

Percy Hedley School's

Whole School Blog

News, Stars, Careers Fayre is coming, Northumberland Zoo, Fish Quays & Shooting Hoops – from John & the PHS Team

Friday 9th October

Hello everyone, Happy Friday!

I hope you've had a great week. It's been a fine, exciting one in school, full of trips, stars and plans. One plan is our Careers Fayre on the 20th October – it's a newish thing and I'm really looking forward to it

On a slightly more serious note, there are two articles from Rebecca and Lizzie today around some serious aspects of safeguarding, dysphagia and even Julie's Makaton is about mental health. But there are also some lovely pictures of all aspects of school life – reading, school values, early years, the new play area, gardening – honestly, I hope there's something that takes your fancy. And there's some great stars too, including a Wellbeing Star!

There's a lovely atmosphere and people really want to share their stories with you all every week like this – I even have to leave things out sometimes! It's great whenever we see you at the school for functions, and I hope we do again soon. The school is good because it's a partnership between all of us – home, different professions and all sorts of people working together for the good of the children. Thanks for your support

All the best!

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

Attendance

The latest data from the Attendance Team

	30/09/2026
WEEKLY PERCENTAGE	86.68
WEEKLY YEAR TO DATE	90.15
ON ROLL	147
PA - Missing more than 50-90% of school, current week	17.00%
PA - Missing more than 50-90% of school, rolling average for half term	23.13%
SPA - Missing more than 0 - 50% of school, current week	10.20%
SPA - Missing more than 0 - 50% of school, rolling average for half term	3.40%
2025/2026	85.05
2026/2027 Year to date	85.92
UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES	0.69%
UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES ROLLING AVERAGE	1.5%

Attendance this week was **86.68%**, with our overall attendance for the year to date standing at **90.15%**. Attendance has unfortunately dipped again this week however we are aware of some colds and seasonal bugs which have affected a number of our young people

As always, we appreciate that some absence is unavoidable, particularly where children and young people are unwell but please remember our class teams and nursing team are available to offer advice and support so if you are unsure whether your child is well enough to attend school, please do contact us for support

Where children are well enough to attend, every day in school provides valuable opportunities for learning, communication, independence and friendship

Thank you for your continued support in helping us achieve the best attendance possible for all pupils



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 make a difference in our school!

It's great to have such a good School Council, who are actually making a difference! 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 is from Becky



National
Year of
Reading
2026

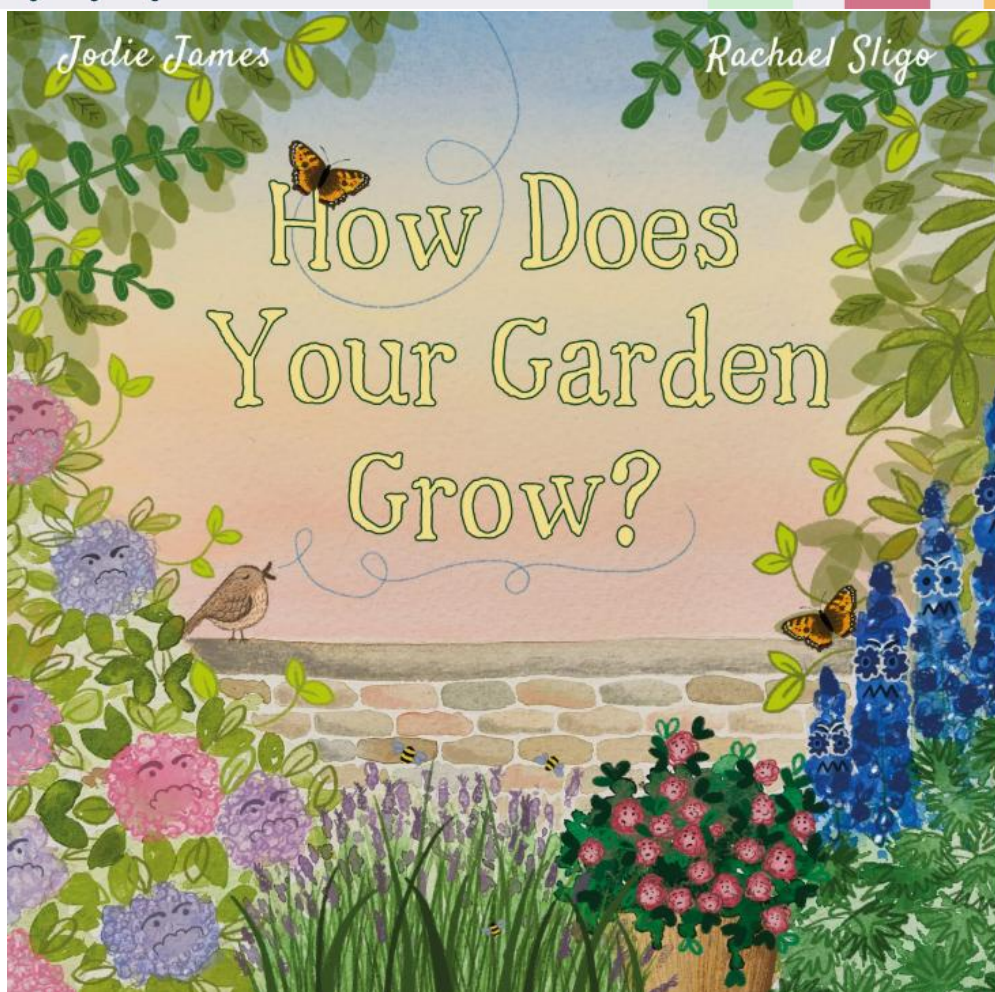
WE ARE ALL READERS & WRITERS!

