

Percy Hedley School's

Whole School Blog

News, Stars, Amelia & Ameen's April Fool, Cheerleading & Egg-cited to MOVE! -
from John & the PHS Team

Thursday 2nd April 2026

Hello all

Happy Easter! We thought we'd get out a blog today as we're all off tomorrow for Good Friday

Cheers! It's an amazing blog today, with so much in it – and I had asked everyone to send me something a day early. There is such a range from some great articles, to sports, stars, upcoming events, egg-decorating competitions and all sorts. I'm sure there's something to meet most tastes – and talking of tasting, I was tricked by an April Fool!!!

We'll be off for a couple of weeks and back on the 20th of April for the summer term when we'll be delighted to be open again and meet the children as they arrive. I hope your time until then is what you want it to be and that you can enjoy the spring lighter & warmer weather. There is a lot of chat in the summer terms about transitions, next steps & plans, so hopefully we'll be in touch at various times with the right kind of conversations. In the meantime, all the best, take care, and thanks for your support

John S

OUR SCHOOL VALUES:

Respect,
Teamwork
& Resilience

HOW THE CURRICULUM WORKS & WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO US:

3 Super-Steering Groups deliver our Key Drivers through our curriculum.

The Key Drivers are Communication, Wellbeing and Independence

The Groups are Literacy, Physical Development & Personal Development



Have a read about the cheerleading in Nathan's sport bit lower down!

😊 from John & the PHS Team 😊



School Council!

Let's hear from Amanda about what's been happening with the School Council! We meet every two weeks & discuss all sorts of important projects. We listen to what the students want & try our best to make this happen

The Student Council meeting last week was about feedback from another Taster Day for the school menu. It was jelly and ice cream. Feedback so far has been very positive. The next taster will be after the Easter break



Students hosted an Easter Egg decorating competition, judged by one of our School Governors, Paul. Eggs were either made at home and brought in or made in school

STOP PRESS!!!! WINNERS!!!

Drum roll please.....we have winners from the Egg competition.

Early Years George

Lower sch Matthew P

Upper sch Teddy B

Engagement JoJo

P16 Ella Rose

And the staff winner wasAndy Dawson!!!

Well done everyone. There was so much competition and Paul THE Governor who came in to judge found it really hard to choose.



 **Literacy**

*Becky, our Literacy Specialist Lead, leads a team that improve all aspects of literacy, including writing, oracy, reading, phonics, books & the library!
Here's Becky!*

THE YEAR OF READING!

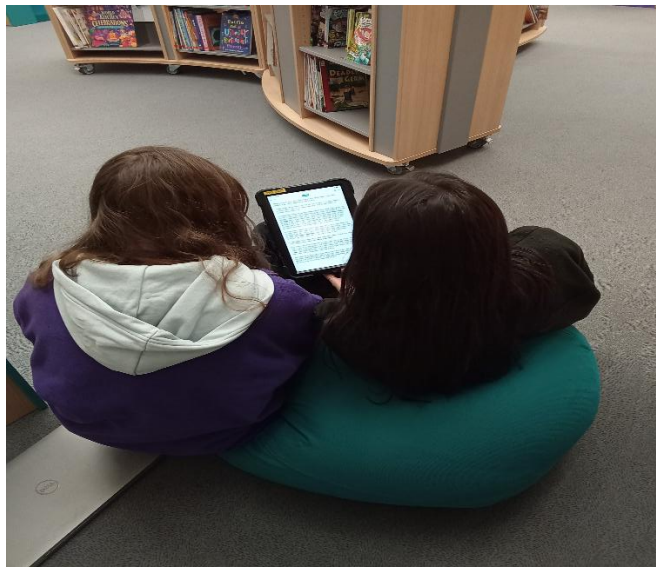


Last week's blog was about the idea of 'multimodal' reading - things like reading digitally, using picture books, comic graphic novels or audiobooks. This week we were able to introduce the Library Tablets to our students and staff - a great resource ready to go for the summer term! We've got a set of 10 tablets and headphones in different sizes, and 4KR were the first to try them out. Here's Ayaan getting stuck straight into an e-book



At first the majority of the class weren't bothered about the option of the tablets, much to our surprise, and actually just wanted to relax in the space and look for a new physical book to take back to class - which is their routine and something to celebrate in itself! We had to show some of the different apps that were available and what they could access to interest them, things like Match of the Day magazine through BorrowBox and an interactive mystery story with the NumberBlocks appealed to this group

We also had groups of LSAs come to the library as part of staff training this week to explore content that might appeal to their classes and familiarise themselves with the devices to be able to support students. These two were settled in comfy for a good while. Ready for their next library visit slot on the timetable!



Don't forget that to have a look at BorrowBox through your local library if you're after some books to keep you going over the holidays

Happy Easter & Happy Reading!



Healthy Living



Everything that is in the world of Healthy Living: physical development, including physio, hydro, MOVE, PE, HI, VI, OT & other key areas for us, including Outdoor Learning & many other aspects. Steph oversees this & one of our priorities this year. This week, it's Ash again with a cool thing!

EGG-Cited to MOVE!



Percy Hedley was full of energy and excitement last week as students took part in our EGGcited to MOVE Easter event. All students joined in an engaging Easter egg hunt around the school, transforming familiar spaces into a series of fun, movement-based activity stations.

