



# Newsletter: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Dear Families,

## **Decider Skills**

Our pupils' emotional well-being is especially important to us and, as you know, we are proud to be part of the STAR initiative (Support Targeting Anxiety and Resilience) delivered through Durham Local Authority.

As part of this, our Year 4 children are taking part in weekly Decider Skills sessions. These sessions provide pupils with opportunities to explore and develop strategies to manage their emotions.

I was interested to hear from the children themselves, and I am pleased to say that feedback from the class and Mrs Moore is extremely positive.

The Y4 children have been able to talk about the benefits of our involvement in the programme. The class explained that they are, 'exploring ways to control emotions to stop yourself from getting angry or upset'. They were able to share a range of calming strategies and discussed the importance of self-care with a message that worrying/upsetting feelings 'will pass'. Each week, the children have been given a challenge to practise the skills at home.

With a wider view on supporting pupils' emotional needs, we will be holding a coffee morning for parents/carers on **Wednesday 22nd April 9am – 10.30am**. This will be led by Caroline Daly, Specialist SEND & Inclusion Advisory Teacher with the Emotional Wellbeing and Effective Learning Team at Durham. She will start with a presentation to offer some insights into regulating emotions, and she will be around afterwards for an informal chat in case anyone has any further questions. If you have any concerns or particular interest in this area, we encourage you to come along. Light refreshments will be available.

## **Big Lent Walks**

Our Big Lent Walks are underway. Families can support this wonderful cause by donating through this Arbor School Shop or send in £2 cash donation to school.

Many thanks, in anticipation, for your support.

Have a lovely weekend!

Mrs Burgess

# General News

## Raffle Prizes

Following your generous contributions of chocolate goodies, our Friends of St Patrick's have assembled some fantastic prizes which will be raffled next week at our Easter celebrations. Please bring some change along with you to support this fundraising events for school.



The poster features a central text area surrounded by colorful Easter eggs. At the top center is the logo for 'FRIENDS OF ST PATRICK'S', which depicts two figures holding hands under a green arch. The main title 'Easter Raffle' is written in a large, stylized font. Below the title, the ticket availability dates are listed, followed by the draw date. A green cloud-shaped box highlights the price per ticket. At the bottom, the total number of prizes is stated.

FRIENDS OF ST PATRICK'S

HOP ON OVER FOR OUR  
***Easter Raffle***

Tickets will be available to buy  
before each Easter liturgy  
Monday 30th March  
Tuesday 31st March  
Thursday 2nd April

To be drawn after the yr5/6 liturgy  
on Thursday 2nd

£1  
PER STRIP

24 EGG-CELLENT PRIZES TO BE  
WON



# General News

## Nursery, Reception and Year Three Hall Hill Farm Trip

Classes were blessed with glorious sunshine for their fantastic day out at Hall Hill Farm this week.

Everyone involved had a brilliant day. We have included a few photographs below to give you a flavour of the range of activities children experienced.



## 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.

# 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 SNAPCHAT

With over 900 million active monthly users and billions of 'Snaps' sent each month, Snapchat is a popular messaging app among children and young people. It allows users to share fun, spontaneous pictures and videos with friends and family while using playful filters. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures, videos and messages are only viewable for a short period of time.

**SNAP STREAK**  
97

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

**AGE RESTRICTION**  
13+

### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Snapchat's use of artificial intelligence (AI) includes features like the 'My AI' chatbot and AI-powered filters, offering interactive experiences that can be fun but also pose risks. These tools may share unfiltered or inaccurate responses, promote unrealistic beauty standards, and collect personal data. Advanced filters and deepfake-style lenses can distort reality, potentially leading to manipulation, impersonation, or inappropriate content.

### SCREEN ADDICTION

Snapchat boosts user engagement and daily use with features like streaks (daily Snapchat exchanges between you and a friend). When a streak's been going for a few days, users will see a 🍌 emoji. The number alongside it shows the number of days, but if users miss a day and break the streak, the only way to restore it is to pay. This encourages daily use habits, and frequent notifications can keep users returning to the app even more often.