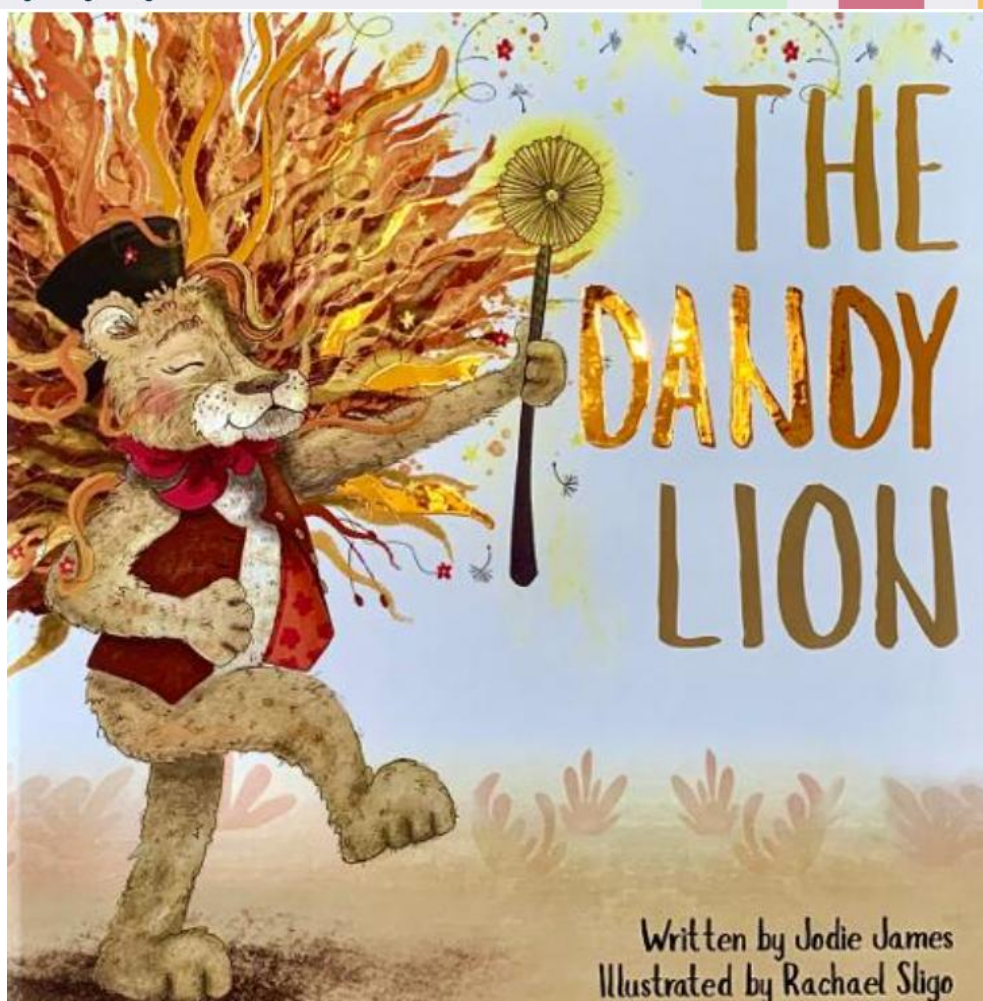
This week the Literacy Team have some news to share, as plans are coming together for an exciting project all about the idea that we are ALL readers, and we are ALL writers. This is something that is very important to Percy Hedley School, as reading and writing may look different in different classrooms, however all forms are valued. Everyone has the right to access stories and to express themselves!

We wanted a way to be able to celebrate our amazing readers and writers in the final term of the 'National Year of Reading', and so we will be working together with local Author Jodie James on a project that all of our students will be involved in. We will be sharing more details of this project shortly, but for now, we'd like to share a little bit about Jodie!

Jodie is a storyteller and published author living near our school, and she has written two children's books so far. 'How does your garden grow' is a nature story set in Northumberland (based on the Walled Gardens at Wallington to be specific!) and 'The Dandy Lion' is all about the joy of being yourself! Jodie has been in to visit our school a couple of times now, and is looking forward to getting to know us a little more!







Looking forward to sharing more of this exciting project shortly!

Happy Reading!



BOOK FAIR, from Russell!

As you will be aware, we recently hosted our annual Book Fair

As always, it proved to be a great success. This, of course, is because we have such wonderful support from our families, the takings for the fair once again totalling

hundreds of pounds. Commission from these sales enables the school to choose more free books for our school

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the event so successful



Physical Development



Everything that is in the world of 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 always a priority!

