OR WEDNESDAY 25TH

SCAN TO BOOK



Parent/Carer Information



Emotional Wellbeing

Tuesday 13th January 2026 9.30 am—11.30 am

This session will focus on emotional wellbeing, what is it and how can we improve it for ourselves and our children.

Understanding Behaviour Development in Children & Young People

Tuesday 3rd February 2026, 9.30 am—11.30 am

This session will look at behavioural norms in the developing child and how adult behaviour influences this. We will look at the challenges parents and carers may face and how they can support their children and young people to develop resilience and manage risk as they grow to adulthood and independence.

Understanding Why Children Might Be Anxious About School

Tuesday 17th February 2026, 9.30 am—11.30 am

This is an awareness session to increase understanding of why children might be anxious about school, identify potential triggers and look at available support and strategies. This session is suitable for parents/carers of all school aged children but may be of limited value to parents of children with more complex needs.


Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust



www.mctdurham.co.uk



Parent/Carer Information



Anxiety (Two age groups)

Over 11 years

Tuesday 3rd March 2026, 9.30am—11.30am

Tuesday 31st March 2026, 9.30am—11.30am

5-11 years

Tuesday 24th March 2026, 9.30 am—11.30 am

Tuesday 28th April 2026, 9.30 am—11.30 am

This session looks at what anxiety is, what the triggers might be, how to identify it and how we can support our children and young people.

Please book a place using the link or QR code directly below:

[CAMHS Training Booking Form - Parents Carers](#)



To visit our Trust website, for further information, please scan the QR code at the bottom of this page. The sessions are aimed at parents of school aged children but parents of younger/older children are very welcome. The sessions will be led by a CAMHS trainer and run on Microsoft Teams. If you have any additional needs, please email tevw.countydurhamcamhstraining@nhs.net


Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys
NHS Foundation Trust



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0191 5873541



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Tel: 0300 0051213