



Shilbottle Primary School Friday Flyer

13th March 2026

Headteachers Update

It has been another really positive week here at Shilbottle Primary School and it has been wonderful to see the children continuing to work so hard and represent our school so proudly.

Following the review last week and the positive outcomes shared in my previous Friday Flyer, we felt it was only right to reward the children for their fantastic efforts. Therefore this week they enjoyed a little extra break time at lunchtime as a small thank you for the focus, effort and maturity they showed. It is a real joy to see how positively they respond every day and how keen they are to do their very best in their studies.

This week we were also delighted to welcome Amy, who is part of the Newcastle Red Bulls Rugby Club. Amy will be joining us for the next few Wednesdays to lead rugby sessions as well as running an after-school club. It was fantastic to see the enthusiasm on the children's faces and how quickly they embraced trying a sport that may be new to many of them. Providing a wide range of opportunities is something we are keen to continue developing. I know that through feedback some families have mentioned the importance of expanding sporting opportunities and this is certainly the start of more to come. By working closely with the other schools in our trust, we are exploring a number of ways to further enhance our sporting provision moving forward.



We also held our Celebration Assembly and Hot Chocolate rewards this week. A huge well done to all of our winners. It is always fantastic to recognise the effort, progress and positive attitudes that our children show every day.

A quick reminder that next Friday will be Comic Relief Day for Comic Relief. Children are invited to wear something red (instead of their usual school jumper if they wish) and if possible, bring along a £1 donation to support this fantastic cause.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We hope you all have a lovely weekend, and we look forward to seeing everyone again on Monday. **Mr Shaw**



Shilbottle Primary School Friday Flyer

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 BLUESKY

AGE RESTRICTION 13+
With an App Store rating of 17+ & Google Play rating 16+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?
While Bluesky has been around since 2019, it's suddenly taken off in a big way thanks to a significant exodus from X (formerly Twitter). Indeed, it looks and behaves a lot like Twitter before Elon Musk bought the platform. Bluesky has been touted in recent months as a safer, more open-minded alternative to X – but like any social media site, it still has its share of risks.

NO PRIVATE ACCOUNTS
While most social networks allow accounts to be private, at the time of writing, all Bluesky accounts must be public. The development team has indicated this might change in the future, but the app is built on a public-first protocol. If private accounts are ever introduced, it may only be in a limited way – such as through the implementation of group chats.

INTERACTIONS WITH STRANGERS
Every account being public means that anyone can be contacted by anyone else. While users don't have to respond and can easily block people and move on, it does mean that youngsters are at particular risk of being contacted by scammers, messaged by predatory adults or exposed to others with ill intentions. These horrors can be compounded by the fact that Bluesky doesn't require its users to provide their real names.

TROLLING AND BULLYING
While Bluesky currently feels a lot friendlier than X seems to have become, its lack of private accounts means that there's nothing to stop users from trolling and cyberbullying younger people. While accounts can be blocked and reported, a persistent bully could simply create a new profile, potentially making their victims feel unsafe in continuing to use the app.

DANGEROUS MISINFORMATION
Established news organisations have fact-checking and editing processes, but social networks have no such controls and can often serve as breeding grounds for misinformation and disinformation. Bluesky will possibly be no different once it reaches a certain size, and children may not have the critical thinking skills to tell fact from fiction – or to discern an interactive, honest user from a malicious one.

ADULT TARGET AUDIENCE
Bluesky isn't designed with children in mind, and there aren't many parental controls on the platform. In an interview with the BBC, Bluesky's CEO originally said that the app would only allow users aged 18 and above to sign up, but a spokesperson later clarified its age restriction as 13+. This could imply the app was originally meant for an adult audience and suggests that making the platform more child-friendly might not currently be a priority.

RAPID GROWTH
At the time of writing, Bluesky seems calm in comparison with other social networks where moderation is key and the atmosphere toxic – but that's due at least in part to its smaller community. The app has recently been adding as many as a million users per day, and if that continues, there'll be more unpleasant users to handle, and moderators could struggle to maintain the pleasant environment Bluesky is currently known for.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE THE ADULT CONTENT FILTER
Bluesky doesn't have much in the way of parental controls, but there are content filters which can hide sexual and graphic imagery. These are enabled by default for underage accounts but can be manually turned on in the 'Moderator' section of the app's settings. The advanced Bluesky Moderation Service lets you restrict content even further, hiding – for example – self-harm content, extremist rhetoric, and even nude posts.