Celebrating Our New Outdoor Play Area

Over the summer term, we were thrilled to see the installation of our brand new outdoor play area, and since returning in September, it has already transformed the way our youngest pupils play, learn and explore. The space has quickly become a hub of adventure, curiosity and movement, with children choosing to spend far more time outdoors engaging in rich, meaningful physical experiences

This new environment has been a wonderful addition to our school, especially in supporting early physical development skills. High quality outdoor play is a vital part of our curriculum, giving pupils opportunities to build the foundations of mobility, coordination, balance, strength and sensory regulation through engaging, child-led exploration

The play area has been carefully designed to encourage movement, exploration and growth, offering a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their gross and fine motor skills in ways that feel natural, motivating and fun

Gross Motor Development

Children have been busy:

Stepping across unstable surfaces

Climbing and navigating new heights

Balancing on beams and platforms

Spinning, sliding and jumping

Exploring movement challenges at their own pace

These experiences strengthen core stability, coordination, motor planning and confidence which are essential building blocks for future physical skills and classroom readiness

Fine Motor Development

The space also encourages:

Sand play and sandcastle building

Scooping, pouring and transferring water

Throwing and rolling objects

Manipulating tools and natural materials

These activities support hand strength, dexterity, grasp development and sensory exploration, enriching early learning across the curriculum.

One of the most exciting features is our wheelchair-accessible trampoline, which has already become a firm favourite! Our youngest pupils have absolutely loved practising their bouncing skills, experiencing movement, rhythm and vestibular input in a safe and fully inclusive way. It's been wonderful to see the joy and excitement this has provided!

Outdoor play is not an "extra" at PHS, it is a powerful part of how we deliver the curriculum. This new space allows pupils to:

Build physical readiness for learning

Strengthen sensory regulation

Develop independence and problem-solving

Engage socially through shared play

Explore nature, risk-taking and build resilience

By embedding physical development into daily outdoor experiences, we are enriching learning across all areas and giving pupils the foundations they need to thrive. Please do take a look at the lovely photos which show just how much they have enjoyed this new space!





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

School Values

Respect, Resilience and Teamwork in Action

At our school, we are proud of the way our pupils demonstrate our core values of Respect, Resilience and Teamwork every day. These values help to create a positive, supportive and welcoming environment for everyone

Each week, we celebrate pupils who go above and beyond by awarding Star of the Week. Whether it is showing kindness to others, persevering with a challenge, or working brilliantly as part of a team, it is always fantastic to recognise and celebrate their achievements

A great example of our values in action can be seen in the Formal Pathway Social Area. This inclusive space brings pupils together to play, socialise and build friendships. Pupils regularly demonstrate respect by sharing equipment and including others in games, resilience by trying new activities and overcoming challenges, and teamwork by working together and supporting one another

We are incredibly proud of how our pupils live our school values every day and help make our school community such a positive place to learn and grow







Jo Ferguson
Personal Development Lead
[*j.ferguson@percyhedley.org.uk*](mailto:j.ferguson@percyhedley.org.uk)

Thank you for your continued support. By working together, we can help our young people develop the confidence, resilience and independence they need to achieve their full potential

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



Wellbeing!



Connect, Keep Learning, Be Active, Take Notice, Give

Wellbeing is a Key Driver at PHS. This year we've increased both the size of the team and the space they have for the children. Let's hear about the latest exciting things that are going on there



WELLBEING STAR!!!

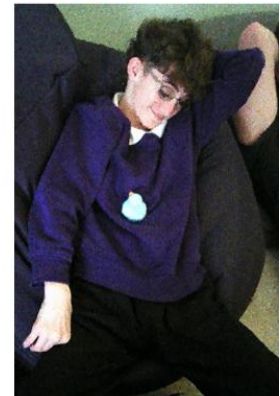
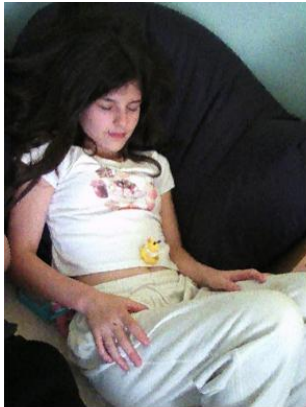
Check out this wellbeing star! Sienna has been great at recognizing when a visit to the wellbeing hub will help with her regulation. Look at her mindful artwork. Well done Sienna, we are so proud



Students in Terry's class, are in the Take Notice group (from the 5 ways to Wellbeing). They have been practicing some muscle relaxation exercises. Relaxing your muscles helps promote a state of calm. A relaxed body equals a relaxed mind

We placed ducks on our tummy's and tried 'big belly breathes', we had to try keep the ducks balanced. At the end of the session all of the students said they felt 'calm and relaxed'

Well done, Teddy, Toby, Sinead and Layton



PE

PE is great here and very important for a lot of the students – in fact all sorts of movement. They've already made a great start to the year, so let's see what Nathan has for us!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Motor Activity Training Program

This week in PE, as part of our MATP (Motor Activity Training Program) ball skills sessions, Jack and Jackson demonstrated some fantastic skills and determination





Using a switch-operated activity, both students showed excellent control and understanding as they successfully scored basketball hoops. They also used a switch to operate a fan, blowing balls towards targets and nets, helping to develop their understanding of scoring, engagement, and confidence throughout the session. It was wonderful to see both students fully engaged, celebrating their successes and showing great perseverance

Well done, Jack and Jackson, for your excellent effort and positive attitudes during PE this week! 🏀👏🎉



The Marvellous Early Years Ducklings!