### SEXTORTION

Because Snapchat's disappearing messages feature may foster a sense of safety, users may become targets of sextortion. For example, a predator may pressure someone into sending nude images, then somehow capture those images to threaten and intimidate the victim. This might involve claiming they will share the images with friends or family unless money is paid.

### SNAPCHAT+

Snapchat+ is the platform's premium subscription service, offering early access to new and exclusive features. In June 2021, Snapchat introduced a new tier called Lens+, giving subscribers access to hundreds of lenses and AR experiences for playing, creating, and sharing Snaps. These paid features may encourage young users to spend money to access exclusive content, increasing the risk of overspending or feeling pressured to make in-app purchases.

### ACCESSIBILITY

Snapchat is now accessible from a web browser, meaning children can use it on a laptop or tablet without downloading the app. This can make activity harder to monitor, reduce the effectiveness of parental controls, and increase the risk of unsupervised communication or exposure to inappropriate content.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's disappearing messages feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ACCESS THE SNAPCHAT FAMILY SAFETY HUB

Created with guidance from Common Sense Media, Snapchat has developed a family safety hub that explains how the app works and how to use its in-app protections for teens. It's recommended that you review this guidance before allowing a child to download Snapchat. Remember, the app is only intended for children aged 13 and over.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasizing its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

### BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger connects with a child on Snapchat and makes them feel uncomfortable by pressuring them to send or receive unwanted or inappropriate images, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile to report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user, with a tailored reporting section under the 'Nudity and Sexual Content' category. In this category, there's the option to report somebody for threatening to leak sexually explicit images, or 'nudes'.

### USE PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER

Sit down with the children in your care and explore Snapchat's privacy settings as a shared activity. You can help them adjust who can contact them, view their stories, or see their location on Snap Map. It's a good opportunity to explain why some settings are safer than others, reinforcing their understanding of online boundaries. Encourage them to regularly review these settings, especially after app updates or changes in their friendship groups.

# March Wellbeing Activities

I am loved.

I am thankful.

## Acts of Kindness March Calendar

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

1

Draw a picture and give it to someone special.

2

Help tidy your classroom or home.

3

Write down something you are grateful for.

4

During a family meal, ask everyone to share the best part of their day.

5

Donate books or toys to a local charity.

6

Ask your teacher how their day is going.

7

Give someone a compliment to help them feel better about themselves.

8

Share a favourite memory with a friend or family member.

9

Introduce yourself to someone you haven't met before at school.

10

Write a thank-you note to someone who helped you.

11

Play a boardgame or do a puzzle with your family.

12

Set yourself a goal to achieve today.

13

Encourage someone that you see is struggling.

14

Write a note to someone to show them that you care.

15

Wish the first person that you see an amazing day.

16

Offer to help someone.

17

Share your toys with a friend or sibling.

18

Do a chore to help someone in your family.

19

At the end of the day, write or draw one great thing that happened.

20

Find a positive quote and share it with someone.

21

Be kind to yourself and do something special for you.

22

Help a teacher without being asked.

23

Be a friend to someone in need at school.

24

Do something nice for someone who is special to you.

25

Help prepare a meal with your family.

26

Donate food to a local food bank.

27

Teach someone something you are good at.

28

Tell a joke to make someone laugh.

29

Do something that you love to do.

30

Recycle.

31

Make a card for someone special.

### Outdoor Mindfulness Scavenger Hunt

Go outside and use all of your senses to complete this scavenger hunt.



Find something that makes you happy.



Listen to a bird singing.



Find something that smells nice.



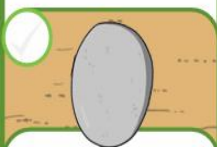
Listen to leaves rustling on a tree.



Find something that is your favourite colour.



