

Percy Hedley School's

Whole School Blog

News, Stars and HELLO AGAIN! - from John & the PHS Team

Friday 4th September 2026

Hello again everyone!

And how are you all? How has your summer been? Good I hope – even although it was a bit hot at times! Hope you're all well

We've been off but we had a couple of training days on Tuesday and Wednesday, and then it's been absolutely lovely to have the children in yesterday and today. It really is great to see those we know again, and to welcome nine new children in this term. Yesterday felt amazing!

Particular welcome to our nine new families. We hope you're happy with what you seen so far with us – please do reach out to Eileen, the office, Safeguarding, Behaviour, Class Teacher or any of the other teams such as Wellbeing, Nursing or the therapies we do. There are several people's email addresses in the blog below if you want to get involved with anything. And please do join the Friends of PHS!!!!

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

Aside from seeing everyone older and younger again, as well as new faces, one of the good feelings was to do with the work done in the school over the summer. There are a few pictures below, but we have had work done with the front gates, the PE area, our courtyard, a physical play space, more wellbeing rooms, another sensory area, as well as some changes to classrooms, furniture and resources. We've really gone for it! Inside and out!

There are always a lot of changes at this time of the year and no matter how much you prepare for them, it can be quite a lot to take in, so we're keeping a close on everyone at the moment. I do hope that your son or daughter came back having had a good first day back, and that they settled well. It really has been good to see them and to look forward to a great year for them here at PHS

It's a lighter blog this week, but I've popped a few pictures in, and there is a new column on Eating, Drinking & Swallowing from Jennie our Dysphagia Lead, and still some Makaton, Online Safety, PE from last term, exams info and Becky talking about the Year of Reading. There will be some pictures of our first day on the company site and various socials, and Eileen's Family Liaison blog which you can find here [News - Percy Hedley Foundation](#), our main school one which is here [Percy Hedley School - Percy Hedley School](#) and the wider Foundation site here [Home - Percy Hedley Foundation](#). You can catch up with most things at these places!

All the very best for a great year. We're very excited about the time to come, and looking forward very much to working with you and your children

Welcome back and all the very best

John S





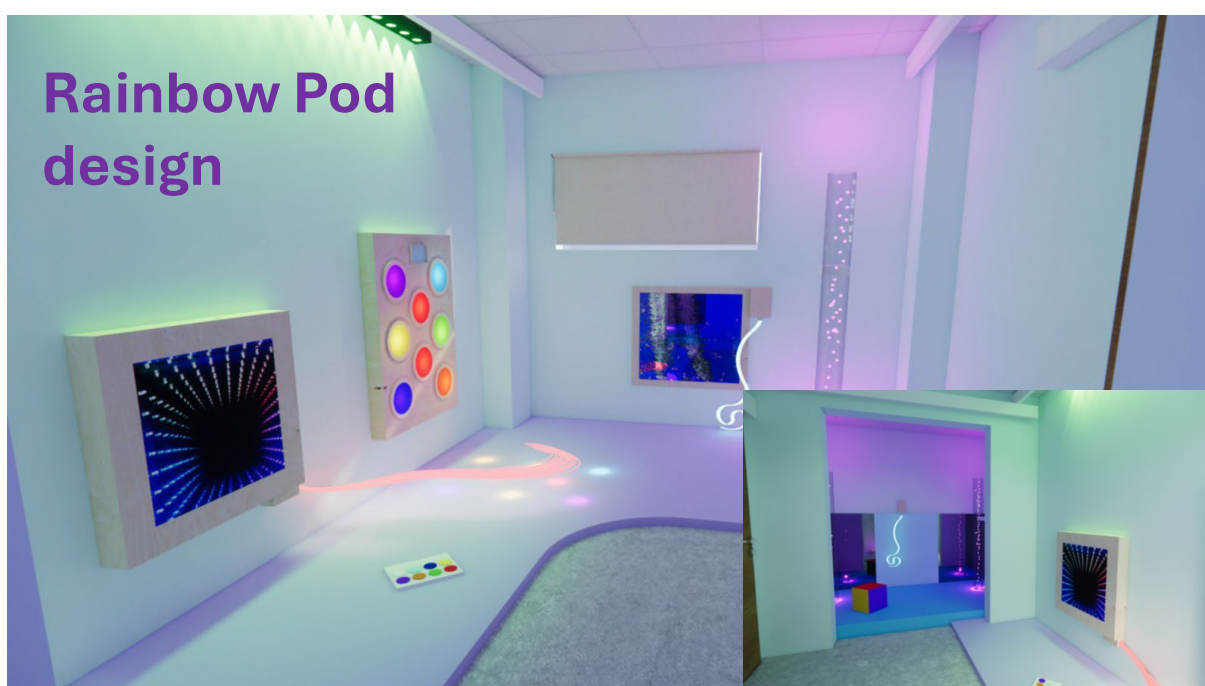
Lovely space outside Chris' Classroom



A room we've converted with a swing and other useful physical therapeutic activities



Our fabulous new courtyard with amazing things to play with!