We have a great Early Years class, The Ducklings, with a great area to learn & play in. Kate shares with us each week what they've been doing! Hope you enjoy the words and pictures



This week we have been exploring Autumn and have really enjoyed sharing the story Leaf Man



As we read the story, we explored lots of exciting sensory experiences linked to the different things Leaf Man blows past. Some of our favourite parts included meeting the chickens, feeling the wind from the fans, experiencing the spray water for the river breeze, and being surprised when a butterfly flew out of the book!



We also enjoyed our Autumn-themed assembly. We explored different sights, sounds and experiences linked to the season, including party poppers to represent fireworks, colourful lights, and listening to Diwali music



In class, we have loved exploring our Autumn tuff tray filled with seasonal treasures. We investigated pinecones, conkers, sticks, pumpkins and acorns, using our senses to explore the different textures, shapes and colours. We even used

some of our Autumn treasures to build a sand man in the sand and enjoyed rolling conkers outside, exploring how they moved



To finish the week, we enjoyed visiting the new Cloud Room with Abbie. We especially loved exploring the musical stepping stones and had lots of fun jumping over the moving jump rope



North Shields Fish Quays – another great trip with Richard’s class!



This week, 5RDRM continued learning about foods that are local to our area with an exciting trip to North Shields Fish Quay. Our first stop was the Old Low Light Heritage Centre, where students learned about the history of North Shields and discovered how the town has developed around its fishing industry over many years



After exploring the heritage centre, we visited the fish market and quay area to see where local seafood is landed and sold. Students enjoyed looking at the different types of fish and learning about the important role the fishing industry plays in our local community



To finish our visit, we had the opportunity to taste some local produce, including delicious fish and chips and crab sandwiches. Everyone enjoyed trying the local foods, and it was great to see students engaging with new experiences. One of the highlights of the day was Bobbie managing to get his hands on a fish once again, much to everyone's amusement!



The trip was a fantastic opportunity to learn more about our local area, its history, and the foods that are produced close to home. Well done to all the students for representing the school so positively throughout the day. 🐟👏👏



Northumberland Zoo Adventure 🐾

Students enjoyed a fantastic visit to Northumberland Zoo, where they explored animal care, met a variety of minibeasts, and discovered some of the specialist tools used by zookeepers

The group then put their learning into practice by designing animal habitats and creating enrichment toys to support animal wellbeing before visiting the zoo's impressive new snow leopard enclosure

The visit was a brilliant opportunity to learn about animal welfare, conservation, and careers in the zoo industry. We were incredibly proud of our students, who represented the school brilliantly with their enthusiasm, curiosity, and excellent behaviour throughout the day

Hear what some of our student's had to share about their learning encounter at Northumberland Zoo

Sadie: "I really enjoyed making the enrichment toys for the Limas. Some of the animals were a bit too noisy for me though."

Joshua: "I liked the snow leopards. They eat a lot of meat."

Patrick: "The colour of leopard's poo was horrible."

Aurora: "A bird flew over my head during the Birds' of Prey Show."







Therapy Star of the Week!



This week, with Kate! Who is nominating.....



HARPER!

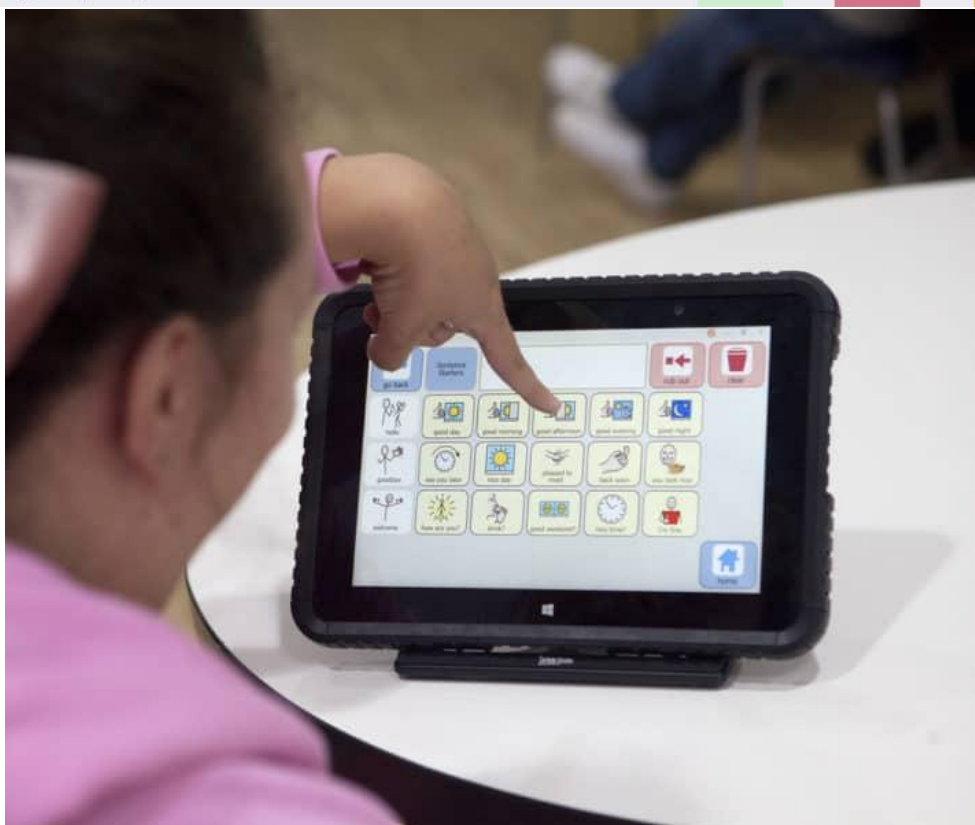


Communication!

