Percy Hedley School's

Whole School Blog

News, Stars – and Diabetes Awareness 🔘🔘🔘

– from John & the PHS Team

Friday 27th November,

Hello everyone

It has been another busy week across school, with lots of fantastic learning and achievements to celebrate. As we move closer to December, excitement is beginning to build and a little birdy has told me that our school Christmas tree may even be arriving next week! 

A big thank you to Faith in Joel's class, who has been helping us mark **Diabetes Awareness Week** by raising awareness and sharing important information with our school community. 🔘 (*For anyone asking "what's with the blue circles?", they're the international symbol for diabetes awareness and support.* 🔵*)*

Thanks for your support. Do enjoy this blog, Eileen's or Lizzie's – don't miss the articles on Online Safety - or anything else on the website and wider Foundation one

Cheers and 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

From our Attendance Team – this is last week's data

The latest data from the Attendance Team

147 PUPILS	Week ending 20/11/26
Current Week	90.68
Year to date	90.31
PA – attendance 50-90%, current week	147
PA – attendance 50-90%, average	14.96%
SPA – attendance 0 - 50%, current week	15.15%
SPA – attendance 0 - 50%, average	4.76%
Unauthorised absences	5.66%
Unauthorised absences average	0.30%

Whole-school attendance last week was **90.68%**, an increase from **89.83%** the previous week and significantly higher than the **86.46%** recorded in the same week last year. We are incredibly proud of our children and young people for continuing to come to school, engage in learning and make the most of every opportunity available to them.

With lots of exciting activities and festive events planned over the coming weeks, it's a great time to be in school. We know that seasonal coughs, colds and bugs are common at this time of year, but if you are unsure whether your child is well enough to attend, please get in touch. Our class teams and nursing team are always happy to offer advice and support.

Thank you for your continued partnership in promoting good attendance and helping every child get the very best from their school experience.

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, and they make a real difference to our school!

This really fits in with our ethos and the vibe of the school too. Thanks to them!

The Student council are helping to plan for the next event, Christmas Jumper Day. We have been busy creating some jumpers ready for the day.

These designs were done by 4KR on their laptops







Literacy

Each week the Literacy blog aims to share a little of what is happening across school in the world of literacy – that could be reading, writing or oracy – and celebrate the achievements of our pupils. We will also share anything that might be helpful for families too, to continue to develop a love of reading and writing at home!

After last week's author visit, this week's blog is all about writing! At Percy Hedley School we believe that we are all writers, though what that looks like might vary a lot between classes – and even in classes.

This week we're having a look at what writing looks like in Beth's class of emergent writers. Emergent writers are developing their early writing, and these pupils are making great progress with expressing themselves.

In this session, 4BE are developing their writing and communication skills through activities linked to their own experiences and interests. Some pupils are shown photographs of themselves in activities, and then this is used to target sentences or key words. You can see from the pictures below how much is going on – there are symbols, communication devices, sensory exploration, mark making, letter awareness, word building and more!

For some pupils, writing involves creating simple sentences using symbols and words, while for others it focuses on the early foundations of literacy, such as cause and effect, making choices and participating in communication exchanges. By tailoring activities to each pupil's individual needs, we ensure that every child can develop their communication and literacy skills in a way that is motivating and meaningful for them – and everyone can be a writer!








Happy Reading & Writing!



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! This time Jenna is going to share some very exciting information about our new sensory room we've named the 'Rainbow Pod!' 🌈





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We are delighted to introduce a new additional sensory room here at Percy Hedley School!

We take a whole-school approach to promoting physical development, recognising the importance of sensory and movement experiences in supporting students to experience, engage and participate in meaningful activities.

Our sensory rooms provide opportunities for students to explore different sensory experiences, develop physical and sensory motor skills, learn through play, support communication and social interaction or be a space for calm and emotional regulation.

Our new sensory room is an exciting addition to our ongoing commitment to physical development, supporting every student to move, explore, regulate and participate within an additional learning environment.

Some of our students have been enjoying using the Rainbow Pod. Exploring the interactive features and engaging in sensory stories!



Therapy Star of the week

Joe has demonstrated excellent progress in developing his independence and confidence within the community.

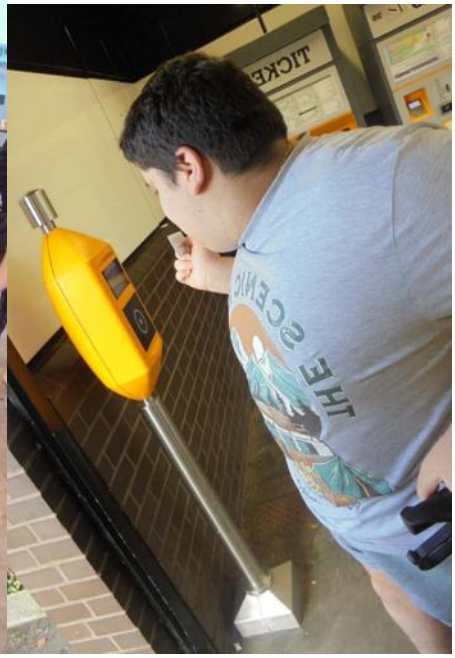
Joe has been working on planning and completing journeys using the Metro and other methods of public transport. He is demonstrating increasing confidence in navigating the community, making decisions, and applying a range of independent living and self-help skills in a real-world context.

