

# Percy Hedley School's

## Whole School Blog

News, Stars, Frogs in Forest School, Pokemon Go! & the School Council - from  
John & the PHS Team

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2026

Hello again everyone

And now we're properly into the summer term! And it feels good. Of course it's going to be a long weekend due to the Bank Holiday, so that's nice but a bit odd! But hopefully the sun will shine on all of us as much as we want it to

It's a great blog today, full of rich and interesting stories that show just how well the children do at the school, and how much we enjoy them achieving so well

We also have good solid stuff too from the safeguarding, behaviour and nursing columns, some awesome stars, and important curriculum updates in literacy, healthy living and personal development & wellbeing. Makaton, School Council, PE, Outdoor Learning.....lots and lots of good stuff

We have the prom and This Is Me coming up after half term, and are starting to have thoughts already about September, otherwise it's been a good week here, have a lovely long weekend yourselves, see you on Tuesday – and as always thanks for your support

All the very best. Happy May!

John S

😊 from John & the PHS Team 😊

### 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

## School Council!

Let's hear from Amanda about what's been happening with the School Council! Excellent stuff!

*"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"*



This week the Student Council had a lot to discuss at the meeting. We agreed we would like to source some 'Leavers Hoodies'. We will send a letter home soon.

We are also starting to collect any unwanted gifts you may have for our Father's Day Sale. This will be on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June. The funds will be used around school; we are going to try and raise some funds for some outdoor seating for our main yard area

Lastly, Andy from the Wellbeing Team came to ask for some help to arrange a Talent show for our next Resilience Day which is 22<sup>nd</sup> May, we will be making some posters and making a schedule for the show



## Literacy

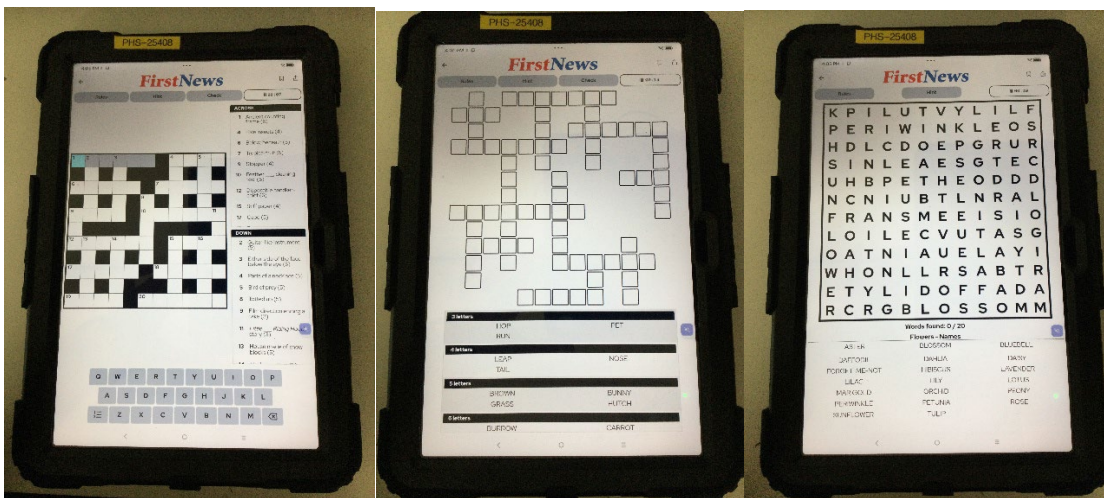
Becky, our Literacy Specialist Lead, leads a team that improve all aspects of literacy, including writing, oracy, reading, phonics, books & the library! Here's Becky!