At each stop, students were invited to take part in Easter-themed challenges designed to be accessible and enjoyable for everyone. The event strongly reflected the principles of the MOVE programme, focusing on developing independence, building confidence, and promoting meaningful movement.

Students were supported to make choices, initiate actions, and engage with their environment in ways that suited their individual

abilities. From hopping and reaching tasks to balance and coordination activities, each station encouraged active participation while celebrating the spirit of the season. Let's Chick-out how the students got on...

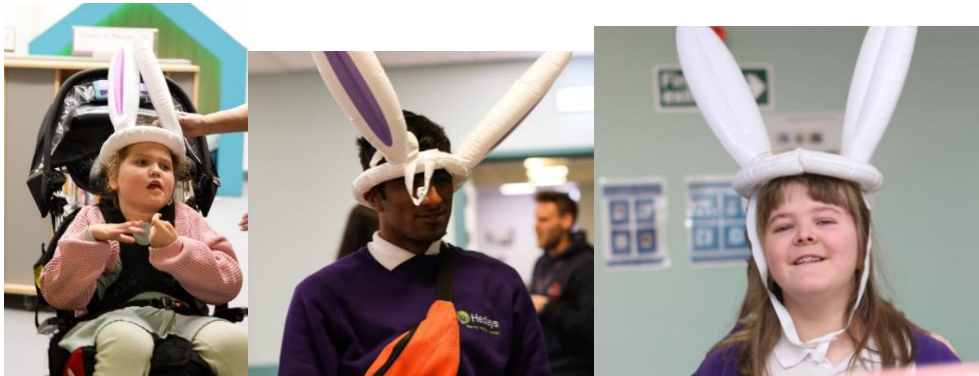
First stop up our wonderful Library we see Alex (and his physio Nina) practice throwing beanbags at the bunny targets and Toby (3KJ) demonstrating some eggs-tra hard work reaching for the targets in supported standing!



The wonderful students Amelie, Vivie-Sienna and Rupert from LT/SH class and Benjamin from AH class were showing us egg-cellent reaching putting hoops on our willing staff bunny volunteers!!



We even had amazing student bunny volunteers very eggs-cited to join in on the fun including Lysbeth (LT/SH) and 4KR/4MM students Ayan, Sadie, Edward and Joshua C!



Next stop we hop on over to our physio room where Robin and Olly from 3TW show us some balance work hopping on the bunny feet trail in the parallel bars:



In true MOVE-style we see Amelia in her walking frame accessing bean bag throws to the bunny burrows and carrot pulls from the soil!



Onto the outdoor quad where there was egg-citement to find the water pistols with Isaac (3LL), Lucas (3TW) and Ethan (3C) aiming for the Easter Chicks!!!



Michael (3RC) enjoyed fishing for the rubber ducks from the Easter pond



Hopping on over to the ELTBA Corridor Matthew and Ellis (3RC) worked on their balancing and upper limb coordination in an Egg and spoon race!!



While JoJo (BE class) really got into the festivities of the day dressing up along the way!



Ethan and Cayden (3RC) engaging in some easter fun games, while Harry (4MM) practiced rolling eggs to the easter baskets!



Finally in our wonderful Helen Sensory Motor Suite we have JJ and Michael from BE class and Zakaria from 4KR showing us some great reaching and coordination in balloon games.



Teddy (4MM) working hard on his upper limb strength and rolling aiming for bunny skittles!



Chloe and Ellis (3RC) really enjoyed the *eggs-traordinary* sensory tickle tunnel!!



Taim (3TW) and Harry (4MM) loved the trampette practicing bunny bouncing!!



Importantly, EGGcited to MOVE also provided a valuable opportunity for consolidation of skills that students have been working on throughout the term. Whether practicing transitions, improving posture, or developing mobility, students were able to apply these skills in a fun, motivating context.

Most of all, the event was filled with laughter, teamwork, and a real sense of achievement. It was wonderful to see students enjoying themselves, supporting one another, and growing in confidence as they moved through each activity.

A fantastic celebration (Hi-10 Michael!!) well done to everyone involved! Happy Easter!!



Personal Development & Wellbeing

One of the best things about the school and one of the most important for our pupils, PDW covers PSHE, Careers, Social Moral Spiritual & Cultural Issues, Online Safety, Behaviour, Wellbeing(!) & similar areas. Jo pulls it all together – let's hear what's been happening this week around the place

Wellbeing

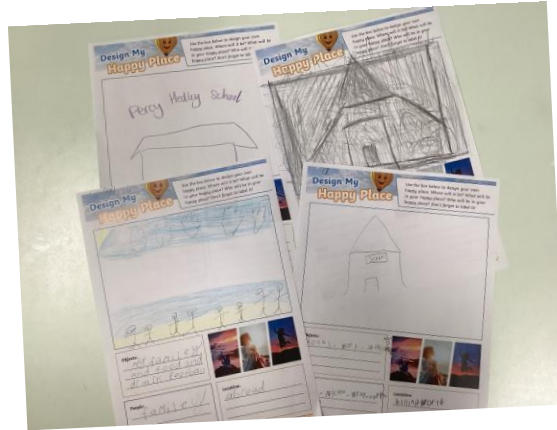
In 2LT/SH one of our favourite times of the week is our group sensory room session. We thoroughly enjoy our spring story and interacting with a range stimuli, exploring our different senses through touch, sound and smell. We've been activating a range of switches to change the colour of the room, we take turns with our friends sharing the stimuli and we make sure to have our say by saying what we 'like' and 'don't like'





SMSC

As part of Stress Awareness Month, 3KJ have been discussing where their happy places are. Some of the happy places drawn are school, a beach abroad or their favourite TV/ film sets. Everyone shared where is in their happy place and described the scene.