Harper has been working well on her target this term answering simple questions and extending her phrases. She has been responding to questions using her VOCA and her voice during play and learning activities including board games, structured tasks and during outdoor play too

Well done, Harper – it's been lovely to see you communicating well in school!

Therapy STAR!!!



A VOCA at work!



Gardening Club with Ben!



Or, Horticulture News, if you want to be posh! Anyway, great things are happening in this area of school, so let's hear Ben's latest update

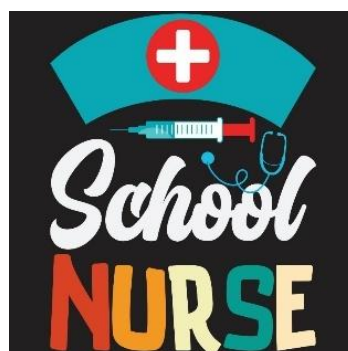


Loving Horticulture News/Garden Club!



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!



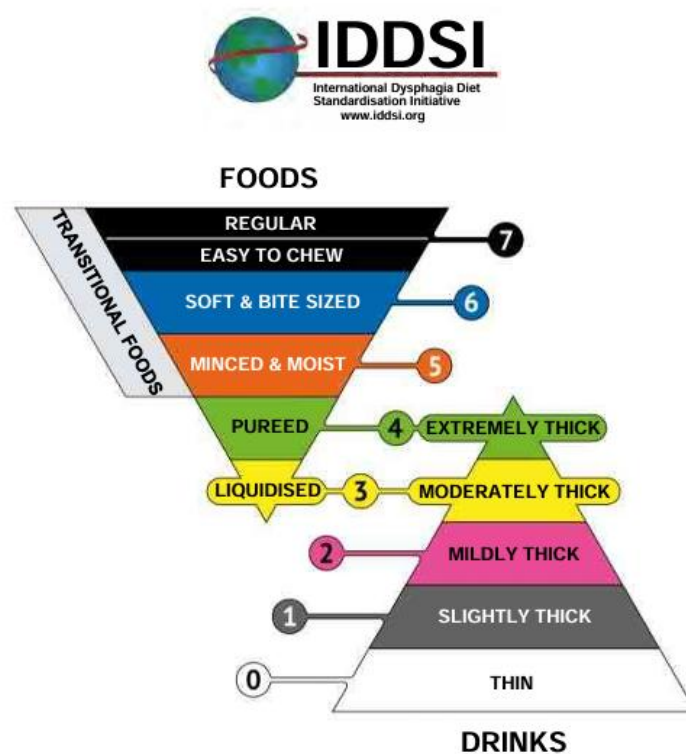
Eating, Drinking & Swallowing – with Jennie! Part Three!

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 again from Jennie in this new section and see what it's all about this week!

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 and 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.

LIQUIDISED

We don't use this level for food very often, but blended diets which go through a PEG are generally this texture. This food is thick and smooth and can be drunk from a cup or eaten with a spoon. It will spread out if you put it on a plate or in a bowl.

You can't eat it with a fork as it will slowly drip through

Any questions for the Dysphagia SaLTs the email address is

PHS.salt@percyhedley.org.uk



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

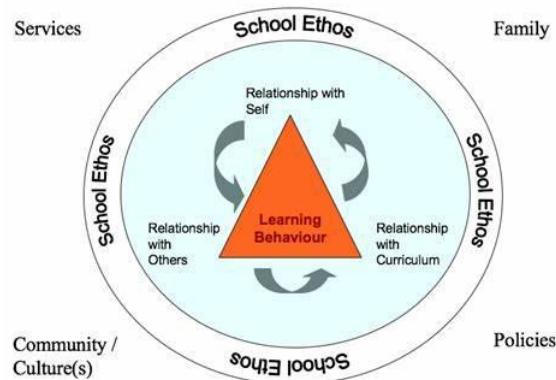


Figure 1: Behaviour for Learning conceptual framework



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, and it's always central to our mission



Dreaming Big and Planning Well

Over the course of this Autumn blog series, we've explored some of the different aspects of Preparation for Adulthood, from developing independence and communication skills to considering future education, employment, community participation and wellbeing. While these areas may seem separate, they are all connected by a common goal: helping every young person build a fulfilling, meaningful and happy adult life

Preparation for Adulthood starts long before a young person leaves school: it is a continuous journey that runs through every stage of their education. Every new skill learned, every challenge overcome and every achievement celebrated contributes towards a young person's future

One of the most important parts of this journey is having aspirations. As parents, carers and professionals, we all want young people to have opportunities, choices and ambitions for their future. Aspiration is about encouraging our children and young people to dream big, while also ensuring that plans remain centred around their individual strengths, needs, interests and goals

As families, you play a vital role in Preparation for Adulthood. The conversations you have at home, the opportunities you create and the encouragement you provide all help to build essential skills and aspirations. Working together with school staff ensures that we are supporting young people consistently and effectively as they move through each stage of their journey

We encourage you to think about the next steps for your child or young person. Preparation for Adulthood is not a destination; it is an ongoing process of growth, learning and discovery. Our staff are always available to offer guidance and support, and there are a range of resources, reviews and planning tools available to help families navigate the journey ahead. Please do check out the resources section on the school website, and visit your LA's Local Offer, which outlines the support available for your child, where you live

Reflection Question:

What is one Preparation for Adulthood goal that your family could focus on over the next six months?