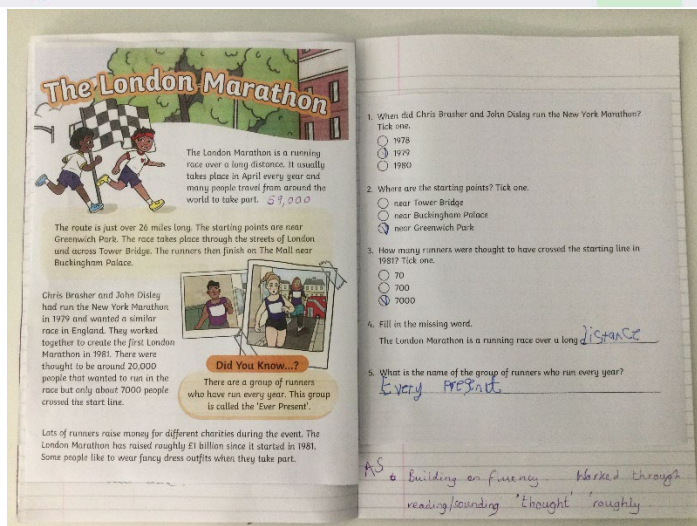
### THE YEAR OF READING!



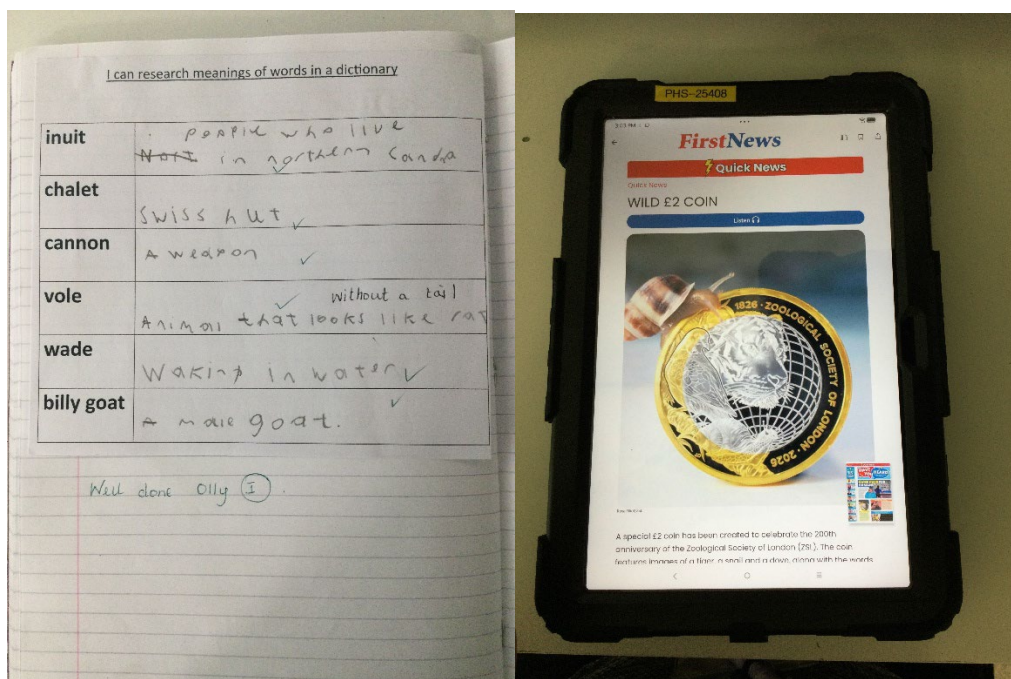
### Tablets!

The last few blogs have been all about the library tablets and what we've got ready for students to use. This week we're going to take a look at how students in Terry's 'Cohort 4' students have been using the tablets in their morning session, and what else they've been up to!





We talk about 5 'Cohorts' of reading to help capture the different types of input students may have around their reading at Percy Hedley. Students in Cohort 4 have moved past our synthetic phonics programme (ELS) and are working on developing comprehension skills, vocabulary and fluency in their reading, though will still be making use of those phonics skills! Every morning students in ELTBA and Appropriate Accreditation pathways have a 'phonics' or 'reading' slot on their timetable where they either attend ELS or they work on reading skills most relevant to them



Terry's group in ELTBA have a very varied week, practising their reading in a wide range of tasks. This might include learning to use a dictionary or thesaurus, reading comprehension question and answer tasks, reading news articles or games and

challenges. They've been trialling using First News (a newspaper written for children and young people) as an app on the Library tablets too, as something a little bit different. Have a look at some samples of their work and what they've been getting up to



Hopefully we'll be able to share some of their feedback as to how it's going in the weeks to come!