My Work Experience Story at PHS - Casey

"From a young age I have always wanted to work within care"

My journey started from caring within the home as a Personal Assistant. The role involved:

- Cooking and making drinks
- Cleaning, washing and drying clothes
- Helping to look after my employer's dog
- Helping and set up the laptop and other technology for meetings and presentations
- Doing food shopping and any other duties as and when needed



"I completed a Personal Assistant training course at Newcastle College to help me to understand my chosen career. I received a certificate which I can use for job applications in the future."

Developing my skills even further...

In October I started a new work experience placement at Hart Beeps, which is a music-based storytelling, singing and signing playgroup for babies and toddlers.

At Hart Beeps I:

- Welcomed parents into the session
- Cleaned the community room before and after each session
- Helped to wash, sterilise and dry all equipment
 - Supported sessions by encouraging children to sing, dance and sign



Next step:

"I have been really lucky to have been asked to help Christina out at Hart Beeps in my own time outside of school. For my next placement I hope to work in more of a healthcare role such as a care assistant in a hospital."

"At first, I was nervous, as I was unsure of new people and getting used to a new routine. I was shy to sing and join in but now have increased my confidence working in the different age groups and have really enjoyed supporting in different activities and planning and leading sessions."



Update from Andy from the latest Resilience Day!

Resilience Day: Autism and Disability Awareness

It was another busy Resilience Day on Friday as students looked into the lives of influential figures living with disabilities. By researching celebrities and scientists, classes explored how individuals such as Emma Watson and Stephen Hawking navigated barriers to achieve incredible success.

Students also:

Created Fact Sheets: *Breaking down myths and sharing essential information about different disabilities.*

Shared Personal Stories: *Some students chose to share their own experiences of living with ADHD and Autism.*

Visit Our Exhibition! *We are so proud of the work produced that we're taking it to the community. You can see our posters and fact sheets on display at Killingworth Library ([NE12 6SS](#)) from April 7th until the end of the month. If you're passing by, please do pop in and take*

Andy's Class' April Fool!

April Fools in 5AH – A Very Sneaky Sensory Cooking Session!

5AH fully embraced the spirit of April Fools' Day during our Sensory Cooking session this week—with a very cheeky twist!

The pupils carefully prepared what looked like delicious, handmade 'chocolate truffles'... but there was a surprise inside. Hidden beneath the melted chocolate were Brussels sprouts! Once dipped and decorated with colourful rainbow sprinkles, they looked incredibly convincing.

Using switches, the pupils independently activated the microwave to melt the chocolate, then took turns stirring and adding the "secret ingredient" to the mixing bowl. There was great focus and anticipation as the truffles came together—and even more excitement as the plan unfolded.

Amelia played a starring role, using her VOCA to sweetly ask unsuspecting staff, "Would you like one of our chocolate truffles?" Her delivery was so sincere that no one suspected a thing!

We successfully fooled Maikel, Zoey, Pari, Neil, Kasia, John—and even our headteacher John! Carla, our School Business Manager, was a near miss—being vegan, she couldn't have one!

The pupils were fantastic at keeping the surprise a secret and clearly enjoyed every moment of the big reveal. There were plenty of laughs all round.

Happy April Fools' Day from Andy's Class! 😊





PE with Nathan!

PE is great here and very important for a lot of the students – in fact all sort of movement is. It's always good to hear from Nathan! What's been happening this week then?

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



PE Blog of the Week – Sunderland Cheerleaders Performance

This week, LSTE and Lower School students had the exciting opportunity to enjoy a Sunderland Cheerleaders performance, and what an experience it was!

The performance showcased cheerleading through a dynamic display of movement, music, and stunts, creating a highly stimulating and immersive experience. Students really enjoyed watching the cheerleaders perform, responding enthusiastically to the energy, sounds, and visual elements throughout.

Students also had the opportunity to engage in the cheerleader experience by using pom-poms, wearing cheerleader uniforms, and engaging in routines, which added to the excitement and engagement. At the end of the session, each student was able to hold a real-life award trophy and medals, making the experience even more memorable.

A special highlight was seeing Jo Jo, Emilia and other students were being lifted by the cheerleading team—a thrilling moment that brought lots of smiles and captured the excitement of the performance!

We are incredibly proud of how all students represented the school, demonstrating excellent behaviour and engagement throughout.

A big thank you to Sunderland Cheerleaders for delivering such an inspiring and enjoyable experience. We look forward to providing more opportunities like this in the future.

See below for photo highlights from the session!





Chris Carr's Class!

Well, Chris' class are settled into their new place now, and have a lovely new person in their class too. I'm always excited to see what they've been doing – let's have a look! It's always good, and it is today too!



What a fun and creative week we've had getting ready for the Easter break! The classroom has been buzzing with excitement, laughter, and lots of imaginative ideas as we wrapped up the term in style.

In science, we became real investigators during our ramp experiment. We started with a flat ramp and then built it higher and higher using bricks, predicting what might happen each time we let the car go. The best part was making our guesses and then testing them out! We discovered that the higher the ramp, the faster and further the car travelled!