LOOK OUT FOR FAKES
Impersonation is a problem on all social networks. While the consequences are usually benign, imposters sometimes attempt to scam or groom children by pretending to be a popular influencer or online personality. Bluesky is unique in that it can be connected to official domains, with users' handles linking to other sites, while this isn't widely used right now, it could be a reliable way to verify celebrities and public figures in future.

ENCOURAGE BLOCKING AND REPORTING
Another tool that Bluesky uses to ensure a decent experience is muting and blocking accounts. The former prevents you from seeing a specific user's content, while the latter stops them from seeing yours. If a child is encountering toxic or abusive on the platform, encourage them to use this function, while also reporting the offenders to help make the platform a nicer place for everyone.

KEEP AN OPEN DIALOGUE
As with all social media platforms, moderation and content filters can only do so much. It's highly likely that a child will eventually face something unpleasant. For that reason, it's important to make sure that young people are aware of the risks and know how to handle the technology if anything they see on the app makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.



Shilbottle Primary School Friday Flyer

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 94.6%. Our Whole School Target is 96%

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Mrs Blackhall	94.4%	93.4%
Mrs Kelly	92.4%	94.9%
Mr Phillips	98.8%	95.3%

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

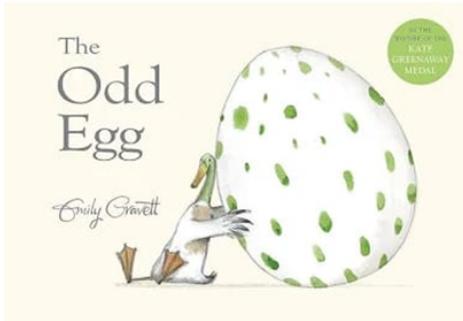
Absence Procedures if your child is ill, please keep them at home until they are well enough to return to school. Please notify us by phone call or email before 9.15am if your child is to be absent, and continue to inform us on a daily basis if they continue to be ill.

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.



Shilbottle Primary School Friday Flyer

Classroom updates - Bluebell Class



It has been an action-packed week for Bluebell Class, beginning with Drawing Club, where our Reception children shared the story 'The Odd Egg'. They concluded the unit by designing and describing their very own unique eggs. In KS1 English, the children have successfully completed their final drafts of their windy weather reports. Continuing their use of Rob Biddulph's 'Blown Away' for inspiration, they are now shifting their focus towards describing the chilly landscapes of an Arctic setting.

In Maths, Reception have been exploring the different compositions of 10. Using Numicon has been a fantastic way for them to identify number patterns and build strong visual links. Meanwhile, our older KS1 learners have been busy identifying odd and even numbers; again, Numicon proved invaluable in helping them visualise how even numbers are composed of pairs, while odd numbers always have an 'odd one out.'

Our Geography sessions saw us researching the extremes of living in the hottest and coldest places on Earth. Our older children enjoyed drawing themselves dressed for both Antarctica and the Sahara Desert, carefully describing the clothing and resources required to stay safe and survive in such contrasting climates.



In PE, our KS1 children were delighted to have their first session with Amy, a coach from Newcastle Red Bulls. The lesson was a huge success, and the children are already showing great excitement for next week's coaching.

Your children have been working hard to create a special surprise for Mothers Day. Please remember to check bags and reading folders for an envelope!

Wishing you all a peaceful weekend.

Mrs Blackhall



Shilbottle Primary School Friday Flyer

Classroom updates - Poppy Class

It has been another busy and productive week in Poppy Class. In Maths, we have continued our work on fractions, focusing on ordering and comparing fractions. The children have also continued with our multiplication challenge and it has been fantastic to see some of them make massive improvements in both speed and accuracy.

In English, we spent time perfecting our writing toolkits before using them to write some amazing Viking fact files. The children worked hard to include the key features of non-fiction writing and then edited their work carefully to make it even better.