**Happy Reading & Playing!**



## 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!

### MOVE to be MOBILE: Transdisciplinary Session

Here in PHS we use a transdisciplinary approach to therapy, where all our teachers, therapists and support staff work closely together to share knowledge and embed therapeutic strategies throughout the school day. This collaborative model ensures that every moment, no matter how small throughout the day becomes an opportunity for learning, development, and increased independence

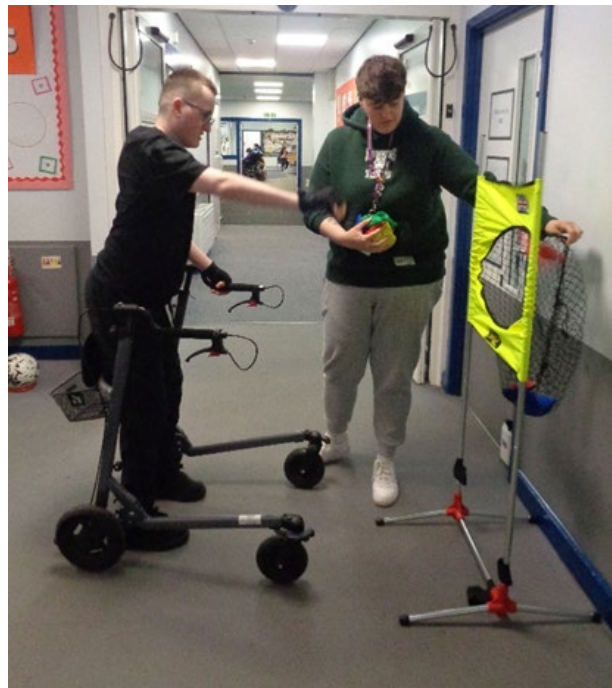
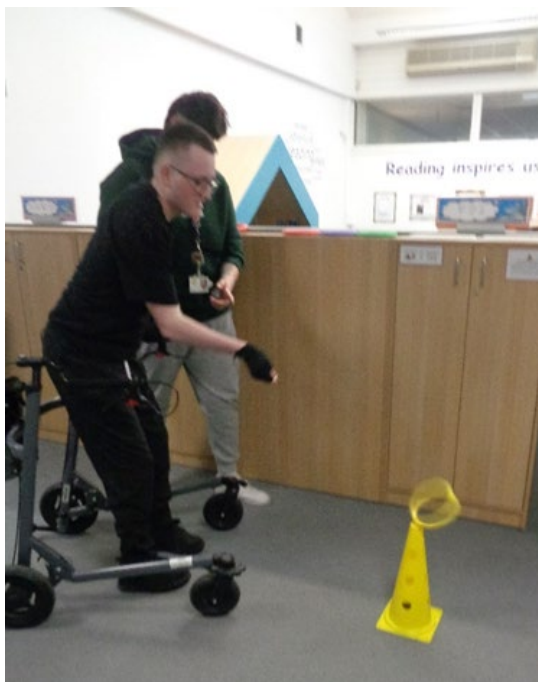
One example of this approach in action is our MOVE to be MOBILE group this term led by our physios Bex and Mary. This transdisciplinary session supports our students in accessing their environment while using a walker or other mobility device, with the aim of maximising their gross motor skills, physical abilities, range of movement, and most importantly their independence. The sessions focus on improving our students' functional mobility, gait pattern, efficiency, endurance, and speed

These sessions provide dedicated time within the school day for students to work on specific mobility skills under the guidance of a physiotherapist. Importantly, the skills developed are not confined to these sessions alone, they are carried over into each student's daily routine. For example, students may practise walking to the dining hall at lunchtime, utilising a movement break to support return to learning, or turning a familiar activity into a meaningful opportunity to apply and reinforce their learning

Have a look at Brandon and Finley navigating obstacles and reaching to move objects in their path!