Cheerleading with friends was a highlight! We loved moving to the music and waving our pom-poms. It was so exciting to hold the medals and trophies! Working in groups, we created our very own fantastic performances!

2CC got wonderfully creative making Easter cards. We carefully cut out bunny templates and then used bright colours to dab around them. Watching our bunnies come to life with splashes of colour was so much fun. We can't wait to share them with our families!



We've had such a fun-filled and busy term, and while we're all ready for a well-earned break, we also want to take a moment to say a very special goodbye. Happy retirement to the amazing Hilery, who has been part of our school family for 26 wonderful years. She has taught and inspired so many of us, both students and staff. We will truly miss her kindness, enthusiasm, and warm smile. Thank you, Hilery, for everything you've given to our school. You really are one in a million, and we wish you all the very best for your exciting new adventures!



Early Years – The Ducklings!

It's so nice to hear about what the Ducklings have been doing each week, and to share in some of their experiences. The photos are always great too. Kate is going to give us the news, as well as some fabulous pictures!

We've had such a lovely last week of term, packed full of activity, creativity and lots of fun! The children have really enjoyed all the exciting things we've been doing. One of the highlights was decorating our very own Easter bonnets. We used coloured paper, paint pens, stampers, Easter stickers and lots of little fluffy chicks. The children were so proud of their creations and loved trying their hats on afterwards, they looked fantastic!





We also decorated chick biscuits this week. The children mixed their own icing and used sprinkles to finish their biscuits off. We're pretty sure more sprinkles went into tummies than onto the biscuits, but that's all part of the fun, and they were very yummy!



Alongside all our creative activities, we've had plenty of active fun in the classroom too. The new elephant spinning chair has been a big favourite, along with the trampette and the pop-up tent and tunnel. There has been lots of movement and exploration, and it's been lovely to see the children enjoying these resources together.

We hope you have a lovely Easter holiday!



Outdoor Learning with Hannah!

It's great to have Hannah doing Outdoor Learning at the school. Let's see what she's doing with it these days.....





2LT/SH's class love getting outside and really enjoy their weekly Outdoor Learning lessons. This term, they have been developing their independence by making choices about what they would like to do during each session.

Each week, they are offered a range of activities, including the new sensory area, the Book Nook, the mud kitchen, the music wall, and a craft activity. Most weeks, they choose to split their time between the sensory area and the Book Nook.

As you can see from the photos, they have thoroughly enjoyed exploring the sensory area—smelling the herbs and admiring the beautiful colours—as well as listening to stories in the Book Nook.



Ben's Gardening Club!



Now the weather is better Ben has started to get out more with Gardening Club – they do loads of great work, it's fun – and educational too. Let's have a look at what they've been up to and see Ben's nice slide!



GARDENING NEWS

This week in the garden the team has been busy making a new a flower bed and planting new bulbs in preparation for the first Percy Hedley Flower Show



Nursing News!

The school is full of different teams working together for the good of the pupils, and we have a lot of different disciplines & types of people working here. It's really good that we have nurses & HCAs. This week – immunisation!



Go Nurses!



Behaviour for Learning (BfL)

Aylisha and Corin have developed the BfL Team and work on supporting our pupils all the time, in all situations. They've been joined by Nicola, Nat, Sarah & Andrea this year to make a really important team for the school. Let's hear a lovely message about culture from Aylisha

What World Autism Awareness Day Means

Today marks World Autism Awareness Day, a global opportunity to increase understanding, promote acceptance, and celebrate the vast strengths and talents of autistic people.

In our school community, we are proud to support and champion autistic children and young people every day. This day gives us a chance to highlight the importance of creating truly inclusive, capable environments where every learner feels valued, respected, and understood.

World Autism Awareness Day encourages us to:

- *Recognise the diversity of autistic experiences — no two autistic people are the same*
 - *Promote acceptance, not just awareness*
 - *Listen to autistic voices and value lived experience*
 - *Challenge stereotypes and outdated assumptions*
- *Create safe, predictable environments where students can thrive*

It's a reminder that inclusion is built from daily practice — through kindness, patience, consistency, and compassion

If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the BfL Team

aylisha.holland@percyhedley.org.uk

c.orr@percyhedley.org.uk

Call: 0191 216 1811

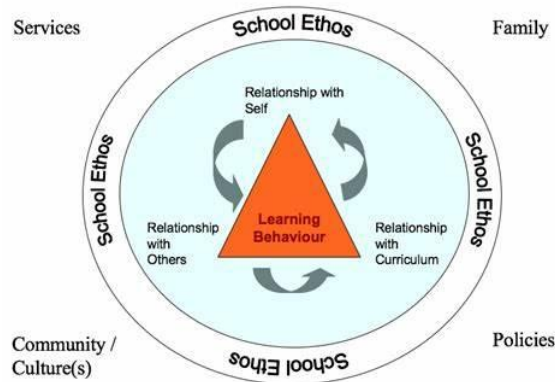


Figure 1: Behaviour for Learning conceptual framework



Preparation for Adulthood with Hannah

PfA is a priority on the School Development Plan this year

Let's hear below what Hannah & the PfA Team have been working on – PfA is one of our very biggest priorities! Hannah has dates for your diary too!



Parent Carer Forum

Benefits: what are you entitled to? How can you support your child/young person with their money?

This Wednesday, we hosted a Parent Carer Forum, focusing on benefits and how you can support your child/young person with their money. As usual, this was a hybrid meeting and was well-attended, with as many people online as in the room! We have also opened the

forum up to all parents and carers, so that you can start getting the information you need as early as possible.

