



Whittingham
C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Whittingham, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 4UP | Telephone: 01665 574222
Email: Admin@whittingham.northumberland.sch.uk

Monday 13th January 2025.

New Year Welcome News

Dear Parents/ Carers,

I hope you all had a good Christmas and now we have returned it is lovely to see the children in school and ready for another term where their learning will be enhanced in all areas.

We look forward to welcoming you into school for events across the term, many events are already planned and will be on the dates letter which will be out on Monday. However, we are always looking for more opportunities to develop your child's learning so there may be additional visits/ visitors that we will arrange during the term. Your class teacher will be in touch if this happens.

As always, we are always looking to improve and thanks to those who completed our survey last term.

It was good to see an overwhelmingly positive response and are looking into any suggestions made and these are detailed below. If you do have a concern please do talk directly to your child's class teacher and if you do not receive a satisfactory response please speak to Mr Charlton, Deputy Headteacher or myself so we can resolve any issues.

Q- Is the curriculum broad enough?

You said – 'Perhaps some more LGBTQ leaning classes, racism and perhaps current affairs in terms of critical thinking and understanding how media and social media may not be accurate or reliable. Just to start that early'.

What we are doing – I have met with Rosie Bush, head of inclusion at DCHS and we are going to go for the Rainbow School Award, working for this award will mean that we will need to clearly show what we are already doing in school and what other opportunities we can develop to ensure this is covered.

You said – 'Would be great to have more language too'.

We previously taught Spanish and French but after working with our feeder Secondary School we were guided to deliver French only. Our curriculum is already so broad that we are unable to accommodate another language lesson. However, this could be something for a future After School Club if we were to change our wrap around provision.

You said – 'Not really a no, I think a lot of subjects are covered well and are varied - just would be nice to see more music and introduction to instruments, and perhaps occasionally have external teachers come in for different sports'.

We are pleased to have Mr Charlton teaching in school who is a talented musician and across the school the children are taught drumming and steel pans. We have an external music teacher who comes in once a week and is able to teach violin but there is currently no take up for this. She does, teach keyboard to pupils. These lessons are arranged through Music Partnership North, further details can be provided upon request.

You said – 'Teach Agriculture'

Agriculture is taught in school as part of science and geography topics and through visitors and visits such as our biennial trip to the Countryside Day.

You said – 'It would be great if there could be a lunchtime gymnastics club.'

Unfortunately, the school hall is being used for lunches during lunchtime so we are unable to offer this. Prior to our current wrap around care offer, we were able to offer clubs such as gymnastics as we were able to set age limits appropriately. If wrap around care were not to continue in the future, in the current format, this is something we could consider re-instating.

School Grounds

As you know, we do not have a school caretaker and the Senior Leadership team ensure the school site is safe. In the case of bad weather there is a gritting plan on the school gate that we follow for gritting in icy weather or clearing in the case of snow. Please do check this and also be careful as the ground conditions may change throughout the day and become treacherous without warning.

Also, please note in icy or snowy weather any children who have had the code of conduct signed so they can play on the school grounds after school must not play on any of the fixed equipment and during winter months school grounds are closed at 4pm. The spring/ summer schedule returns in April. Please remember to supervise your child carefully as staff are not responsible for monitoring the children and we do not want to any accidents to occur.

School Uniform

I am sure you will agree with me; our children look extremely smart in their school uniform. Please help us to maintain this by following our school uniform policy (a copy is on the school website).

Just a few reminders regarding uniform as I have noticed a few things this week:

If your child has their ears pierced they should only wear studs and should not wear earrings on PE days unless they can take them out independently and store them safely. Make up is not allowed. Hair accessories should be in school colours. Nail varnish should not be worn. Please ensure your child in KS2 wears their tie each day.

School Buses and Parking

In the mornings please do not walk on the village hall carpark until the buses have left. If you are able to stand on the pavement opposite the carpark and not on the carpark it is much safer for everyone. Please also don't park your car on the carpark during this time.

School Standards Success

You may have noticed recently that the Northumberland Gazette recently published a most successful schools list based on Y6 SATs results. This was based on 175 Primary and Middle Schools and I am extremely pleased to see that we came joint 11th!

The success of SATS at Y6 is a whole school effort so everyone should be congratulated!

We are already looking to see how we can take the top spot in the future! Your support is needed for this and please do ensure your child completes their homework each week and that you hear your child read each day and support your child in attending school well and not taking time out of school for holidays as days missed from school impact learning and outcomes. These small things that you can help with make such a difference.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes,

Belinda Athey – Headteacher.