Next we have James showing us some good reaching and throwing tasks whilst in his walking frame:



Finally, we have Finley, Phillip and Mattie showing us how they can incorporate walking and football skills – great work lads!!!



Our MOVE to be MOBILE sessions are about empowering every student to explore their environment with confidence, take greater ownership of their daily routines, and build lifelong skills for long term function and independence. Well done everyone!



## 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 the current priority is

### Healthy Living

We want to help children learn healthy habits while they are at school, and we would really like your help. This short survey asks a few questions about what you think healthy living means. Your answers will help us understand what is important to you as parents and carers, so we can make positive changes together

### [Healthy Living Survey – Fill in form](#)

There are only 11 questions on it and it doesn't take long to fill out, honestly!!!!!!!

Thanks for doing it!



## This Week in Forest School!

Love Hannah's updates about this, a fabulous aspect of our school. Let's hear from her

*This term in Forest School, our topic is Nature Studies, and this week we've been focusing on frogs, linking our learning to Save The Frogs Day on 28th April*

*All our activities have been frog-themed. The children explored a range of fiction and non-fiction books in the book nook, discovering fascinating facts about frogs. They also learned about the frog life cycle by searching for information in the Gloop Swap—getting hands-on and a little sticky along the way!*

*Creativity has been in full swing too, with the children using natural materials to create their own frog and lily pad pictures. Some students even braved having their hands and feet painted to show how a frog's trail prints might look like along a roll of paper*

*The children have thoroughly enjoyed learning new facts and exploring all things frog. Their favourite fact was:*

***Frogs breathe not only through their lungs, but also through their skin***





All things frog!



## 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?



### Post-16 PE (Thursday): Pupil Choice Continues Following Its Huge Success

Post-16 PE on Thursdays continues to be delivered through pupil-choice sessions, allowing learners to select activities that suit their interests while remaining active, motivated and engaged

#### Tennis (In School and at the Local Tennis Court)

Learners are developing racket skills, coordination and game awareness through tennis sessions delivered both on site and at the local tennis courts. These sessions promote independence and provide valuable real-world sporting experiences.

#### Bowling, Boccia and Kurling

This option offers a range of inclusive, target-based games focusing on accuracy, strategy, turn-taking and cooperation, ensuring all learners can participate confidently and successfully



### Pokémon Go Orienteering and Map Reading

Outdoor walking sessions combine orienteering and map-reading skills with a Pokémon-themed challenge. Learners have shown excellent engagement, using teamwork, problem-solving and navigation skills while remaining physically active



Walking and map reading support physical fitness, wellbeing and independence while developing navigation, problem-solving and teamwork skills in real-life settings



The photos show Olivia, Dominic, Kacey, Mathew, Michael and Gracey throughout enjoying being outdoors and the fun of the game, working together to follow routes, read maps and hunt for Pokémon while benefiting from fresh air, movement and purposeful activity



### **Chris Carr's Cool Class!**

Always excited to see what this great group have been doing...what's the news?



## Cooking and coding in 2CC



2CC have really taken to our baking sessions lately! We begin by carefully reading the recipe and gathering all the ingredients we need. Then it's time for everyone to get involved, taking turns to crunch, stir, pour, mix and whip. Today we made a delicious Rocky Road... though it was so popular there wasn't any left to share!



In computing, we've been learning how to give instructions to devices. We created our own simple algorithms and carefully typed them in using the mice. Before pressing GO! We made predictions about where our robot mice would end up and it was exciting to see the results come to life!