As well as working hard on these important skills, an example of one of the activities Joe has also managed to squeeze in, is seeing Fenwick Window!

Well done, Joe!









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 about this week

PSHE

This half term, pupils across school have been exploring our PSHE theme: Self-Care, Support and Safety.

Through a range of practical and engaging activities, pupils have been learning how to look after their physical and emotional wellbeing, recognise trusted adults who can help them, and develop the skills needed to stay safe in different situations. Lessons have been tailored to meet the needs of each pathway, ensuring learning is meaningful and accessible for all.

Alongside this, pupils have continued to build important Preparation for Adulthood skills, including communication, independence, decision-making and self-advocacy. Many classes have taken part in real-life learning opportunities both in school and within the local community, helping pupils apply their skills in a variety of contexts.

We are incredibly proud of the confidence, resilience and maturity pupils have shown throughout the term. Thank you for your continued support in helping us develop these essential life skills.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Jo Ferguson
Personal Development Lead
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



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

Supporting Boys and Young Men: International Men's Day and Movember.

November brings two important opportunities to pause, check in, and open up conversations around health and wellbeing: International Men's Day and Movember.

While Movember is widely known for raising awareness and funds for men's health, particularly mental health, suicide prevention, and prostate and testicular cancer, International Men's Day shines a spotlight on positive male role models, healthy relationships, and the everyday pressures boys and men can face.



Why This Matters for Our Students

School is where young people begin shaping how they view themselves, others, and emotional wellbeing. Recognising both causes in our school community helps to:

Challenge unhelpful stereotypes: Boys and young men can sometimes feel pressure to "hold it together" or hide when they are struggling. Talking openly helps normalise asking for help early.

Build emotional literacy: Giving students the language to talk about stress, friendships, identity, and mental health strengthens resilience both in and out of the classroom.

Encourage lifelong healthy habits: Starting conversations around physical and mental health young makes it easier to look after yourself and look out for mates later in life.

Wellbeing belongs to everyone in our school community. Whether you are checking in with a friend, learning about health causes, or talking to a trusted adult, small conversations can make a big difference. If you or someone you know needs support, please reach out to a member of the school wellbeing team.

Email: percyhedleyschoolwellbeingteam@percyhedley.org.uk





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 & Richard have for us!



Mulberry Pathway – Celebrating Our Students' Progress

Exploring Throwing, Catching and Balloons!

Today, we continued developing physical skills through fun, engaging and sensory-based activities.

Students had a fantastic go at striking balloons into the air, tracking their movement and attempting to catch them. These activities support hand-eye coordination, timing, movement and physical confidence.

We also explored different sensory experiences, feeling balloon textures, listening to the sounds they made and enjoying the excitement of popping a few!

Celebrating Individual Progress

As we approach the end of Autumn Term 1, it has been fantastic to see the progress our students are already making.

- **Faiyaz** – Developing his ability to be alongside others, learning to share experiences and communicate with his class team.
- **Hayden** – Developing his ability to engage and communicate with others, building positive connections.
- **Rupert** – Showing improved awareness of others and himself when on rebound, watching his classmates and tracking the resources around him.
- **Retal** – Continuing to develop her independence and showing real determination in all areas.

These achievements highlight how Physical Wellbeing supports much more than movement. We are also developing awareness, communication, social interaction, sensory exploration and independence, while celebrating every student's individual progress!









CLASS AND PATHWAY UPDATES

The Marvellous Early Years Blossoms!

We have a great Early Years class, The Blossoms, 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



We've had a very busy week in class and are so proud of the independence skills the children have been showing. Rowan has been demonstrating fantastic independence by washing his dishes after lunch without any adult prompts. Alli has also made us very proud by beginning to feed herself at lunchtime, showing increased confidence and independence during daily routines.

We have also been busy preparing for the winter season in class. The children enjoyed creating decorations for our classroom tree and had a lovely time exploring different materials to make their special creations. We are looking forward to displaying the decorations in class next week and celebrating the start of the winter season together.