Small steps taken today can help create exciting opportunities for tomorrow. Together, we can continue supporting every young person to achieve their aspirations and prepare for a successful adult life

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: <https://www.percyhedley.org.uk/percy-hedley-school/preparing-for-adulthood-resources/>



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

MAINS
Chicken & Chorizo Paella
Manchego Mac & Cheese
SIDES
Patatas Bravas (Spanish Potatoes)
Escavlivada (Mediterranean Vegetables)
DESSERT
Basque Cheesecake
Cupcakes

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



Exams with Kat!

Welcome to all returning students and new students that joined new class teams.

With the new academic year under way, the exams team is starting the full year cycle once more. Updating details, preparing the years schedule of qualifications, and setting up support and information for teaching staff and students. Updated regulations have been circulated by JCQ (Joint Council of Qualifications) which will be available on the Percy Hedley website under the exams section.

I wish you all a good start and successful year ahead



Safeguarding – this week, nicotine use in students



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. Let's hear about this week's important topic from Rebecca

Nicotine use in students

The government have issued further warnings about nicotine use in young people and the affects it continues to have on health. This continues to be an increasing issue for many schools who are using stop and search policies, as well as vaping detectors in bathrooms to support them to manage the situations.

Tobacco use amongst teens is down for the first time since research began and the focus is now on vapes and nicotine pouches, which some would argue have been marketed towards children and young people.

Schools and colleges are already well versed with the epidemic of brightly coloured and flavoured vapes that are being found amongst students, some as young as primary school age. There is also the issue that some parents will be enabling this by allowing them to vape and even purchasing vapes.

"Snus" is widely used in sport such as football. Many young people may be influenced by this and see high profile athletes using it and this could minimise the danger to them.

Use of counterfeit or illegal vapes also poses safety risk. As with cigarettes and alcohol, nicotine products are restricted to over 18s. However, in most UK towns

and cities, dedicated “vape shops” grace every high street and may not be as strict on their product quality or who they sell them to.

What is nicotine?

Nicotine is classed as a ‘stimulant’ which means it triggers the release of dopamine and speeds up messages between the brain and the body. In the short term, it can make a person feel more alert, but when it wears off, so do the effects. Nicotine is also addictive which means long-term regular use can cause the body to crave more nicotine and make it harder to stop using it.

Nicotine is either extracted from the tobacco plant or created in a lab using chemicals. The most common ways that people can use nicotine include:

Cigarettes/rolling tobacco

Vapes or e-cigarettes

Nicotine pouches, often known as “snus”

Chewing tobacco

Schools and colleges will often be the places that notice potential behavioural changes in students, which may indicate they are addicted to nicotine. This could include:

Frequent requests to leave lessons, extended toilet breaks, unexplained absences from lessons or congregating in known “vaping” hotspots

Behavioural changes – inability to concentrate, irritability and loss of focus can all be signs that a student may have a nicotine addiction

Admission and rationale – some students may tell us that they are vaping or using nicotine. Some have reasoning which is also misinformation for example “it helps with my ADHD”, “it calms me down” or “it isn’t dangerous”.

What we can be doing to support with this

Facilitating a safe space for open and honest conversations with parents and carers. Avoid judgement but look for solutions or ways they can work together. Understand that some parents may be shocked and horrified, whereas others may already know and even be facilitating it

Asking them to keep a diary of how much they are vaping. What are the triggers for them wanting to vape or consume other forms of nicotine? How do they feel if they don’t?

Addressing unsafe situations and misinformation. Speak to them about the dangers of illegal vapes and places that sell them. Some illicit vapes have been found to contain substances other than nicotine

For those who are saying it helps with their moods and behaviour, acknowledge this but also prevent them with the facts. [Talk About Trust](#) has some really good resources for schools and parents

Communicate with them. How are they doing? Have they cut down? Is peer pressure an issue. Open dialogue is key to ensuring a consistent approach

Educate and talk about it. Schools and colleges should be acknowledging the issues with nicotine. Use credible sources such as the BBC who have some targeted articles and research for young people

Ensure that staff are not seen vaping by students. Our school site is “smoke free” and our staff are aware of when and where they can smoke if they need to.

If you are concerned please get in touch with the safeguarding team.

More information and support can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/help-others-quit/young-people-and-vaping/>

<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/feelings-behaviour/safety-wellbeing/im-worried-about-my-child-vaping/>

E-Cigarettes & Vaping

What Parents Need to Know

Vaping is NOT SAFE for children, adolescents, and young adults.

Dangerous Ingredients in E-Cigarettes

Nicotine Salts	Addiction & stunted brain development
Propylene glycol	Worse lung function & harder to breathe
Flavoring chemicals	Toxicity to your body's cells

Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes, e-cigs, vape pens, vapes): A device used to inhale vaporized liquids containing nicotine, or even marijuana. These also contain dangerous chemicals and additives.