Today in class, we explored weight by choosing different objects from around the room. We discussed which items we thought might be heavier or lighter, then tested our ideas using the scales. We noticed that heavier objects made the scale go down, while lighter ones lifted up. Great investigating, 2CC!





## Early Years – The Ducklings!

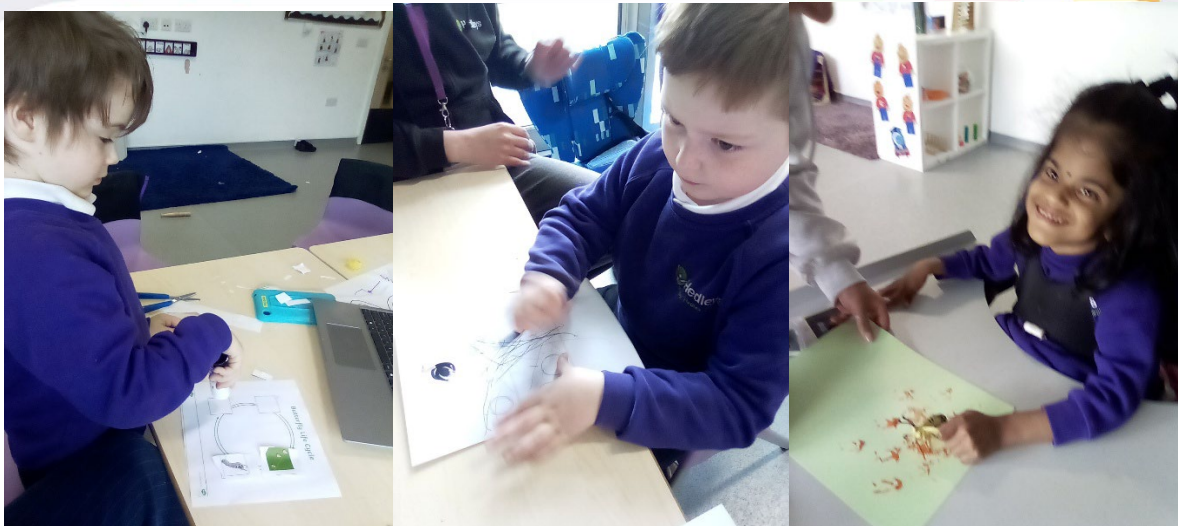
It's always so good to hear about what Kate & the team have been doing with their week. Such a lovely class. Let's play matching the pictures to Kate's story of the week too! Cheers, Ducklings!



This week, we've continued our learning and exploration around minibeasts, linked to our focus story *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*



We have really enjoyed being creative! The children explored painting with minibeasts, dipping them into paint and discovering the different marks and patterns they left on the page. We also had opportunities to make beautiful butterfly collages using colourful tissue paper. Alongside this, we practised our scissor skills by cutting and sticking to create our own bees and ladybirds



As part of our learning about life cycles, we continued to watch a slow-motion video of a caterpillar changing into a butterfly. Some of the children then had a go at ordering the life-cycle pictures, showing lots of interest and beginning to develop their understanding



In ELS, we have been practising the letter 'o'. The children enjoyed finding objects in a box that begin with the 'o' sound and had a go at forming the letter.

Finally, we've made the most of the beautiful weather, enjoying lots of outdoor learning and play, which has been a lovely way to end the week



## Therapy Star of the Week

Emma!



Ameila has nominated Emma for Therapy Star of the Week. Let's hear why, from Amelia

*This week, Emma has been a star for her amazing effort during her rebound session with her SALT and PT. She worked really hard to communicate her song choices using switches and showed great determination while practising her balancing and bouncing. Her focus, perseverance and positive attitude were brilliant to see – well done Emma!*



**EMMA - THERAPY STAR!!!**



### **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



### **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. Let's see what they're talking about this week

## Sun Safety

Staying safe during the UK summer term needs a combination of sun protection and pollen management, especially as children are more sensitive to these environmental factors than adults



### ☉ Sun Safety for School

The sun's UV rays can be strong enough to cause skin damage in the UK from **mid-March to October**, even on cloudy or cool days

- **Sunscreen Application:** Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen (at least **SPF 30** and **4-star UVA protection**) to your child 30 minutes before they leave for school. Please send a labelled bottle to school for top-ups
- **Protective Clothing:** Provide a **wide-brimmed hat** or legionnaire-style cap that shades the face, neck, and ears. Light-coloured, close-weave fabrics block more UV rays
- **Hydration:** Ensure your child has a reusable, labelled **water bottle** every day. Remind them to drink frequently, as they may not always recognize early signs of thirst.