Peoples Kitchen Christmas Appeal



THE PEOPLE'S KITCHEN

HOW YOU CAN HELP
THE PEOPLE'S KITCHEN

Items we need	Examples
Tinned Veg	Tomatoes Plum & Chopped, Peas, Carrots, Sweetcorn, Potatoes
Tinned Fruit	Peaches, Pineapples, Fruit Cocktail, Pears, Mandarin Oranges
Soup	Tinned or Instant Vegetable, Tomato, Chicken, Broth, Lentil, Potato & Leek
Cooking/ Baking Ingredients	Sugar-Caster & Granulated, Flour – SR & Plain, Jam, Coconut, Cocoa, Dried Fruit, Cooking Oil, Lentils, Broth Mix, Spices
Snacks	Pot Noodles, Pot Pasta, Crisps, Biscuits, Chocolate, Sweets, Cereal Bars
Drinks	UHT Milk, Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate, Cartons of Juice, Fruit Squash
Desserts	Rice Pudding, Jelly, Angel Delight, Instant & Tinned Custard, Evaporated Milk, Golden Syrup, Black Treacle
Tinned Meat	Ham, Corned Beef, Chilli, Curry, Minced Beef, Bolognese, Stewing Steak
Cooking Sauces	Indian, Thai, Chinese, Italian, Mexican, Coconut Milk
Condiments	Tomato Ketchup, Brown Sauce, Mayonnaise, Salt, Pepper
Pasta & Rice	Lasagne, Egg Noodles, Rice
Stock and Gravy	Vegetarian, Beef, Chicken, Onion
Toiletries	Soap, Mens Spray Deodorant, Shampoo, Conditioner,Shower Gel, Razors, Toothpaste and Brushes, Sanitary Products
Cleaning/Other	Washing Up Liquid, Washing Powder, Books, DVD's, DVD Players/ Small -Medium Flat Screen TV's
Rough Sleepers	Sleeping Bags, Rucksacks, Handwarmers, Flasks, Unlocked Mobile Phone
Pet Food	Dog & Cat Food – Wet, Dry and Treats
Clothing	Trainers, Waterproof Jackets, Joggers, , Jeans, Sweat Shirts, T Shirts, Socks, Gloves, Scarfs, Hats

We are grateful for your kind donations – We do not accept food if it is opened.
Clothing does not need to be new, but we ask for it to be in good condition and clean.
We do not need used duvets, suits, dress shirts, or summer clothing.

This year we have decided to support our friends at the People Kitchen with their 'Winter Appeal', as part of the UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award. We will be completing a collection in school for them, to support the people of Newcastle over the Christmas period, and the winter months.

Above there is a list of the items that they would like donated to support the appeal. Please only donate if you can, there is no obligation to get involved.

There are several items of clothing they are requesting, which do not have to be new, as long as they are in good condition. If you are having a clear out, they would really appreciate them.

They are also asking for 'bag for life' style bags, which they use to create food parcels for those who need them, therefore if you are having a clear out, a bag of bags would also be appreciated.

If you are sending food items, please choose those off the list, that are in date. Please do not send any perishables.

Our student council will be sorting these items in school, and we will be delivering them to the centre before the Christmas holidays.

Therefore, please can any items be brought into school by Friday 11th December.

Any items can be sent into school for the attention of Rebecca Fletcher.



Gardening Club with Ben!



Or, Horticulture News, if you want to be posh! Anyway, great things are happening in this area of school!

Loving Horticulture News/Garden Club!

We have some exciting news brewing too! We're currently in the process of sourcing a new greenhouse to support and expand our horticultural experiences in school. This will give pupils even more opportunities to grow, explore and learn outdoors while developing their understanding of plants and healthy foods. We can't wait to share more details soon, so watch this space! 🌱🏡







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

Allergy Information – Important Reminder

To help us comply with Benedicts Law and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils, we kindly ask that if your child has any allergies, you complete and return the allergy information letter recently sent home in their bag.

🔵 This week, we joined in with Diabetes Awareness Week, raising awareness and celebrating the ways we support pupils with diabetes in school. 🔵

Please ensure you provide details of

Name

Date of Birth

What your child is allergic to.

-What reaction they may experience.

-Any treatment or medication required.

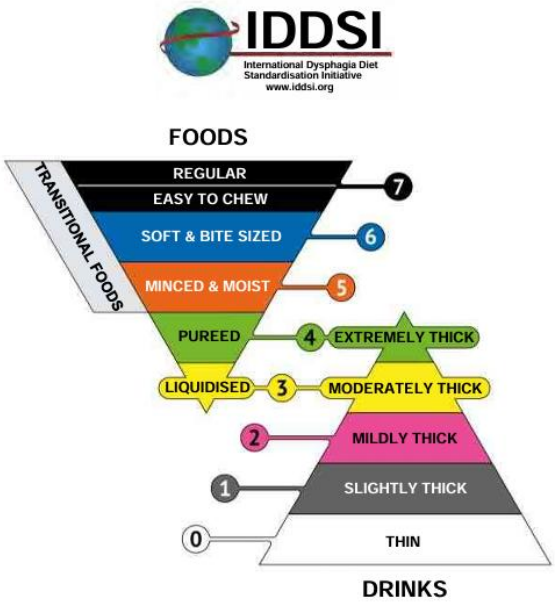
If you no longer have the letter, please email the School Nursing Team on PHSNurses@percyhedley.org.uk with this information.