We discussed appointeeship, Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independent Payments, Access to Work and Universal Credit. As your child approaches adulthood, they may be entitled to benefits in their own right. It is also important to be aware of what may happen to your benefits when your child leaves education altogether, how this may impact on their financial support and how you can start your financial planning well in advance of this.

Here are some key takeaways, with links that we talked about which you might find useful for your own research.

Appointeeship:

- *What is an appointee A person who has been authorised by the DWP to apply for and manage benefits of a person who cannot manage their finances because they are mentally incapable or severely disabled.*
 - <https://www.gov.uk/become-appointee-for-someone-claiming-benefits>

Disability Living Allowance Child:

- *is to help with the additional cost of looking after a child who:*
 - *Is under 16*
- *Has difficulty walking or needs much more looking after than a child who does not have a disability.*

<https://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children>

PIP:

- *Personal Independence Payment is a benefit paid to help with additional costs associated with a disability/mental health condition.*
- *It is paid from age 16; those on DLA Child will transition on or soon after their 16th birthday.*

<https://www.gov.uk/pip/how-to-claim>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRIY0eYuDp0>

Access to Work:

- *is a grant that supports people with a health condition or disability*
- *It provides individual practical support and advice to help to overcome barriers at work*
- *It helps people with all types of disabilities, including Mental Health conditions*

- Access to Work grants may help with additional costs beyond “Reasonable Adjustments”

- <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

Universal Credit:

- for those receiving education.

Special rules apply.

Need to consider:

- If parent in receipt of Child Benefit & Disability elements of UC these continue till 20th birthday
- If not in receipt of above, apply for UC capacity for work element after 16th birthday

<https://contact.org.uk/help-for-families/information-advice-services/benefits-financial-help/universal-credit/universal-credit-for-young-people/>

Post 16 – 19 Bursary:

The 16-19 Bursary is funding from the Department for Education to reduce barriers to learning for students in Post 16 settings.

1. Vulnerable Student Bursary:

- Student who is a LAC, is living independently or is in receipt of both PIP and UC in their own name.

2. Discretionary Student Bursary:

- Household income, not including child’s DLA/PIP is less than £40,000
 - <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

If you missed the forum, or if you have something related to these topics that you would like to discuss with us, please contact Eileen, our Family Liaison Officer by phoning school or via email (e.robinson@percyhedley.org.uk)

Our next forum will take place on 06.05.26

The focus will be on Making Decisions and we will discuss:

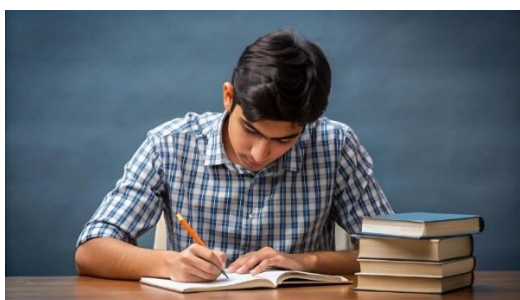
- Mental Capacity Act
- Mencap signposting
 - Deputyship
- Lasting Power of Attorney
 - Wills and Trusts

This is a repeat of last year's session, but please come along for a chat, and to jog your memory!



Exams!

Let's hear from Kat who has the task of organising everyone's exams! Quite a job!



Well done to everyone that has now completed their mock exam and got a good practice for the upcoming exams in the summer. Lots of hard work has gone into setting up the mock exam week and with combined team effort we completed it. Thank you to all the candidates, as this was demonstrating that you "can do"! Mock papers are kept for contingency and to provide to the JCQ Inspection service on demand – and required paperwork has been completed. Planning of the summer schedule is in hand, and it will be good to see so many of you achieving great results which will give you opportunities after your time at Percy Hedley School

Keep up the good work everyone!



School Lunches

Please find the menus here: [School Meals - Percy Hedley School](#)

Unless your child is in receipt of Free School Meals or Bursary, please ensure your iPay account is topped up before meals are taken. Thank you for your understanding & continued support in helping us to provide good quality, safe & nutritious meals for our children

If you have any questions or need support with your iPay account, please don't hesitate to contact the school office



Safeguarding – this week, holiday info!



Aylisha is our Safeguarding Officer, Rebecca is the DSL. Tracy and Corin round out a great DSL Team, with others like Carla, Lizzie & Vicky involved too in other aspects of safeguarding. This week, Rebecca is giving us a quick guide to an updated government document that's come out. Let's have a read!

Ahead of the half-term we want our parents and carers to feel supported. Please see information below of agencies who may be able to offer support around the following:

Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse can happen to anyone. Children are now classed as victims of Domestic Abuse whether they have witnessed it or not.

For further support and advice visit:

[Home \(myharbour.org.uk\)](http://myharbour.org.uk)

[ManKind Initiative - Supporting Male Victims of Domestic Abuse](#)

[Home - Women's Aid \(womensaid.org.uk\)](http://womensaid.org.uk)

Mental Health

Mental health is a subject that many of us find difficult to discuss, primarily because of fear of saying the wrong thing and making matters worse.

Please see a list of resources available below: NHS 111

To get urgent mental health advice from the NHS, call 111 and select the mental health option. 111 will tell you where you can get help. They may also be able to put you through to a trained mental health professional over the phone.