### 🤧 Managing High Pollen Levels

Hay fever symptoms can impact a child's wellbeing and concentration

- **Prevention at Home:** Keep windows closed overnight to prevent pollen from entering bedrooms
  - **Daily Management:** Monitor the [Met Office Pollen Forecast](#) and start medication, such as non-sedating antihistamines, two weeks before their known "season" begins

- **Protective Gear:** Encourage your child to wear **wraparound sunglasses** outside to keep pollen away from their eyes



**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

*From 1 April 2026, schools in England are operating under new Department for Education (DfE) guidance titled Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools. This replaces the long-standing 2013 guidance and sets out clearer expectations, strengthened safeguarding duties, and new statutory requirements for recording and reporting*

*Our Behaviour for Learning (BfL) team has aligned school policies to ensure full compliance with the new guidance and is delivering staff training to support safe, and consistent practice*

If you have any questions or queries please don't hesitate to contact the BfL Team

[aylisha.holland@percyhedley.org.uk](mailto:aylisha.holland@percyhedley.org.uk)

[c.orr@percyhedley.org.uk](mailto:c.orr@percyhedley.org.uk)

Call: 0191 216 1811

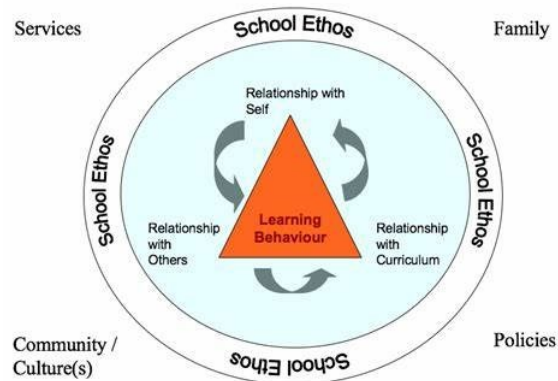


Figure 1: Behaviour for Learning conceptual framework



## Preparation for Adulthood with Hannah

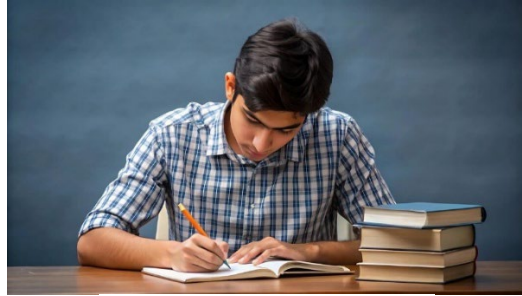
PfA is a priority on the School Development Plan this year

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!



## Exams

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



## 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, ROTH – Risks Outside The Home



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!

*As we enter the summer term we start to think about our training for September and our policies and procedures that need updating.*

*Part of the work that we complete for our policy writing, is thinking about the risks outside the home (ROTH) that our pupils face, to help us to educate them in this area. These then form part of our contextual safeguarding training for our staff.*

*Risks outside the home (ROTH), or extra-familial harm, refer to dangers children and young people face outside their family home, often in community spaces, schools, or online harms—such as criminal/sexual exploitation, gang violence, or trafficking—are often addressed through contextual safeguarding, focusing on the location rather than just the home environment.*

### **Common Examples and Contexts of Risks Outside the Home**

**Criminal Exploitation:** *County lines drug distribution, "cuckooing" (taking over a home), and being forced into illegal activities.*