More amazing sensory stuff!

😊 from John & the PHS Team 😊



School Council News

"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 are making a difference to the school!

It's great to have such a good School Council, that are actually making a difference with these kinds of things. It really fits in with our ethos and the vibe of the school too. Thanks to them!



Our School Council Board!



Literacy

Becky, our Literacy Specialist Lead, leads a team that improve all aspects of literacy, including writing, oracy, reading, phonics, books & the library! Let's catch up with what the latest happenings are!



It's still the year of Reading!

It was so lovely to welcome students back this week and get started with the plans for the new academic year! Autumn Term is always a busy one, but with it being the final term of the 'National Year of Reading' - it's going to be an extra busy one!

For parents and families who may be new to Percy Hedley School, we are on a mission to promote a 'Love of Reading' for all students, and show that everyone can be a reader and a writer. For some students that may look a little different to how we would typically think of reading and writing, but it's just as valuable

To get us started this half term (after a little bit of settling in time!) we'll be celebrating National Poetry Day on the 1st October, World Mental Health Day, 10th November -reading can have a very positive impact on mental health! and there will be opportunities for parents and carers to learn more about our approach to Reading & Writing - whether you're able to join us in school or catch up online.

We'll be sharing more information about all of these as we have it!

In the meantime, please do share any new favourite books, audiobooks, podcasts, magazines or comics your child or young person may have enjoyed this summer with their class team - it's always great to get recommendations from our students and families!

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 & it's one of our priorities this year



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

If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to contact me at j.ferguson@percyhedley.org.uk, or speak to your child's class teacher



PE

PE is great here and very important for a lot of the students – in fact all sorts of movement. Here's something from last term that I didn't get the chance to put in!



Waffle's Orienteering Adventure!





Our students became fantastic explorers by helping Waffle the Dog find his missing football!

The adventure began with a football shirt hunt around the classroom, encouraging students to move independently while searching for hidden clues. They then worked together to guide Waffle through a tricky maze using directional arrows, carefully choosing the best route to reach the football.

This fun challenge developed navigation, directional awareness, teamwork and communication, while promoting confidence, independence and physical activity in an inclusive environment.

There were plenty of smiles, celebrations and great teamwork as Waffle finally reached his football. A brilliant PE lesson where learning, movement and fun went hand in hand at Percy Hedley School!



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.



Go Nurses!

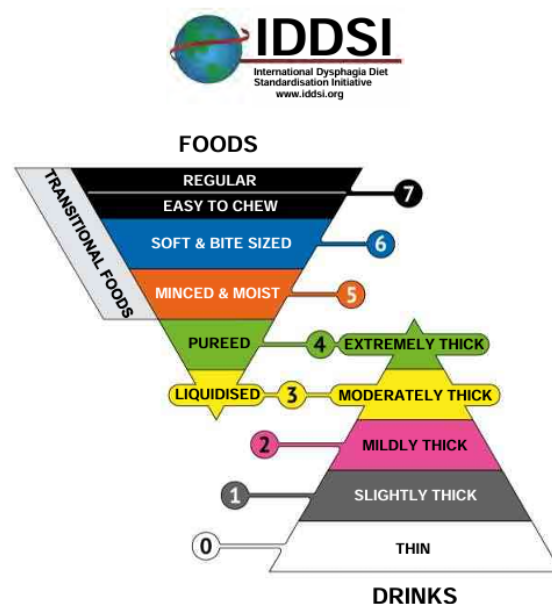


Eating, Drinking & Swallowing – with Jennie!

Jennie is our Dysphagia Lead, working across the Foundation and co-ordinating the work of the Dysphagia Group of Speech & Language Therapists

Jennie is planning to explain what IDDSI is over the first few weeks of this new part of the blog, and then include some recipes, top tips etc as time goes on. Excellent! Let's hear from Jennie in this new section and see what it's all about!

Eating, Drinking and Swallowing (Dysphagia)



Across the world we use the same words to describe food and drinks that have been modified because someone has eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties.