111 can support anyone who is feeling unsafe, distressed or worried about their mental health. They can also give information and advice about what to do if you're worried about someone else.

If you would rather get help online, you can use [111 online](#).

Opening times: 24/7 111

YoungMinds-[YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | YoungMinds](#)

Has a wealth of resources on their website, as well as providing dedicated crisis services. The YoungMinds Crisis Messenger provides free crisis support every day of the week, at any time or day or night

SHOUT - [Shout: the UK's free, confidential and 24/7 mental health text service for crisis support | Shout 85258 \(giveusashout.org\)](#) Shout provides free, 24/7 text support for young people across the UK experiencing a mental health crisis.

All texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors.

Texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile and Telecom Plus.

Texts can be anonymous, but if the volunteer believes you are at immediate risk of harm, they may share your details with people who can provide support.

Opening times: 24/7

Papyrus- [Papyrus UK Suicide Prevention | Prevention of Young Suicide \(papyrus-uk.org\)](https://www.papyrus-uk.org)
Offers confidential advice and support if you're struggling with suicidal thoughts, and information about how to make a safety plan.

Its helpline service - HOPELINE247 - is available to anybody under the age of 35 experiencing suicidal thoughts, or for anyone concerned that a young person could be thinking about suicide.

Opening times: 24/7 every day of the year

The helpline HOPELine247 is available on 0800 068 4141

Childline- [Report Remove | Childline](https://www.childline.org.uk) If you're under 19 you can confidentially call, chat online or email about any problem big or small.

[Can provide a BSL interpreter](#) if you are deaf or hearing-impaired.

Hosts [online message boards](#) where you can share your experiences, have fun and get support from other young people in similar situations.

Opening times: 24/7 0800 11 11

Samaritans- [Samaritans | Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy | Here to listen](https://www.samaritans.org) Whatever you're going through, you can contact the Samaritans for support. N.B. This is a listening service and does not offer advice or intervention.

Opening times: 24/7 116123

jo@samaritans.org

Other support available:

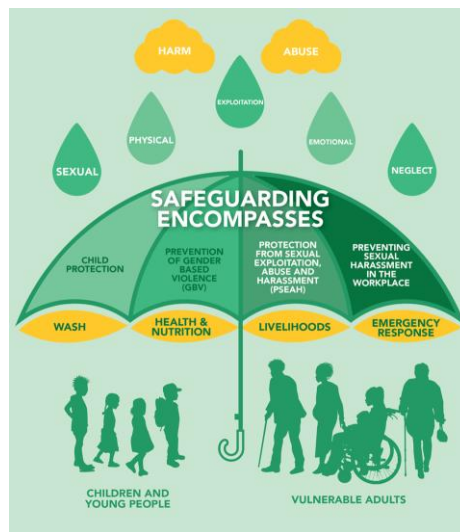
Children North East- [Who We Are - Children North East](https://www.children-north-east.org.uk)

Children North East deliver services, support and initiatives that provide a platform for children, young people and families to work through issues, take action and provide them with the tools to reach their full potential. These include therapeutic services, mental health support, youth work, family support, domestic abuse services, community-based support, consultations with young people and Poverty Proofing

If anyone would like further information or support during half-term please contact aylisha.holland@percyhedley.org.uk

As ever if there is anything that the DSL Team can help with, or if you have any queries or questions at all, then please don't hesitate to contact r.fletcher@percyhedley.org.uk or

aylisha.holland@percyhedley.org.uk for anything like at all that you think is, or even may be, related to safeguarding



Safeguarding is a lot of different things!

Online Safety

Please do tell us what you feel would be helpful in the Online Safety blog, and the team will look into it. We know what a priority this is for many of you

Online Safety Update: What Parents Should Know About Roblox

We wanted to share a recent news story that may be particularly relevant for families of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), especially those who enjoy online gaming.

Why is Roblox being discussed?

Roblox is currently the most popular gaming platform in the UK for children aged 8–12. With millions of young users worldwide, it allows players to create games, interact with others, and explore virtual worlds.

However, a recent BBC report has raised concerns about whether the platform's safety measures go far enough to protect children.

What concerns have been raised?

An independent game developer shared concerns based on their own experience working on the platform. These included:

- *Exposure to inappropriate content: Some user-created games may include violent or disturbing themes.*
- *Contact with strangers: Children can interact with other players, which may carry risks if not carefully monitored.*

- *Attempts to move conversations off-platform: There have been reports of users encouraging children to continue conversations outside of Roblox, which is against the platform's rules.*
- *Effectiveness of moderation: Not all reported concerns are acted on, according to the developer's experience.*

The developer's advice was clear: children should be closely supervised while using the platform, and if constant monitoring is not possible, families may want to reconsider its use.

What does Roblox say?

Roblox has stated that safety is a top priority. Measures currently in place include:

- *Mandatory age verification (introduced in the UK in 2026)*
- *Restrictions on communication between different age groups*
- *Automated systems to monitor behaviour and flag concerns*
 - *Content labels to guide age-appropriate gameplay*

The company says it takes action against users who break its rules and continues to improve its safety systems.

Why is this important for SEND families?

Children with SEND can be more vulnerable online, particularly if they:

- *Find it harder to recognise unsafe situations*
 - *Are more trusting of others*
- *Enjoy repetitive or immersive gameplay that keeps them online for long periods*

This makes it especially important to have clear boundaries and support in place.

