



Shilbottle Primary School Friday Flyer

8th May 2026

Headteachers Update -

Another busy and positive week has flown by at Shilbottle Primary School and as always, the children have continued to work incredibly hard across all areas of school life. It has been lovely to see so much enthusiasm, positivity and determination throughout school this week.

A lot of our conversations this week have still very much centred around our fantastic 100-year celebration event that took place last Friday. It has been wonderful coming into school and hearing the children still talking so positively and enthusiastically about the event. Seeing the smiles on their faces and hearing them reminisce about the day really does make us believe that it created memories which will stay with them for a very long time.

It has also been fantastic to see the wider exposure the school has received following the event, particularly through the Northumberland Gazette, alongside the many lovely comments and messages we have received from families, friends and members of the wider community. We are incredibly proud as a school to have had the opportunity to host such a special celebration and to bring so many people together.

A huge thank you once again goes to all of our parents, carers, wider community members, family and friends who came along and supported the day. Your support helped make the celebration such a success. One of my personal highlights was walking into the hall and seeing so many people gathered around the historic photographs from throughout the decades. It was wonderful hearing people point themselves out in photographs from the 1950s and 1960s and sharing those memories together. It truly was a fantastic day and one that will undoubtedly hold a special place in the history and memories of Shilbottle Primary School for many years to come.

As we move towards next week, our Year 6 children are now preparing for SATs week. Throughout this week we have been completing our final preparations but most importantly, we have spent time talking about perseverance, resilience and having a positive growth mindset. We have reminded the children that all we can ever ask is that they try their very best and feel proud of the effort they have put in. By this time next week, SATs will all be finished and can become a distant memory.

We also enjoyed another lovely Hot Chocolate and Celebration Assembly this week. Well done to all of our winners, it is wonderful to celebrate the children's achievements, effort and positive attitudes.

We hope you all have a lovely weekend and we look forward to welcoming everybody back on Monday, ready for another fantastic week ahead.

Mr Shaw



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SEND

An organisation of Educational Psychologists called ASK Psychology will be facilitating some parent workshops on different themes over the year ahead at locations across the trust. The first session will be after the May half term and will be hosted in three locations (Swansfield, Ponteland Primary and Heddon) for parents to access from any school. The first session will be delivered by ASK's Occupational Therapists and will cover one of these issues :

- toileting(primary),
- eating and drinking (primary),
- sensory differences and sensory lifestyles (primary and secondary)
- sleep (primary and secondary)
- neuro-affirming play (primary and secondary)

A form on your parentmail account will be sent to you, please could you indicate the session that would be of most interest to you and submit back to us by noon Tuesday 5th May 2026.

The results of this survey will determine the session to be delivered.

Once the survey results are gathered, we will advertise the parent session which has been chosen and the timings and location of the delivery.





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Safeguarding

Shilbottle Primary School is committed to keeping all children safe. Our staff regularly participate in safeguarding training and are fully aware of how to keep our pupils safe and what signs to look out for. Our pupils know they can share any concerns and we have robust policies and procedures in place which underpin safeguarding. It is our paramount priority to keep all children healthy and safe. Remember our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in school are **Mr Phillips, Mrs Blackhall and Mr Shaw.**

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients; not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EVOLVING SCAMS
WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer in a spurious 'emergency' - plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then 'jacking up' WhatsApp's contact list to ask you to report the scammers to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS
To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

FAKE NEWS
WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use often means to be shared rapidly - whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double-check icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from original - and might not be entirely factual either.

CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES
In 2022, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chat' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID. There is an additional feature - 'Secret Codes' - where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to take screenshots and extract they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

VIEW ONCE CONTENT
The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't request them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content - but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing protection of privacy.

VISIBLE LOCATION
WhatsApp's live location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location - potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journey that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION
Encourage children to treat unsolicited messages with caution; get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS
It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to My Contacts or My Contacts Except... Additionally, if a child needs to use live location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need - and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY
Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a linked Contact folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they're stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep those chats so secret. Also, if children send any view once content, it could be useful to ask them why.

DISCUSS GROUP CHATS
Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a group immediately, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable - or for any reason, in fact.

THINK BEFORE SHARING
Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding anything on WhatsApp. It's easy - and all too common - for content that is not meant to be shared more widely, even privately on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

ONLINE

SECRET CODE



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Attendance

As parents and carers we want to share our attendance figures because it is you who can make the big difference. Our children are entitled to a full and balanced education and at Shilbottle we feel we provide one of the best experiences possible.

Current Whole School attendance is 94.8%. Our Whole School Target is 96%

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Mrs Blackhall	97%	94%
Mrs Kelly	95%	95%
Mr Phillips	94%	95%

Days of school add up to lost learning						
Days in school	190	186	180	175	171	170
Percentage attendance	100%	98%	95%	92%	90%	<90%
	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Caution	Cause for concern	Serious concern

Absence Procedures if your child is ill, please keep them at home until they are well enough to return to school. Please notify us by phone call or email before 9.15am if your child is to be absent, and continue to inform us on a daily basis if they continue to be ill.

We have a continual focus on attendance and punctuality and this is of the utmost importance in your child's education. Please remember that our school gate closes at 8.40am as this is when our lessons begin. Anyone arriving after this time is classed as late and will miss valuable learning opportunities, such as phonics, which take place immediately after registration.