This means that we all understand each other and the food or drink is the same no matter where you go or who makes it

At Percy Hedley School the dysphagia trained Speech & Language Therapists carry out assessments to work out what the safest foods and drinks are for our students and our excellent kitchen team make the food to the right consistencies

Each week we will focus on a different level to explain what it all means, so we can work together to make sure we get it right for our students

Any questions for the dysphagia SaLTs the email address is
PHS.salt@percyhedley.org.uk

7 **REGULAR**

These are normal, everyday foods of various textures that are developmentally and age appropriate. This means there are no restrictions other than 'common sense' changes depending on how old the person is and what they like to eat. For example, young children would need foods like grapes or cherry tomatoes cut up.
Most of our students (and staff!) have this level



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 to make a really important team for the school

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

aylisha.holland@percyhedley.org.uk

c.orr@percyhedley.org.uk

☎ Call: 0191 216 1811

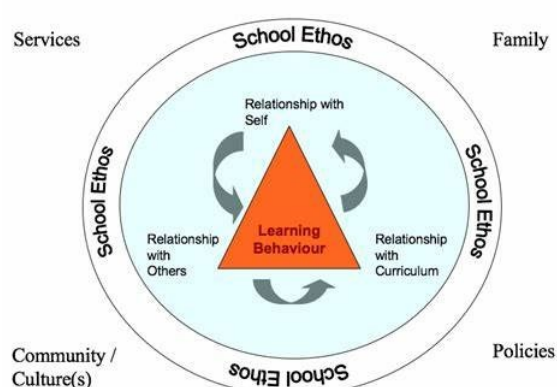


Figure 1: Behaviour for Learning conceptual framework



Preparation for Adulthood with Hannah

PfA is a priority for the us and always will be. Hannah & the PfA Team use this space to tell us what they've been working on



PfA Lead: Hannah Fuller Hannah.fuller@percyhedley.org.uk, Careers lead: Louise Finlay L.finlay@percyhedley.org.uk or Family Liaison Officer: Eileen Robinson e.robinson@percyhedley.org.uk

Here is the link to our PfA resources:



Exams!

We'll talk about it perhaps at other points, but I just wanted to give you a flavour early on about how well our students who took exams did. We're really proud of them. Just to give you that taste, this is a list of the exams that were taken here last school year. We've had some brilliant results!

Types of examinations that took place this summer/on demand during academic year

GCSE Examinations

1 GCSE Physics

3 GCSE Biology

1 GCSE Geography

3 GCSE English Language

1 GCSE English Literature

4 GCSE Mathematics

4 GCSE Statistics

6 Edexcel Award Numbers & Measures Level 1

3 Edexcel Award Numbers & Measures Level 2

3 BTEC Level1/2 First Award in ICT – Completing 2year course

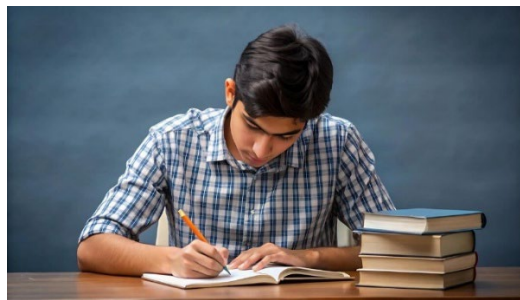
13 Entry Level Certificate Mathematics 5930

9 Entry Level Certificate English NEN0

7 Level 1 Functional Skills – Mathematics

3 Level 2 Functional Skills – Mathematics

- 2 Level 1 Functional Skills – English- Writing
- 3 Level 1 Functional Skills – English – Reading
- 1 Level 1 Functional Skills - Speaking Listening Comms Exemption
- 4 Level 2 Functional Skills – English –Writing
- 4 Level 2 Functional Skills – English – Reading
- 4 Level 2 Functional Skills - Speaking Listening Comms Exemption
- 2 Functional Skills Entry Level 1 Mathematics
- 5 Functional Skills Entry Level 2 Mathematics
- 5 Functional Skills Entry Level 3 Mathematics
- 6 Functional Skills Entry Level 1 English
- 6 Functional Skills Entry Level 2 English
- 8 Functional Skills Entry Level 3 English



Mobile Phones in schools!

We've been working on a new policy to reflect what's going on in the country about this, and what the government is telling us

Please do have a read

Rebecca is happy to answer any questions about it at all. Get Rebecca on r.fletcher@percyhedley.org.uk

Mobile Phones in School procedure

To maintain a safe, focused and supportive learning environment, all students must hand their mobile phones to a member of staff at the start of the school day. Phones will be stored securely and returned to students at the end of the school day.

The school recognises that many students rely on mobile phones for their journey to and from school. Students may therefore bring their phones to school for transport and travel purposes, but they must be handed in immediately upon arrival.

Exemptions and Reasonable Adjustments

The school acknowledges that some students may require access to a mobile device during the school day as part of their individual needs. Reasonable adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may include:

- Medical needs, such as the management of diabetes through mobile phone-linked monitoring systems.
- Communication needs identified within an EHCP or other support plan.
- Therapeutic interventions recommended by healthcare professionals or therapists.
- Activities that support Preparation for Adulthood outcomes, where mobile phone use has been identified as an appropriate tool to develop independence, travel training, communication skills or community access.

