



# The Drive Community Primary School

Mrs R Farren, Head Teacher  
The Drive, Felling, Gateshead, NE10 0PY  
Tel: (0191) 421 0390  
www.thedriveprimary.org

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Website Updates – what has been uploaded this week?

All Friday letters and updates (not linked to specific areas: Safeguarding, Online Safety etc.), will be published in either: **Calendar – Read More – Friday Letters**

### Friday Letter 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026

<https://thedriveprimary.ovw8.juniperwebsites.co.uk/>

## Year 5 Trips – Message from Mrs Sinclair

### Theatre Trip

Year 5 had a fantastic time watching *Weird* at the Newcastle Theatre Royal. From the moment the show began, we were transported into the world of Scotland, Macbeth, and witches. The powerful ballad-style songs had the children either clapping along or sitting mesmerised by the incredible singing and catchy choruses. It was a wonderful experience and an exciting way for the children to become familiar with one of Shakespeare's most famous stories.

### Cullercoats Beach

Year 5 completed several fieldwork tasks for their Geography topic on Wednesday. We were collecting data to answer the question: How littered in our marine area? After completing survey digs, litter picks, tally charts and taking photos, we explored the caves and had a lovely day at the seaside. What a great day had by all!

## AI, Communication Apps, and Online Safety

Many children are increasingly exposed to AI tools and communication platforms such as Snapchat and WhatsApp. While these technologies can offer fun and connection, they also come with important safety risks for primary-aged pupils. We want to ensure all families are aware of how to keep children safe online.

### AI – What Parents Need to Know

AI is now built into many apps children use, including Snapchat's built-in My AI chatbot, which interacts with users in real time. Although AI can support creativity and learning, it also creates risks, such as:

- Inaccurate or misleading information
- Inappropriate or adult responses (seen in reports of AI chatbots responding unsafely to children)
- Data privacy concerns
- Confusion about what is real, especially with AI-generated images, videos, or voices

Children may not yet have the critical thinking skills needed to navigate these risks safely.

### Communication Platforms: Snapchat & WhatsApp

Even though these apps are extremely popular with young people, primary-aged children should not be using them, both for safety reasons and because of legally stated age minimums.

### Snapchat – Minimum Age 13

Snapchat requires users to be at least 13 years old to have an account.

The app includes features such as disappearing messages, SnapMap location sharing, and the "My AI" chatbot—all of which require careful supervision and pose risks for younger children.

### WhatsApp – Minimum Age 13 (UK)

WhatsApp lowered its minimum age to 13 in the UK from 16.

Although many families use WhatsApp for convenience, there are risks for younger children:

- Group chats can include unknown contacts who can see and message your child.
- Children may receive inappropriate content or experience pressure to respond.





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### Why These Platforms Can Be Risky for Primary-Aged Children

#### Based on current online safety findings:

- Snapchat has been used in a significant number of child-related online harm cases reported to authorities.
- AI chatbots within apps may give inappropriate guidance or expose children to adult topics.
- WhatsApp group chats can expose children to strangers and unsuitable content even if their contacts are safe.

For these reasons, we strongly advise that primary-aged children do not use Snapchat or WhatsApp.

### Useful Links for Online and AI Safety

 NSPCC – Online Safety & AI Guidance

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

 UK Safer Internet Centre

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/>

 Internet Matters – WhatsApp Safety Guide for Parents

<https://www.internetmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Internet-Matters-WhatsApp-Safety-Guide-August-2023-2.pdf>

 Parent Zone – Snapchat & WhatsApp Guides

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/snapchat>  
<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/whatsapp>

 ThinkUKnow (CEOP)

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

We want children to enjoy technology safely, confidently, and responsibly. If you have any questions about online safety, communication apps, or AI use, please get in touch with the school team.

### School Council Bake Sale

Thank you again for your support. The School Council were thrilled with how much was raised, **£390**. An amazing amount of money.

**Attendance – The League and attendance update (Please note, we work a week behind due to the Friday marks not being populated before the Friday Letter is issued).**

**0 points if attendance is below 96%**

**1 point awarded for weekly attendance figures between 96% - 97.5%**

**2 points awarded for weekly attendance figures between 97.6% - 98.9%**

**3 points awarded for weekly attendance figures between 99% - 100%**

Points awarded to Year 4 this week – well done. Year 4, you are still top of the League with 5 points.

Thank you for your cooperation as we continue to work together to support every child's attendance and wellbeing.



Artsmark  
Gold Award  
Awarded by Arts  
Council England





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Teams	Total Points	Overall Weekly Attendance
Nursery	0	81% -
Reception	2	97.3% +
Year 1	0	94.8% +
Year 2	0	90.9% -
Year 3	3	95.3% -
Year 4	5	96.3% +
Year 5	1	90.3% -
Year 6	1	80.5% -

Have a super weekend – I hope it stops raining at some point.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs R Farren  
 Head Teacher

Dates for the Diary (as they stand) – dates will be added to and possibly changes made. Keep an eye on our website calendar also.

Just a reminder, a 'C' will feature next to an event that requires parent/carer consent. PLEASE NOTE, CONSENT IS NOW GIVEN ON PARENT PAY [www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com). All letters can be found in Letters and Flyer on our school website.

<https://www.thedriveprimary.co.uk/letter-and-flyers/>

Items highlighted in yellow are parent/carer events.

Please note, dates and times of events are also on Class DOJO in the Calendar and on our school website.

Spring Term 1 2026 – 7 week half term	
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> February	Children's Mental Health Week Assembly
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 5/6 Mini Hockey <b>C</b> <b>Letter issued 03.02.26</b>
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 2 Trip <b>C</b> <b>Letter issued 04.02.26</b>
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> February	Pancake Day – School Dinners. <b>If you wish for your child to have dinners this day, please either choose them a dinner or direct them to do this during registration.</b>
	Intra-School Tournaments <b>Children to come in wearing their PE kit on this day.</b>
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 5/6 Swimming Gala <b>C</b> <b>TBC by Local Authority. Children taking part in this event will receive a letter.</b>
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> February	INTU – Year 5 – What is a university? <b>Rearranged date TBC</b>
	KS1 Girls Football <b>C</b> <b>TBC by Local Authority. Children taking part in this event will receive a letter.</b>
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February	Break up for Half Term
Spring Term 2 2026 – 5 week half term	
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	Staff INSET





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	<b>Children are not in</b>
<b>Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March</b>	<b>Children return to school</b>
<b>Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Panathlon Kurling North Competition <b>C</b> <b>TBC by Local Authority. Children taking part in this event will receive a letter.</b>
	Year 3 Quicksticks Hockey <b>C</b> <b>TBC by Local Authority. Children taking part in this event will receive a letter.</b>
<b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March</b>	World Book Day <b>More details to follow</b>
<b>Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March</b>	TOP Sportanility – Creative Performance <b>C</b> <b>TBC by Local Authority. Children taking part in this event will receive a letter.</b>
<b>Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Reception Vision Screening
<b>Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March</b>	Whole School Metro Safety Assembly – NEXUS
<b>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Attendance League Celebration – morning <b>C</b>
	Dance Festival - afternoon <b>C</b>
<b>Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Year 4 Cinema Trip <b>C</b>
<b>Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>	Intra-School Tournaments <b>Children to come in wearing their PE kit on this day.</b>
<b>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April</b>	<b>Break up for Easter</b>



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