Thank you for your support in helping us keep all our children safe.

Go Nurses!



Eating, Drinking & Swallowing, from Jennie (our Dysphagia Lead)



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.

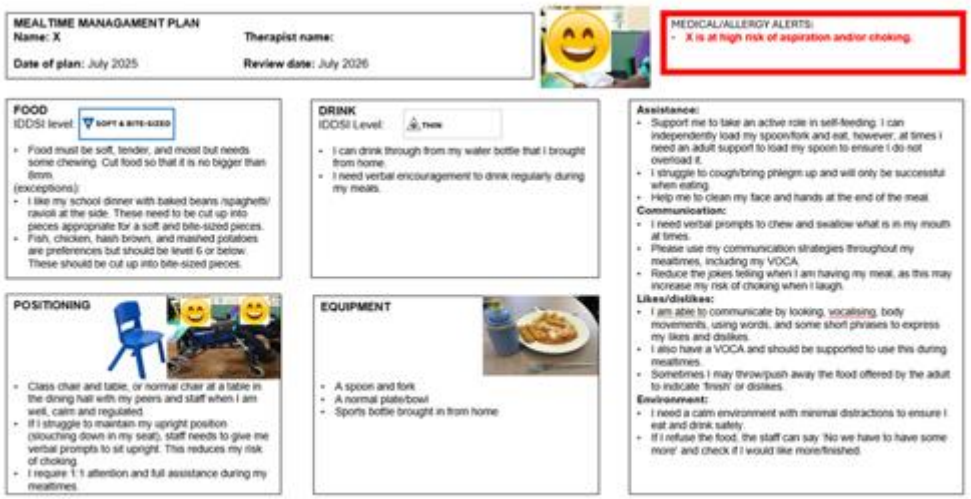
Each week we will have a different focus to explain what it all means, so we can work together to make sure we get it right for our students.

<u>Mealtime Management Plans (MMP)</u>

Once an eating, drinking and swallowing assessment has been completed by the speech and language therapist, with support from the occupational therapist and physiotherapist, then a mealtime management plan is written.

The MMP includes information about:

- The recommended food and drink textures (IDDSI levels)
- The best position for the student during meals and drinks
- Any specialist equipment that should be used
- Additional advice and strategies to support safe eating, drinking and swallowing



MEAL TIME MANAGAMENT PLAN
Name: X **Therapist name:**
Date of plan: July 2025 **Review date:** July 2026

MEDICAL/ALLERGY ALERTS:
- X is at high risk of aspiration and/or choking.

FOOD
IDDSI level: SOFT & BITE-SIZED
- Food must be soft, tender, and moist but needs some chewing. Cut food so that it is no bigger than 8mm.

(exceptions):
- I like my school dinner with baked beans /spaghetti/ ravioli at the side. These need to be cut up into pieces appropriate for a soft and bite-sized pieces.
- Fish, chicken, hash brown, and mashed potatoes are preferences but should be level 6 or below. These should be cut up into bite-sized pieces.

DRINK
IDDSI Level: THIN
- I can drink through from my water bottle that I brought from home.
- I need verbal encouragement to drink regularly during my meals.

Assistance:
- Support me to take an active role in self-feeding. I can independently load my spoon/fork and eat, however, at times I need an adult support to load my spoon to ensure I do not overload it.
- I struggle to cough/bring phlegm up and will only be successful when eating.
- Help me to clean my face and hands at the end of the meal.

Communication:
- I need verbal prompts to chew and swallow what is in my mouth at times.
- Please use my communication strategies throughout my mealtimes, including my VOCA.
- Reduce the jokes telling when I am having my meal, as this may increase my risk of choking when I laugh.

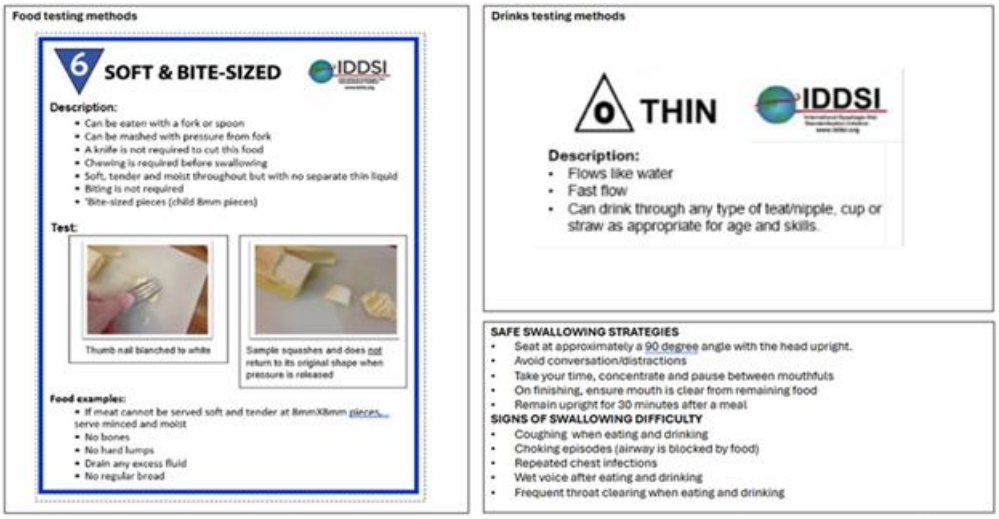
Likes/dislikes:
- I am able to communicate by looking, vocalising, body movements, using words, and some short phrases to express my likes and dislikes.
- I also have a VOCA and should be supported to use this during mealtimes.
- Sometimes I may throw/push away the food offered by the adult to indicate 'finish' or dislikes.