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE):** *Abuse, sexual harassment, or grooming by strangers, peers, or groups*

**Serious Youth Violence and Gangs:** *Involvement in gangs, carrying weapons, and incidents of violent extremism.*

**Online Abuse/Harm:** *Cyber-bullying, grooming, and sharing private images.*

**Peer-on-Peer Abuse:** Bullying or sexual assault between children, often occurring outside school.

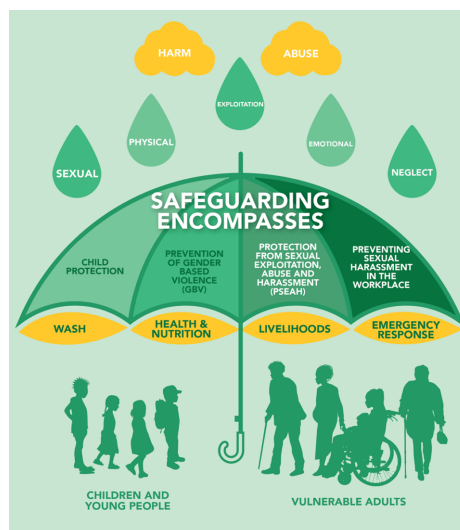
**Modern Slavery/Trafficking:** Forced labour or exploitation of individuals.

**Locations of Risk:** Public spaces such as parks, shopping centres, transport hubs, and online, particularly social media or gaming platforms.

Whilst many of these areas are unlikely to affect our pupils, the holidays often lead to issues with cyber bullying, online abuse and harm, as well as pupils spending longer outside where they can be exposed to a variety of things that we would not want them to be. With the vulnerability of many of our pupils this can often lead to worse consequences

If you are worried about any of the above, please get in touch with us and we can talk it through, and signpost you to relevant support

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](mailto:r.fletcher@percyhedley.org.uk) or [aylisha.holland@percyhedley.org.uk](mailto: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

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

The link to the Online safety information can be found on the school website under the heading “Parent and carers area”, then “online safety” from the dropdown menu.

[View the online safety blogs here](#)

[And view all information about online safety at PHS here](#)



### 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





A telephone call to the school office before 9.30 on the first day of absence if the absence was unplanned, eg illness

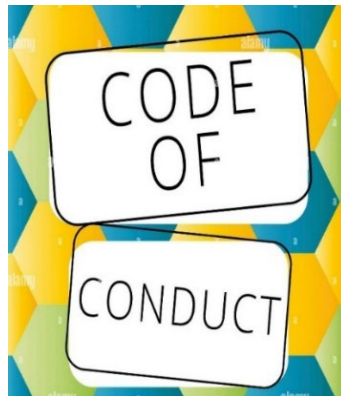
Email to class teacher or [PHSattendance@percyhedley.org.uk](mailto:PHSattendance@percyhedley.org.uk) before 9:30 on the day of the absence

As always, any queries feel free to reach out - [kelly.richardson@percyhedley.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:t.smithson@percyhedley.org.uk)*



## Stars of the Week!

*That reflect our School Values!*

### ENGAGEMENT

Danny!

### Respect!

This week, Danny is our Star of the Pathway for showing fantastic respect in the hydro pool. He worked extremely hard on his swimming skills and done fantastic work on sharing space with others 😊