Practical tips for parents and carers

If your child uses Roblox or similar platforms, you may find the following helpful:

- *Play together where possible: Spend time exploring the platform with your child.*
- *Use parental controls: Check privacy settings and restrict chat features if needed.*
 - *Set clear rules: Agree on when, where, and how long your child can play.*
 - *Talk regularly: Encourage your child to tell you about their online experiences.*
 - *Monitor interactions: Keep an eye on who your child is communicating with.*

The bigger picture

Online safety continues to be an important national conversation. The UK government is currently exploring additional measures to help protect children online, including potential restrictions and safety tools.

Our approach in school

At our school, we are committed to helping children develop safe and responsible online behaviours. We regularly teach online safety as part of our curriculum and encourage open conversations with families.

If you would like support or advice about online safety, please don't hesitate to get in touch.



No-Spray School

Just a reminder that we're a **no-spray school**. This means pupils & staff should not wear perfumes or aerosol body sprays, as these can cause serious allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, for some members of our community. Roll-on deodorants & water-based sprays are fine to use. Thank you for your support in keeping our school a safe place for everyone



Attendance!



Attendance Matters



Thank you for your support with attendance, an area of national scrutiny. Here's Kelly with an important reminder

Hello everyone, just a reminder that holidays during term time will not be authorised. Families are expected to arrange all holidays outside the school year to avoid unnecessary disruption to learning and missed teaching hours.

Please also ensure that GP, dental and other non-urgent appointments are booked outside the school day.

If your child does need to attend an appointment during the school day — or if you need to collect them early for any reason — an absence request form must be completed. These forms should be submitted in advance, and you will be asked to complete one on arrival if this has not already been done. Forms can be collected from the school office, sent home with the students in paper form or sent via email, whichever is most convenient for you to submit.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us maintain strong attendance and ensure accurate records for all students

A brief reminder about how to contact the school for reporting an absence

Parents & carers have a responsibility to notify the school if their child is going to be absent. Please note this is daily for each day the child is absent. This may be via

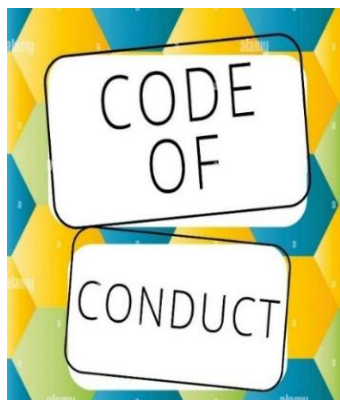
- *A note in the school diary if the absence is known in advance eg medical appointment*
- *A telephone call to the school office before 9.30 on the first day of absence if the absence was unplanned, eg illness*
 - *Email to class teacher*
- *or PHSattendance@percyhedley.org.uk before 9:30 on the day of the absence*

As always, any queries feel free to reach out -
kelly.richardson@percyhedley.org.uk

Thanks for your support and partnership in this area



Parent/Carer Code of Conduct



Our Parent/Carer Code of Conduct is on the website here: [Parent and Carers Area – Percy Hedley School](#). Most schools have these, so please do have a read – they aren't used very often. Thanks for your support with it – generally but also in most things that arise every day



Friends of PHS – the FoPHS!

A huge thank you to all the FoPHS for their time, commitment & support with projects, ideas & all sorts. You're such an important part of the school. All parents, carers & staff are members of the FoPHS by default. The change to a Friends of was to enable us to involve extended family members and those in the community to support us. Your FoPHS committee is

Chair Ollie Teasdale (parent)
Vice Chair Hannah Fuller (staff) Secretary
Tracy Smithson (staff)
Treasurer Ros Holden (parent)

School link Eileen Robinson (staff) - school- role specific appointment

Our 2 parent governors are Chair and Vice Chair of FoPHS too. We are members of Parentkind, which provides guidance & structure to ensure we operate correctly. Benefits include insurance for events, links with their partners & training for parents, carers & staff. We meet half termly. Time and place will be confirmed. Ways in which you can help

- Join the 100 club <https://www.percyhedley.org.uk/percy-hedley-school/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2025/10/100-club-A4.pdf>
 - Attend meetings, share suggestions
 - Volunteer at events



Why don't you join! The Fabulous Friends are always looking for volunteers for events! If you can offer any support, please contact Eileen at e.robinson@percyhedley.org.uk



Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA) – with Tracy and the Team!



Hello parents/carers & families

In January 2024, with your support and contributions, Percy Hedley school successfully achieved this award. The accreditation lasts for three years; therefore it is now time to gain your opinion about whether you have seen any improvements

in the quality of communication with school/ staff during this time. Key points you made were:

- *Regular communication updates on pupil progress*
 - *Yearly events calendar with regular updates*
- *Communication between home & school in a range of formats, phone, email, letter, text, weekly school blogs, home/school diaries, termly newsletters*
 - *A range of times & days when coffee event/ activities take place*
 - *Online opportunities to attend these events*
 - *Online training for families*

In order to gain your feedback I will be sending out a brief survey in a range of formats, with the hope that one of the formats will make this request a quick process. This information will help the LPPA steering group set outcomes for the coming year. Once the data from the survey has been collated, I will share this on the school blog, which hopefully will be of interest to you.

We are currently updating our steering group as having representatives from across school ensures we capture opinions & evidence from as many parents as possible.