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Classroom updates - Bluebell Class

After the excitement of last week's centenary celebrations, the children have been full of positive conversation about it. Despite the high energy, Bluebell Class settled back into their routines beautifully, producing some truly impressive work this week.

Our exploration of "Animals including Humans" continues! Our EYFS learners explored various habitats, identifying which animals thrive on land, in water, or in the sky. Meanwhile, KS1 delved into animal structures, investigating the unique features that help creatures survive in different environments.

The animal theme hopped over into English, too. Our older children rose to the challenge of writing character descriptions for frogs, focusing on expanded noun phrases, adverbs, and conjunctions. In Drawing Club, Reception shared the story *Sharing a Shell*, impressing us with their creative descriptions and independent writing as they brought sea creatures and their habitats to life.



There was a great deal of pride in the classroom this week as the children completed their lighthouse models! Linked to our History topic on the heroic Grace Darling, the children used their DT skills to build these iconic structures. A huge thank you to all the parents who sent in paper tubes; they were essential in bringing these projects to life. The finished lighthouses look fantastic, and the children were rightfully beaming as they took them home to show you!

In Maths, KS1 moved forward with their unit on money, focusing on calculating and comparing different amounts. Our EYFS children have begun a big step in their learning: exploring the composition of numbers between 10 and 20.

It has been a productive, settled, and positive week. Well done, Bluebell Class. Have a wonderful weekend!

Mrs Blackhall





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Classroom updates - Poppy Class

After all the excitement of the celebrations and the bank holiday, the children have worked incredibly hard this week and produced a fantastic amount of work despite it being a shorter week.

In Maths, we have started learning how to tell the time to the nearest minute, which has proved quite challenging for many of us. We continue to work hard on our multiplication facts, and the Year 4 children have been practising regularly in preparation for a mock multiplication test next week.

In English, we have written some fantastic explanation texts, and Mr Shaw even commented on the gold standard of the children's work. We are also very proud that some children earned their pen licences this week due to their beautiful, neat and consistently joined handwriting — a wonderful achievement!

In History, we continued our topic on Early Islamic civilization and explored Islamic art. The children learned about the three main styles used: geometric patterns, vegetal patterns inspired by nature, and calligraphy. We then had great fun designing and creating our own patterned artwork.

The sunshine certainly helped us in Science this week as we investigated how shadows are formed. The children made shadow puppets and predicted where shadows would appear depending on the position of the light source.

In Art, we continued our work on monochromatic art and added the finishing touches to our artwork from last week.

It is hard to believe there are only two weeks left until half term — the time is passing so quickly! Have a lovely weekend, and let's hope the sunshine continues.

Mrs Kelly





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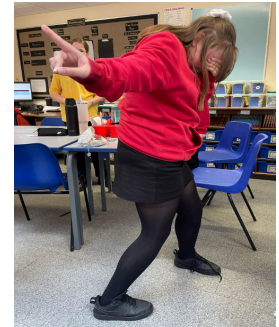
Classroom updates - Clover Class

Although it has been a short week following the Bank Holiday, our classroom has been an absolute hive of positive activity.

This week has very much been about final preparations and positivity for the Year 6 children. We have been incredibly impressed by their perseverance this year; they have taken colossal steps forward in their academic learning.



We view the KS2 SATs not as an arbitrary test, but as a celebratory **opportunity**. Next week is a chance for our children to show off just how far they have come in their entire KS2 journey, building upon foundations set since Year 3. This specific group of children has faced unique challenges, including the Covid disruption during their early years and Year 1 learning. The fact that they have always shown a growth mindset and a desire to learn is a true testament to their character.



No matter what happens next week, we are already **extremely proud** of what they have achieved. They continue to show a wonderful, mature attitude toward their learning.

A massive thank you must go to our Year 5 children. This week, they have been an outstanding source of calm and consistent support for the older children, while simultaneously mastering their own curriculum skills in preparation for their journey next year. What a team!

However, it wasn't just about SATs. We have proudly maintained our regular, enriching curriculum, including: **History:** We discovered the real-world impact of World War I right here in **Shilbottle** and other local villages. We explored the difficult reality that when local men went to fight, many did not return. We learned exactly who stepped forward to take on their vital jobs, researching the inspiring story of the **Land Girls** and even discovering the local "**Tattie Holidays**," when entire schools were closed to allow children to help harvest potatoes! **PSHE:** We learned about the biological effects of smoking, alcohol, and illegal substances on the brain. We also practiced key phrases and strategies to confidently say "No" to peer pressure. **P.E. and Art:** We continued using our P.E. knowledge to design and deliver new playground games, and Vincent van Gogh's *Starry Night* continues to inspire some swirling creative masterpieces in Art.



We are certain that the entire school community will join us in wishing our Year 6 children the very best for next week. They are ready!

Have a wonderfully restful and positive weekend!

Mr Phillips



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Dates for your Diary

Events could be subject to change and will be communicated if required

Date	Time	
Wednesday 22nd April		Reception/Year1 & Year 2 Swimming (every Wednesday)
Monday 11th May - 14th May		Year 6 SATs
Tuesday 16th June	1.00-3.00pm	Sport Day (weather permitting)



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**Happy Birthday to all those celebrating
this week**

**Bobbi-Rose - Bluebell Class
Charlotte - Clover Class**