Environment:
- I need a calm environment with minimal distractions to ensure I eat and drink safely.
- If I refuse the food, the staff can say 'No we have to have some more' and check if I would like more/finished.

POSITIONING
- Class chair and table, or normal chair at a table in the dining hall with my peers and staff when I am well, calm and regulated.
- If I struggle to maintain my upright position (slouching down in my seat), staff needs to give me verbal prompts to sit upright. This reduces my risk of choking.
- I require 1:1 attention and full assistance during my mealtimes.

EQUIPMENT
- A spoon and fork
- A normal plate/bowl
- Sports bottle brought in from home

The back of the plan contains information about the IDDSI testing methods used to check that foods and drinks are the correct consistency.



Food testing methods

6 SOFT & BITE-SIZED IDDSI

Description:
- Can be eaten with a fork or spoon
- Can be mashed with pressure from fork
- A knife is not required to cut this food
- Chewing is required before swallowing
- Soft, tender and moist throughout but with no separate thin liquid
- Biting is not required
- 'Bite-sized pieces (child 8mm pieces)

Test:

Thumb nail blanched to white

Sample squashes and does not return to its original shape when pressure is released

Food examples:
- If meat cannot be served soft and tender at 8mmX8mm pieces, serve minced and moist
- No bones
- No hard lumps
- Drain any excess fluid
- No regular bread

Drinks testing methods

0 THIN IDDSI

Description:
- Flows like water
- Fast flow
- Can drink through any type of teat/nipple, cup or straw as appropriate for age and skills.

SAFE SWALLOWING STRATEGIES
- Seat at approximately a 90 degree angle with the head upright.
- Avoid conversation/distractions
- Take your time, concentrate and pause between mouthfuls
- On finishing, ensure mouth is clear from remaining food
- Remain upright for 30 minutes after a meal

SIGNS OF SWALLOWING DIFFICULTY
- Coughing when eating and drinking
- Choking episodes (airway is blocked by food)
- Repeated chest infections
- Wet voice after eating and drinking
- Frequent throat clearing when eating and drinking

These plans are used by the staff supporting the student at school and are also sent home so you can follow this advice too. The MMPs are also copied to the GP, as well as the paediatrician if appropriate, so that they can be included in the student's medical record. This supports joined-up care across services.

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

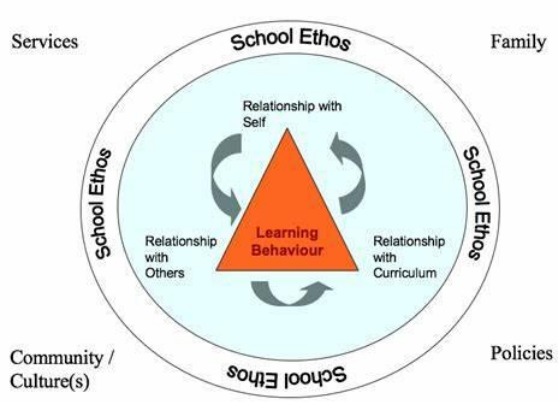


Figure 1: Behaviour for Learning conceptual framework



PfA Blog with Hannah Fuller

Looking Beyond the Next Year

Families rarely talk about assessment scores or annual targets. Instead, they talk about bigger hopes for the future: friendships, confidence, independence, meaningful work, belonging in their community and living a fulfilling life.

This is why aspirations should sit at the heart of SEND planning. Effective preparation for adulthood means looking beyond the next review or school year and asking: *What kind of adult does this young person want to become, and what do we need to do today to help them get there?*

This principle is often described as the golden thread: the clear connection between a young person's voice, their aspirations, EHCP outcomes and the learning experiences they receive every day. When that thread is strong, education becomes

more purposeful. A communication target is no longer just about improving language skills; it may be a step towards building relationships, joining the community or succeeding in employment. Similarly, developing independence in everyday tasks can lay the foundations for greater confidence and autonomy in adult life.

Importantly, preparation for adulthood should not begin when a young person reaches post-16 education. National guidance emphasises that these conversations should start from Year 9, with increasing focus on employment, independent living, community participation and health. Starting early gives young people more time to develop the skills, experiences and confidence they will need in later life.