Any exemption must be agreed by the school in partnership with the student, parents/carers and relevant professionals. Arrangements will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain appropriate and supportive of the student's needs.

Use of Phones Under an Agreed Exemption

Students with an approved exemption may only use their phone for the specific purpose agreed with parents/carers, a medical plan and the DSL. Where this is the case parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss the exemption and an individual contract will be in place to safeguard all pupils and staff. The school reserves the right to review, amend or withdraw arrangements where use is no longer appropriate or where there are safeguarding concerns.

Unauthorised Use

Students must not use mobile phones during the school day without prior authorisation. Unauthorised use, including photography, recording, messaging, social media access or gaming, may result in the phone being confiscated and further action being taken in line with the school's behaviour policy.

This approach reflects current Department for Education expectations that schools should be mobile phone-free environments by default, while making appropriate adjustments for pupils with SEND, disabilities or medical needs.



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

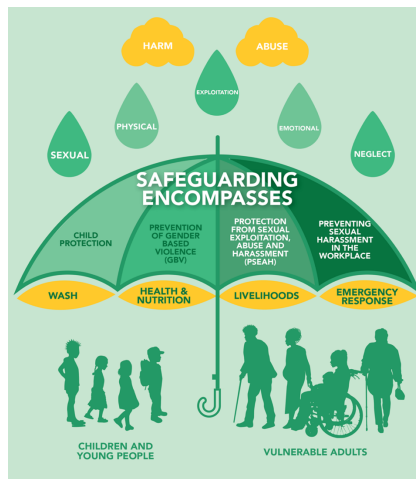


Safeguarding



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

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

This week's is up on the website too, here [Online Safety blogs - Percy Hedley School](#).

The focus is on Government guidance on screentime for under 5s/how this works for SEND children who use technology as means of communication etc

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

*The school day begins promptly at **9:00am**. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as late unless there is a pre-arranged appointment and an absence form has been submitted in advance*

If you have any questions, please contact kelly.richardson@percyhedley.org.uk

Thank you, as always, for your continued support

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. Benefits include insurance for events, links with their partners & training for parents, carers & staff.

The meetings are half termly.



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!



2024-2027

In January 2024, with your support and contributions, Percy Hedley school successfully achieved this award. The accreditation lasts for three years, so it's 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

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



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 1st September 2026

Welcome back to school everyone!

Here are some useful signs for back to school when some things may be a little different for our students (and staff!)

The signs are welcome, school, class, teacher, new, same, different

[Here is my video:](#)

Here are the signs:



WELCOME

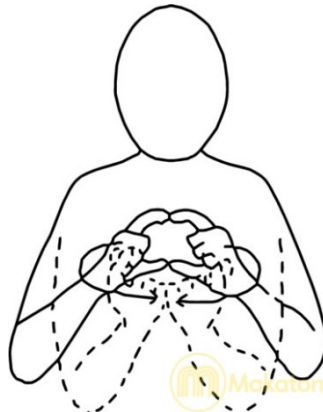
*Both open hands with palms facing
signer bend at knuckles in short
repeated movements.*

welcome

Small circular
movement
in front of
mouth

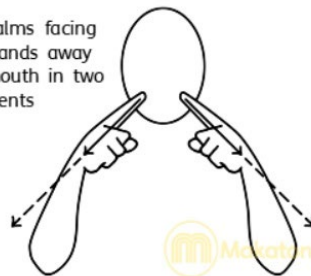


school



class

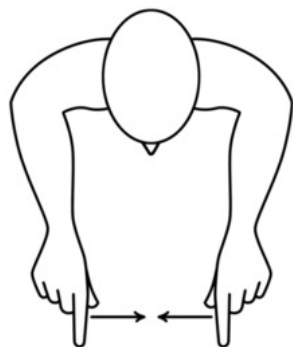
With palms facing
bring hands away
from mouth in two
movements



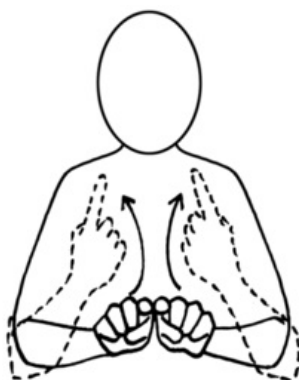
teacher



new



same



different

I have attached some core vocabulary sheets to this email which you can print out. I have some printed copies in my office if easier. Useful for new staff members particularly.

Please give me or Kate a shout if you need anything signing-related (Makaton, TaSSeLs or Canaan-Barrie)

We will be happy to help 😊

[Here is a fun song from The Singing Hands about the first day of school with more useful signs:](#)

Have a great first week back!



Keep signing!

Julie



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

Our Key Drivers

Communication, Wellbeing, Independence