Vaping: The act of inhaling from an e-cigarette

Consequences of Vaping

- Worse anxiety and depression
- Less focus in school
- Worse at playing sports
- Feeling tired more often
- Leads to other addictions
- Spending a lot of your money
- Many unknown risks!

14.7% of Wisconsin high schoolers admit to vaping in the past month

Nationally, that number is 11.3%.



Signs that Someone is Vaping

- Increased thirst
- Sweet, fruity, or minty smell in their room or clothes
- Frequent cough and/or nosebleeds
- Disappearing money



Talking About Vaping with Your Teen

- Set clear anti-vaping expectations
- Explain the consequences of vaping
- Teach how to respond to peer pressure
- Convey that you disapprove of vaping, not them

Resources for Quitting Vaping

- Text DITCHVAPE to 88709
- Visit teen.smokefree.gov/quit-vaping
- Talk to your doctor or local pharmacist for treatment options

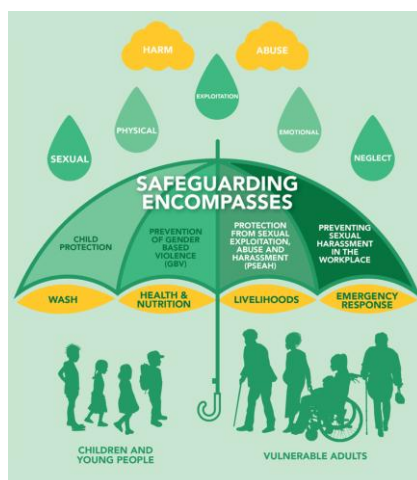
Scan this QR code for links to more information and references for this handout



If you would like any more information in this area you can read the guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/information-sharing-duty-statutory-guidance>

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 – this week, age checks online

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, so let's hear from Lizzie

Here is the Online Safety blog this week, all around new age checks online and the latest Ofcom report on it!

[Online Safety blogs - Percy Hedley School](#)

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 44elly.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. Here's the latest message

We warmly invite you to join us at our next meeting. This will be on Wednesday 21st October from 9.45-10.45. If you would prefer to join online, please let me know and I will set up TEAMS

We will be planning for the year ahead and would like your suggestions. We will also be looking for volunteers to help at events. Our Chair, Hannah will discuss tentative plans with the school's leadership team before the meeting.

Want to know more about FoPHS? We raise funds to enhance the learning experience for all students

Have a look at these Newsletters

[FoPHS News and Updates July 2026](#)

[FoPHS News and Updates 2025](#)

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!



Leading Parent
Partnership Award

2024-2027

Dear Families

A questionnaire was sent out yesterday to all parents/carers via email from the school office as part of our work towards the Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA)

The LPPA team would be very grateful if you could spare approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it by Monday 19th October. This will allow us sufficient time to collate and analyse the responses, which will help inform our future priorities and objectives.

Responses may be submitted anonymously; however, if you choose to include your child's name, this will help us identify specific areas of school where further improvements or support may be beneficial.

Thank you in advance for your time and support. Your feedback is invaluable and plays an important role in helping us continue to strengthen our partnership with families.

Have a good weekend.

Tracy and the LPPA Team

If you prefer to contact me on an individual basis my email address is:

t.smithson@percyhedley.org.uk

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



AND NOW...



STARS OF THE WEEK!
THAT REFLECT OUR SCHOOL VALUES!



PRE-FORMAL

John!

Resilience!



John is our Star of the Week for showing fantastic resilience and independence when using his VOCA

He persevered to communicate with us independently and proudly told us all about the weather! It was brilliant to see John using his voice to share information with others and show us what he can do



SEMI-FORMAL PATHWAY STAR OF THE WEEK!

Ellis!

Resilience!



Ellis has shown fantastic resilience and determination this week with his sitting! He has been practicing his sitting during his PE sessions and to play board games with his friends

Well done, Ellis! We are proud of you for working hard on something you find tricky!



Respect

Connor for respecting other people's needs around school and being kind to others!

Resilience

Taim for showing resilience in lessons!

Teamwork

Alf for showing kindness by trying to include and encourage his peer in activities!



Lisa's POST-16 STARS!!!

We love our sixth form! Let's hear who's been great down there this week? Let's see!

Resilience

Matthew had a really great work placement at Alnwick Castle. He received very positive feedback from the staff. Fantastic!!!

Bobbie has been working so hard and showing great enthusiasm in engineering. Brilliant!!!

Gracie is really coming out of her shell and being very confident and independent. She is using her voca to communicate too. Well done!!!

Brandon has worked really hard on his physio tasks and is reaping the benefits. Great work!!

Resilience and Respect

Katie is a wonderful mentor and support to peers art. She is a great assistant. Amazing!!!