Aspirations are not simply hopes for the future. They are the starting point for meaningful planning. By listening carefully to what matters to young people and their families, we can ensure that today's learning contributes to tomorrow's opportunities. The key question is not only *"What does this young person need right now?"* but also *"Where are they heading, and how does today's learning help them get there?"*

The true measure of successful SEND planning is not how well we complete paperwork or review targets. It is whether young people move closer to the lives they want for themselves

Preparing for Adulthood Resources - Percy Hedley School

SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK

Preparing for Adulthood | NDTi

Supporting Planning & Writing Good PfA Outcomes | NDTi

Year 9 Annual Review Guide | NDTi

Preparing for adulthood | SENDIASS

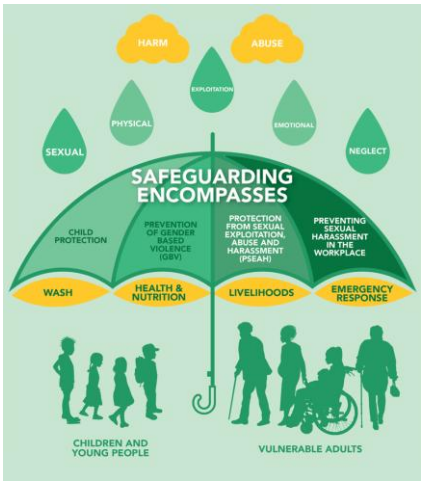
SEND Code of Practice | Mencap

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!

Mobile Phones in schools!

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.

The government are currently reviewing new measures which may be brought in for next September, we will keep on top of this information and will continue to make appropriate decisions for our pupils.

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

School Lunches

A huge thank you to our fantastic catering team, who work tirelessly to provide delicious, nutritious meals for our students every day. The dining hall is always such a lovely, welcoming place, full of happy chatter and smiling faces as pupils enjoy their lunch together. I always love to go and join the children and see everyone enjoying their meals and spending time with their friends.

As the weather gets colder, our winter menu is packed with warming, healthy dishes to keep everyone fuelled for learning and play. Please do take a look at the delicious winter menu on our school website and see the wonderful range of meals on offer.

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

				
Chilli Con Carne	Braised Sausage in Gravy	Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding	Lasagne	Beefburger in a Bun
				
Syrup Sponge & Custard	Ginger Sponge & Custard	Orange Drizzle Cake	Cup Cake	Banana & Caramel Sponge with Custard



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.



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, so let's see what Lizzie is focusing on at the moment

Here is the online safety blog this week-

This week's Online Safety Blog is now available- Online Safety blogs - Percy Hedley School and is particularly important for families. With recent concerns raised about TikTok and young people's mental health, this week's blog explores how social media platforms can influence wellbeing and why it is important for families to understand the potential risks. The blog highlights features such as personalised content feeds, endless scrolling and algorithm-driven recommendations, as well as some of the types of content young people may encounter, including appearance-focused posts, unrealistic lifestyle content, viral trends and mental health advice that may not always be accurate. It also provides practical tips for parents and carers on supporting healthy screen habits, using parental controls and encouraging open conversations about online experiences. We would encourage all parents and carers to take a few minutes to read this week's blog and discuss digital wellbeing and online safety with their child at home.

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!



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

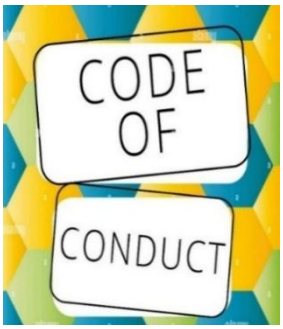
Email to class teacher or PHSattendance@percyhedley.org.uk.address before 9:30 on the day of the absence

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

Thanks for your support and partnership in this crucial 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! FoPHS News!

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.

We have a lot coming up. Thank you to those who have offered to help with some of our activities over the next few weeks. Over the last week letters were sent out for:

- School Photograph sign up
- Volunteer request and raffle tickets

FoPHS Christmas 2026 Letter
School Photos Letter

Thanks to those who supported in any way, purchasing raffle tickets, paying for school photos, offering to support running events and sending in donations for the raffle. This will be drawn at the Christmas Fayre. We would appreciate any donations of bottles, gift sets, chocolates, biscuits, Christmas themed items, toiletries or anything we can use to make up hampers and raffle prizes.

We still need volunteers to help

- Decorate Santas grotto on Monday 14th December from 9.45am
- Help with the FoPHS stall on Thursday 17th December at the Christmas Fayre (afternoon from 13.45)

If you can help, please get in touch

School Photographs.