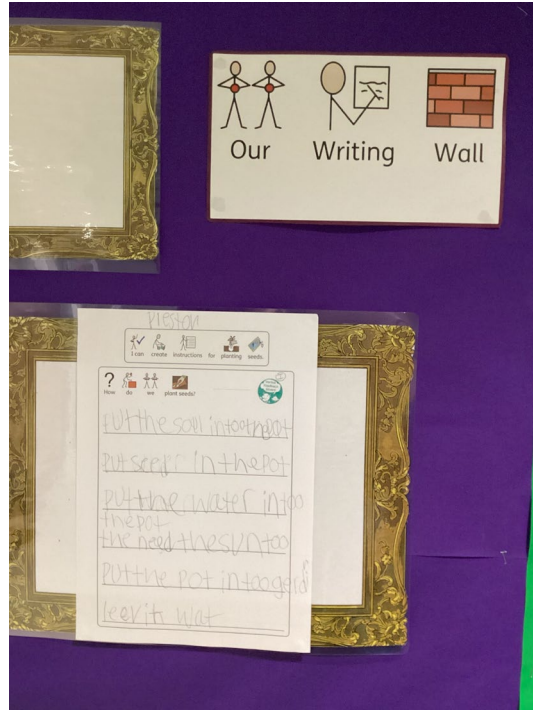
Well done, Danny the Star!!!



ELTBA

Preston!

Respect!



Preston has done fantastic work independently creating a set of instructions to plant a seed. He robot talked and spelt each word to make his sentences. Fantastic work Preston! STAR!!!



### APPROPRIATE ACCREDITATION

Some great folks in KS4! And the greatest this week is...

#### Resilience

Leon for independently getting snacks at breaktime!

Zakaria for beautiful handwriting in ELS!

**Well done both!!!!!!!!!! STARS!!!**



## **POST-16!**

Love our Sixth Form!!! It's a great time to be a student with lots of exciting things happening

We have a lot of good stars this week.

### **Teamwork and Resilience**

Michael, Dylan and Callum for working well in PE, helping out, generally enjoying the lesson and getting involved. Fantastic!!!

Brian worked very well in PE and helped Clare keep score. Well done!!!

### **Resilience**

Kian enthusiastically joined in the tasting session in Food Tech. He tried everything and really enjoyed it. Brilliant!!

Jayden had a fantastic work experience at Jarrow Hall. He worked really hard and was very engaged. Excellent!!

Phillip, Harrison and Brandon have all worked really hard for their exams this week. Wonderful!!!

Ella-Rose and Brian have both worked really hard at work experience. Well done!!!

### **Resilience and Respect**

Dom worked really well at the gym. He followed all the rules. Excellent!!!

Frances and Alex have both worked really hard for their English exam. Well done!!!



## 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*

### Makaton Signs of the Week 27<sup>th</sup> April

#### Cycling signs!



I've been watching some amazing adapted bikes whizzing around the playground from my office window recently so I thought it would be a good moment to revise some key signs for bikes and cycling

Signs this week: bike, ride, cycle helmet, fast, slow, outside

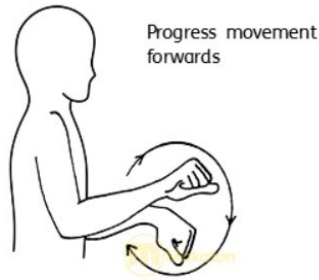
Here is the video I made a couple of years ago:

[https://youtu.be/BP-q\\_0VijIM](https://youtu.be/BP-q_0VijIM)



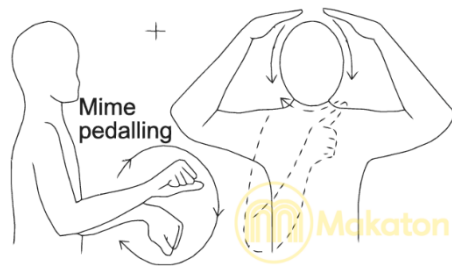
Mime pedalling

bike



Progress movement forwards

to ride a bike



Mime pedalling



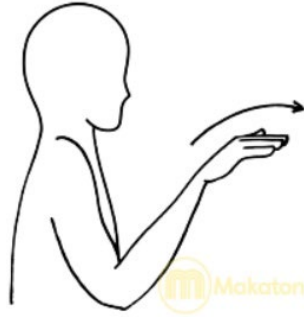
cycle helmet



fast



slow



outside

Happy cycling!



Keep signing!



Julie



And finally...



The invitations

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

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## Our Key Drivers

Communication, Wellbeing, Independence