Find something that makes a noise.



Find something that is smooth.



Find something the colour of the sky.



Find something as small as your fingernail.



Look for a cloud that is shaped like an animal. Watch it change shape.



Follow an insect. What it is doing?



Find something that is soft.

### St. Patrick's Day Potato Pancakes



#### Ingredients

- 2 medium sized potatoes or 250g cold mashed potato
- 75g plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 125ml milk
- 1 tsp sunflower oil
- knob of butter

#### Method

This recipe requires adult supervision.

1. If you need to make the mashed potato, peel and chop the potatoes into chunks. Then, add them to a pan of water and boil for 15 minutes or until they are soft.
2. Drain the potatoes using a colander. (Adult supervision is required as the water will be extremely hot.)
3. Mash the potatoes and then weigh out 250g. Allow this to cool.
4. Sieve the flour and baking powder onto the mashed potato.
5. In a bowl, whisk the eggs and milk together. Then, add this to the mashed potato and flour mixture and stir well. Whisk the mixture until it is smooth.
6. In a large frying pan, heat half of the sunflower oil and a bit of the butter. (Adult supervision is required as the fat and pan will be extremely hot.)
7. Carefully, add 1 tbsp of the batter for each pancake to the pan. You should be able to fit four pancakes in the pan.
8. After about 1 minute, small bubbles will appear on the top and the bottom of the pancake should be light brown. Turn the pancakes over and cook on the other side.
9. When both sides are light brown, carefully remove from the pan.
10. If you have any mixture left, you can cook more pancakes in the same way.
11. Finally, serve and enjoy.



## Head Teacher's Awards

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

Reception/ Nursery	Being Respectful	Lydia	For always being polite and well mannered.
Year 1	Being Respectful	Henry	Being a kind member of our class.
Year 2	Being Ready to Learn	Robin	For being enthusiastic about learning in school and at home.
Year 3	Being Ready to Learn	Robin	For giving teachers 100% of his attention and producing his best work.
Year 4	Being Ready to Learn	Alice	For always being ready to listen, learn and try her best.
Year 5	Being Ready to Learn	Lily-Rose	For her dedication and focus in class this week.
Year 6	Being Respectful	Joe	For always showing such lovely manners.

## Class Teacher Special Mention Awards

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

Reception/ Nursery	Archie	For his very precise cutting skills.
Year 1	Whole class	For their hard work this week across all subjects.
Year 2	Evie	For being such a kind, caring and helpful member of our class.
Year 3	Mark	For always having a beautiful smile on his face and ready to learn.
Year 4	Theo	For a fantastic attitude in all subjects this week.
Year 5	Evie	For working 'above and beyond' in RE this week.
Year 6	Jack	For some super problem solving in maths.



## Summary of upcoming events

Monday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Y1/Y2 Palm Sunday Liturgy 2.30pm in school. All welcome.
Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Y1/Y2 Beamish Museum Trip
Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Y3/Y4 Maundy Thursday Liturgy 2.30pm in school. All welcome



Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	N/Rec/Y1/Y2 Big Lent Walks
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Y4 Segedunum Roman Fort Trip
Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Y5/Y6 Good Friday Liturgy 2.30pm in school. All welcome.

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April School closes for Easter  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April School re-opens to pupils**

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

# Parent/Carer Information

## **Easter Holiday Camps – Foundation of Light** 🌐

Foundation of Light will be running Football and Holiday Camps this Easter (7th–17th April) across Sunderland, Seaham, Peterlee and North Durham.

These sessions are a great opportunity for children to stay active, build confidence and have fun during the holidays.

Places can be booked here:

<https://www.abler.io/shop/foundationoflight/holidaycourses>

There are also fully funded places available on selected camps at Wellfield, Beamish and Seaham for children eligible for Free School Meals through the Fun & Food programme.

If your child is eligible, you will have already received a Fun & Food ticket. Please scan the QR code on your ticket for full details and booking information.