Here is how it works this year:

Beth, our very talented staff member and keen amateur photographer takes the photos. This is done with the support of the class teams who know the students best so that you get a high-quality photograph. This year we asked for pre-payment to ensure that only those who want photos sign up. You will be advised when the photos will be taken and if your child happens to be off that day, we will reschedule in line with Beth's availability. For the donation you will receive digital copies of the photograph by email. There are several places you can get these printed free of charge, paying just pot and packaging and I will provide links to them. The flexibility afforded means everyone can have their photo taken and the charge is a suggested minimum £10 per child on a pay-as-you-feel-basis.

Thanks to all who have returned forms.

100 Club.

We are exploring other ways to make this more successful. Although last year we raised £282 for FoPHS the reduced uptake made it less enticing for subscribers. We will update as soon as we have more information.

Facebook page

This is a closed group for family and friends of Percy Hedley School, where you can share news and updates about school life. It is not for external professionals who may be working with families. To join, you need to answer the question stating your link with school.

Please note: this group is for sharing news and updates about school life and is not intended to discuss any issues around individual students, and as such all comments are moderated. If you have a particular issue or concern, please contact school directly on 0191 216 1811.

Join the Facebook Group here

See what's coming up here:

Percy Hedley FOUNDATION

FoPHS Friends of Percy Hedley School

Upcoming Dates

FoPHS Meeting

Wednesday 2nd December from 9:45am - 10:45am

Christmas Fayre

Thursday 17th December

Summer Fayre

Saturday 26th June 11am - 2pm

How you can help:

- Volunteer your time - Wrap gifts, decorate the grotto on Monday 14th December, help with FoPHS stall at the Christmas fayre on Thursday 17th December
- Donations that we can use for hampers at the Fayre's
- Match Funding

Contact Eileen Robinson (Family Liaison Officer) for more information:
Email: e.robinson@percyhedley.org.uk
Telephone: 0191 2161811 ext. 3260

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)

LPPA Leading Parent Partnership Award 2024-2027

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!



INFORMAL – MULBERRY STAR!

JoJo!

Resilience

JoJo is our Star of the Week for showing fantastic resilience and respect. He has been transitioning more calmly around school, listening carefully to adult instructions, and engaging in adult-led activities for longer periods of time. His positive attitude and improved behaviour are helping him to engage in a wider range of activities!



Semi-Formal Pathway – Damson Star

Esteban!

Resilience!

Esteban has shown fantastic resilience this week and should be very proud of himself! He has been putting great effort into joining in with learning activities and continues to persevere, even when tasks feel challenging. We have been especially impressed by his determination to communicate with others, showing increasing confidence and persistence throughout the week.

Well done, Esteban!



FORMAL PATHWAY – QUINCE STAR

Resilience

Wren – for her first overnight stay at residential. Superstar!!

Post 16 – Orchard Pathway Star

Respect * Resilience * Teamwork

Post 16 Stars

Post 16 have been very busy this week. Here are our Stars.

Teamwork

Josh for being a fantastic Captain of the Football team. Amazing!

Respect and Resilience

James had a wonderful trip to the cafe. He overcame so many obstacles and was very polite and respectful. Very well done!

Faith had a very positive start to her work experience. Brilliant!

Noah has been very helpful around the class. He is so enthusiastic about his work too. Fantastic!

Resilience

Michael always does his morning work without any complaints. Great work!

Riley for working really well using his VOCA to compile a checklist. Brilliant!

Respect

Dom was so kind helping a peer with their goggles in the pool. Wonderful!



Makaton Signs of the Week with Julie!

Makaton signs of the week 23rd November

Non-fiction November

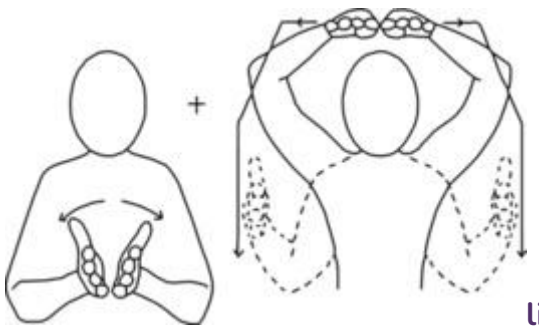
We are celebrating Non-Fiction November in school this week.

The signs are library, book, read, listen, story, fiction, fact (non-fiction) and true.

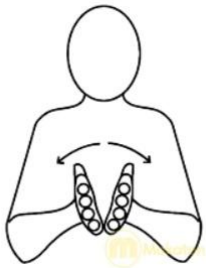
The video demonstrates fact, fiction and true.