Thank you in advance

Please get in touch with Tracy and she will be happy to respond to any queries, suggestions about the LPPA and other issues for parents - from Tracy and the LPPA team - t.smithson@percyhedley.org.uk



Stars of the Week!

That reflect our School Values!

ENGAGEMENT

Nat!

Resilience!



Nat has been working very hard this term on his physical target which was to increase the number of goals he can score by kicking the football whilst in the walker or the

walking sling. He has shown great persistence and determination to achieve this target. Eddie Howe sign this young man up! STAR!!!



ELTBA

Abi!

All 3 School Values!



Abi is ELTBA Star of the Week. She embodies our school values. Always kind and respectful, she makes a great team member and her friends love being paired up with her for learning tasks (and for smiles, jokes and laughter). Abi is super resilient and never lets difficult things stop her from achieving. Well done Abi! TRIPLE STAR!!!



APPROPRIATE ACCREDITATION

Some great folks in KS4! Who has been exceptional this week? A couple of them it seems!

Respect

Jess & Harry L for being respectful and listening well in maths!

Resilience

Taylor for creativity in DT making a fully working door alarm!
Zakaria for communicating his needs well!

Teamwork

4MM for working together well towards the enterprise fair!



POST-16!

Love our Sixth Form!!! Let's see who Lisa is highlighting this week

Resilience

Logan started a new work experience at Old Low Lights. He was amazing - so confident. Fantastic!!

Casey B has completed her work experience as a carer. She was brilliant. Well done Casey B!!

Melody has worked really hard in maths. Excellent!!

Resilience and Respect

Jayden has been very impressive at his work experience. Here is some feedback from the placement.

I had a great time meeting Jayden on Thursday. To me he came across as very earnest and I was impressed by his level of preparation for questions. I was particularly impressed by his answer when I asked what his favourite bit of history is to study and he responded with periods of technological innovation (I mentioned that answer to my colleagues later and they were all very impressed by it as well). Fantastic, well done!!

Resilience and Teamwork

Josh, Bradan and Noah all led their first BTEC Sport warm up independently. They were all brilliant. Well done!!

Respect and resilience

Michael was very well mannered on a trip to Beamish. He was really good at managing his money when paying for things. Last week he was very helpful to a peer too. Well done Michael!

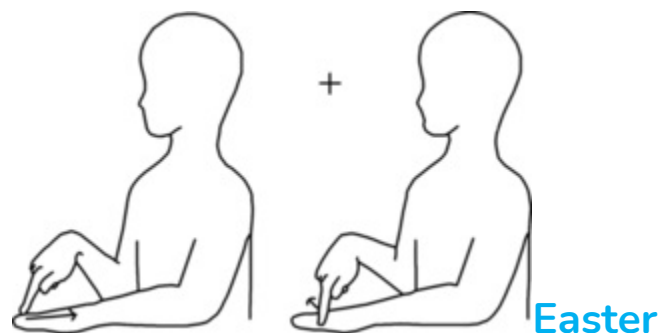


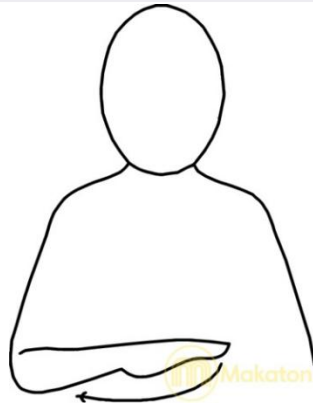
Makaton Signs of the Week with Julie!

Every Sunday Julie prepares a message for the whole school on Makaton signs that are current and relevant to the time of year. I reproduce that here so that you can do the same thing at home if that suits you – or just for you to learn a few signs each week. Hope it works for you! Here's Julie

Happy Easter Everyone!

<https://youtu.be/iRWiABAJ8Qo>

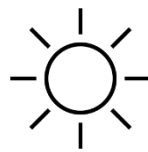




everyone

Here is an Easter video from the Singing Hands:
<https://youtu.be/wdcroKYoVak?si=y1hKTfR9g6oV1zhx>

Wishing everyone a very happy Easter break full of sunshine
and chocolate!



Keep signing!



Keep signing!

Julie





And finally...



On Thursday the 2nd April, we will be holding our annual Spring Fayre. As part of our Upper School Spring Fayre, we will be holding a raffle to raise funds for our Upper School Prom in July. We try every year to keep the prom cost-free to our parents, in line with our Poverty Proofing initiative.

To raise money we have had some amazing donations from parents and local businesses, these include:

- A 3/4 night break for up to 6 people at Cresswell Towers*
 - A half day photography tuition session*
- A half day makeup session with lashes from Diva Dust*
 - Vouchers for a family for Tynemouth Park*
 - A voucher towards lash extensions from Dani*

- *A hair bundle including straighteners and products*
 - *A Goodman deluxe men's grooming bundle*
 - *An Easter Egg Hamper*
 - *Wine bundles*
 - *Two pairs of ear pod headphones*
 - *And many more....*

Whilst the fayre is open to Upper School parents only, we would like to give the opportunity to buy some tickets, tickets are £1 or £5 for a strip. If you would like to buy some tickets, please complete the reply slip on the letters that have been sent home this week, before Thursday the 2nd.

Tickets will also be available at the fayre for those attending

And really finally.....it's coming around again.....



Invitations for our Upper School Prom will be coming out to pupils this week, here is a sneak peek of the invitations which will be winging their way to you soon

.....from John & the Team here at PHS