In PSHE, we explored the importance of sleep and how getting a good night's sleep can affect many aspects of our lives, including our mood, concentration and overall wellbeing. In Geography, we continued our topic on "Angry Earth" and focused this week on volcanoes. We looked at the structure of a volcano and discussed both the advantages and disadvantages of living near one.

It has been a very sporty week! Alongside our basketball session with Emra, we also enjoyed our first rugby session with Amy from Newcastle Red Bulls. The children were introduced to some of the basic skills of the game, including tagging while carrying the ball and they had a go at some simple tackling techniques. In swimming, the focus this week was on water safety. The children learned what to do if they or someone else were to fall into water, such as a river or the sea. They practised the idea of staying calm and floating on their backs like a starfish, which helps them stay safe while waiting for help.

In Science, we began our new topic on soil. The children made predictions about what they thought soil was made from before carrying out an experiment to investigate the different components found within soil.

Finally, we have spent some time this week completing Mother's Day activities, which we hope will bring a smile on Sunday.

Have a great weekend and a very Happy Mother's Day to all the mums — I hope you are thoroughly spoiled!
Mrs Kelly





Shilbottle Primary School Friday Flyer

Classroom updates - Clover Class

We are nearing the summit of our first major writing project inspired by R.J. Palacio's *Wonder*. This week, our focus was on "fine-tuning" the gear. The children discovered that great writing can be a messy process! Like a scout mapping a new trail, they've been playing with ideas, sketching out simple sentences, and then revising and editing to create "prose-perfection" that would make the author herself proud.



We have broken camp from the land of Fractions and moved into the territory of **Decimals**. The class quickly realized that decimals are simply another way to navigate "parts of a whole." Now that we have the basic coordinates sorted, I'm certain we'll be moving through this landscape at a record pace!

Our Geographers have been investigating how the Earth's physical features dictate where and how humans live. There is a very specific reason why Shilbottle Primary doesn't need to run earthquake drills, and our young researchers proved they really know their stuff when it comes to tectonic stability and proximity!

Music was a total blast this week as we auditioned possible songs for the **Year 6 Leavers Assembly**. It's hard to believe we're already planning the finale! In art we have been making realistic food sculptures and we've also been truly spoiled with elite training sessions from both **NUFC** and the **Newcastle Red Bulls**, keeping our explorers match-fit and full of energy.

Following the excitement of World Book Day—and a massive congratulations to **Jaxon** for winning a **Golden Ticket**—Clover Class enjoyed a well-deserved treat! To reward the outstanding maturity they showed during last week's VIP visits, Friday was a non-school uniform day. A huge well done to everyone for earning that extra bit of "basecamp comfort."

Clover Chat-ter

Ready to debrief after a week on the trail? Try these conversation starters:

- *"Why don't we have to worry about earthquakes in Shilbottle compared to somewhere like Japan or Indonesia?"*
- *"What is the value of the digit 5 in 2.653?"*
- *"Which song are you leaning towards for the Year 6 Leavers Assembly—and does it make you feel a bit nostalgic?"*

Finally, Clover Class would like to wish everyone celebrating a happy Mother's Day on the 15th March. I hope you get a well deserved rest! **Mr Phillips**



Shilbottle Primary School Friday Flyer

Dates for your Diary

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

Date	Time	
25/2/2026-1/04/2026		Year 3 & 4 Swimming (every Wednesday)
31/3/2026	10.30-12.00	KSI Alnwick Playhouse - Three Billy Goats Gruff Performance
Wednesday 1st April		Year 5/6 Baking with the Forum ladies
Thursday 2nd April 2026	15.20	School closes for the Easter holidays
Thursday 2nd April	18.00	Easter Prize Bingo - Community Hall
Friday 1st May 2026	All day	Shilbottle School 100-Year Celebrations



Shilbottle Primary School
Friday Flyer



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

Cassius - Poppy Class



Shilbottle Primary School
Friday Flyer

SHILBOTTLE PRIMARY
PARENTS ASSOCIATION'S

Egg-Cellent

EASTER BINGO

FUN FOR ALL OF THE FAMILY

Shilbottle Community Hall

THURSDAY, APRIL 2ND
DOORS OPEN 6:00PM

FREE ENTRY

TEA, COFFEE AND REFRESHMENTS

Greetings ISLAND