Here is my video:

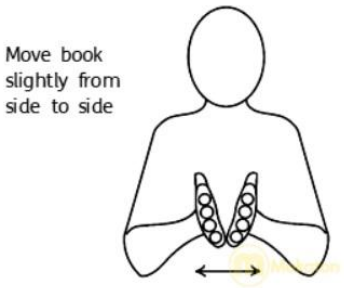
Here are the signs:



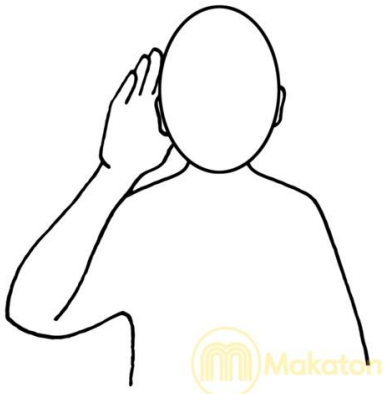
library



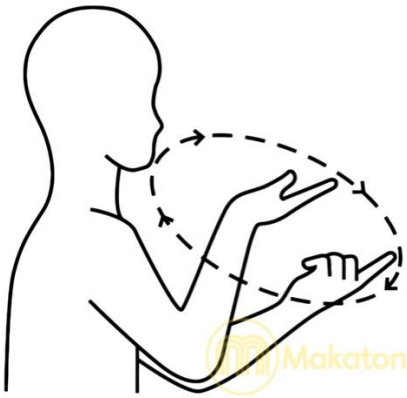
book



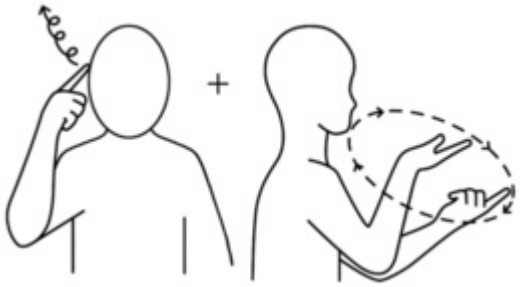
to read



to listen



story



fiction



fact (non-fiction)



true/really

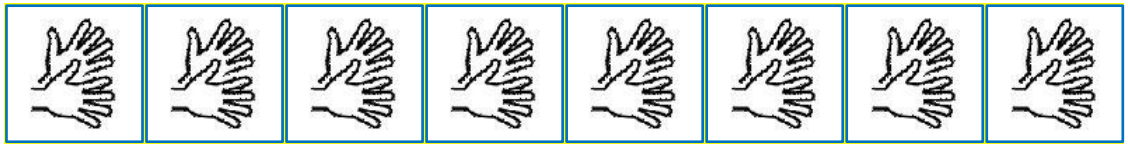
Have an amazing week full of interesting facts about your favourite topics!

Maybe learn the sign for your favourite non-fiction topic?

Please ask SaLTs Julie Goldblatt or Kate Conn if you have any Makaton questions.

Keep signing!

Julie





And finally.....

Diabetes Awareness Week!

Diabetes Awareness Week is an opportunity to increase understanding of diabetes and highlight the experiences of people who live with the condition every day. Diabetes is a lifelong condition that affects how the body processes glucose (sugar), meaning people need to carefully manage their blood sugar levels through a balance of food, activity, medication and, for some, insulin. With the right support and understanding, people with diabetes can lead full, active and successful lives.

This week, Faith has been helping our school community learn more about diabetes and what life with the condition can look like. Through raising awareness, she has encouraged important conversations about inclusion, understanding and supporting one another.

By wearing blue, pupils and staff have shown their support for everyone affected by diabetes. We are incredibly proud of Faith for sharing her experiences and helping to raise awareness of a condition that affects millions of people worldwide. Her confidence, resilience and determination have inspired us all and reminded us of the importance of celebrating and understanding the differences that make our school community so special.

💙 A special well done to Faith for championing this important cause and inspiring our school community to get involved. We are incredibly proud of the difference she has made. 💙



What is happening in school over the next few weeks?

As we approach the festive season, we are excited to share details of the events and activities that will be taking place in our pathways over the coming weeks. We look forward to welcoming you into school for some of the planned events.
Please see below for further details of the events that are taking place across the school.

4th December – Post 16 Hospitality afternoon (students only, a small amount of money can be brought for this)

7Th December – Christingle Service at St Johns Church, Killingworth Village (students only)

9th December- Stay and Play -Blossom pathway (KB class)
Winter Assembly 2-3pm Cherry (4CH) and Mulberry pathways (1LT/HL & 4BE) **Parents / Carers welcome**

10th December – Save the Children Xmas Jumper Day (voluntary donation)

11th December- Festive Fun afternoon 2-3pm Damson pathway (2CC, 2HB, 3RC, 4MM) **Parents / carers welcome**

15th and 16th December – Moving in a Winter Wonderland (students only event)

15th December – Christmas Lunch (student event only)

17th December – Christmas Enterprise Fair from 2pm Quince and Orchard Pathways
Parents / Carers welcome
Quince Pathway -2/3HR, 3KJ, 4TW, 4JH, 4KR, 4AH
Orchard Pathway- 5HF, 5AH, 5RR, 5LA, 5RD/RM, 5LWC, 5OW

Further information has been shared in pathway letters sent home this week. Should you have any questions, please contact your child's class team.



Well done everyone, what a wonderful week!

....John & the Team here at PHS

Our Key Drivers

Communication, Wellbeing, Independence