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. We 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 5th October

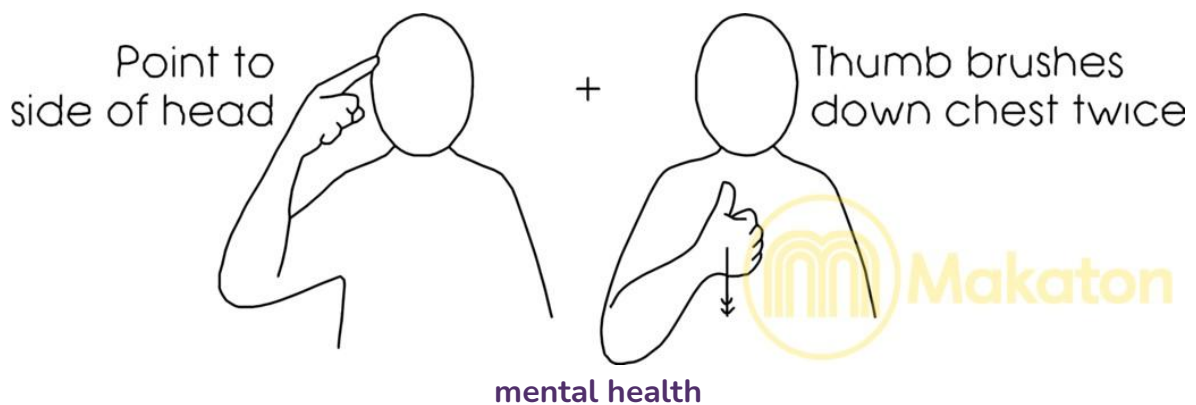
World Mental Health Day is Saturday 10th October



Mental health, okay, talk, listen, feel.

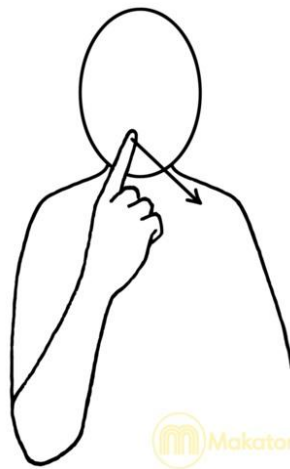
Here is my video:

Here are the signs:

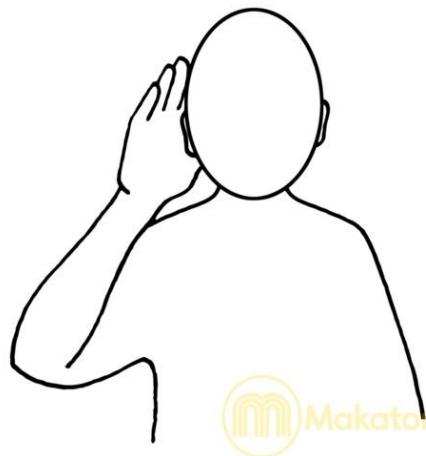




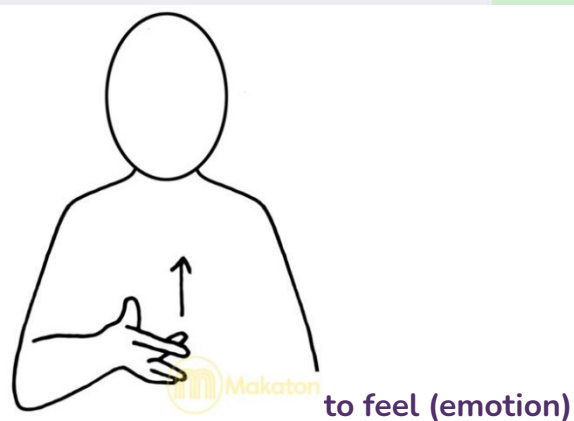
okay



talk



listen



Here are The Singing Hands demonstrating signs for emotions:

And their signed version of FEELING GOOD:

Keep signing!



Julie



AND FINALLY...OUR CAREERS FAYRE!!!!

The poster features a colorful logo on the left with the text 'Percy Hedley FOUNDATION' and 'My Journey My Future'. To the right is a photo of a smiling student in a black t-shirt and cap, framed by a purple and yellow wavy border. Text boxes provide event details: 'Providers Event', 'Tuesday 20th October 2026', 'From 2pm - 6pm', and 'Percy Hedley School, Killingworth'. An RSVP email is at the bottom. The background is decorated with stars and colorful vertical bars.

Percy Hedley School

My Journey My Future

Providers Event

Tuesday 20th October 2026

From 2pm - 6pm

Percy Hedley School, Killingworth

Please RSVP to:
l.finlay@percyhedley.org.uk

We are delighted to invite pupils and parents/carers to our whole-school event on Tuesday 20th October offering the opportunity to meet a range of education, training and social care providers, explore future pathways and ask questions regarding options and support available beyond school

It is increasingly important for young people and their families to explore a range of potential pathways and understand the different opportunities and support available from a variety of organisations. With the current challenges surrounding the availability of suitable placements and funding for young people with special

educational needs across the region; particularly within Post 16 and Post 19 provision, early awareness and consideration of alternative options can play an important part in planning for the future

We understand that planning for your child or young person's future beyond Percy Hedley School can sometimes feel challenging. Our Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) Team will be available throughout the event to provide information, offer guidance and answer any questions you may have

We hope that the event will provide families and young people with a valuable opportunity to explore the options available, make useful connections with providers and feel better informed when considering future pathways and next steps.

We are also able to offer support to enable students to remain after school until 6pm allowing parents to attend the event. Please contact Eileen Robinson or myself if you wish to discuss this option further, on the contact details below:

e.robinson@percyhedley.org.uk or l.finlay@percyhedley.org.uk on (0191) 2161811

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

Our Key Drivers

Communication, Wellbeing, Independence