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Spring Term 2025 Dates

Tuesday 7 th January	School re-opens
Monday 13 th January	PTA Meeting 3.30pm in school
Friday 17 th January	Class 3– Desire Lines Dance Project in school – details to follow
Friday 24 th January	Christingle – in Church 1.30pm Y4 Multiskills County Final via Zoom in school time – see Class Teacher for further details
Tuesday 28 th January	DCHS staff to see Y6
Wednesday 29 th January	Y4-6 Girls Football Teams League at Alnwick Town Juniors (see letter for details)
Friday 31 st January	Class 2– Desire Lines Dance Project in school – details to follow Y 5 and 6 Multiskills County Final via Zoom – see Class Teacher for further details
Tuesday 18 th February	Whole School Open Morning 9.00am-10.00am – English focus
Friday 21 st February	School Breaks Up for Half Term
Monday 7 th and Tuesday 8 th April	Parent/ Carers Evenings 3.30pm-6.00pm
Friday 11 th April	Easter Service in Church 1.30pm School Breaks for Easter Holidays

Website: www.whittingham.northumberland.sch.uk



Be you Be Remarkable

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To translate this newsletter, follow the link in the QR code or click [HERE](#)

Embracing New Year's Resolutions: Be Remarkable, But Remember to Be You!

As the new year begins, many of us start thinking about resolutions. We want to change, grow, and be better—but it's important to remember that the best version of ourselves is already inside us. Rather than trying to become someone else, let's focus on growing in a way that honours who we really are. True growth happens when we stay true to ourselves while challenging ourselves to improve in small, positive ways.

Here are some tips for making resolutions that help you grow without losing sight of who you are:



Be Kind to Yourself:

Start by being kind, not critical. Recognise your strengths and what you've already done. When you set goals, think about how you can grow in a way that feels right for you.

Make Goals You Can Keep:

Big goals are great, but they should be realistic. Small steps are the key to lasting change. Whether it's reading more, practicing a hobby, or spending more time with family, focus on what you can keep up with.

Enjoy the Process:

Sometimes we focus so much on the end result that we forget to enjoy the journey. Let yourself enjoy the steps you take, even when things don't go perfectly. Learning along the way is just as important as reaching the goal.

Make Goals that Matter to You:

Think about what really matters to you. Do you want to be healthier, make more time for friends, or learn something new? Choose goals that reflect what you truly care about.

Remember, You're Already Amazing

You are already enough. Resolutions are about growing, not about fixing anything that's wrong. This year, let's aim to grow in ways that make us feel proud, without losing sight of what makes us unique. By staying true to yourself, you'll find that you can be remarkable just as you are.

Here's to a year of growth, joy, and being the best version of YOU!



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Be you Be Remarkable

Helping Your Child Embrace What Makes Them Remarkable

As parents, we want our children to feel confident and happy. But in a world where "fitting in" is often the goal, it's important to teach them to embrace what makes them *remarkable*. When children learn to love themselves for who they are, they feel stronger and more confident.

Here's how to help your child appreciate their remarkable self:



Encourage Their Interests

Support your child's hobbies, even if they're not the most popular. Following their passions helps them value their uniqueness.



Celebrate Their Strengths

Praise qualities like kindness and creativity, not just achievements. This helps them see their inner value, not just what they do.



Show Self-Acceptance

Children learn by watching you. Be open about accepting yourself, mistakes and all, so they learn to do the same.



Create a Safe Space

Let your child express themselves freely. When they feel accepted at home, they gain confidence to show their true self outside.



Teach Kindness Over Fitting In

Help your child understand that kindness is more important than fitting in. True friends value them for who they are.



Promote Positive Thinking

Encourage your child to focus on their strengths and challenge negative thoughts. Self-acceptance builds confidence.



Encourage Healthy Friendships

Support your child in finding friends who appreciate them. Healthy relationships help them feel valued for who they are.

Your child is remarkable as they are. By helping them embrace their uniqueness and how remarkable they truly are, you give them the confidence to stand out and be their best selves.



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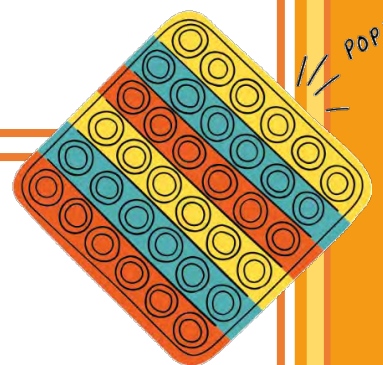


Be you Be Remarkable

Fidget Toys – Why, When, Who and How – A Parent's Guide

What is a fidget toy?

A fidget toy is a small, handheld item made to keep your hands busy and help you focus. It can also help reduce stress. Some common types are spinners, cubes, and toys that you can touch and feel. These toys can help people who find it hard to pay attention.



Do fidget toys work?

Studies show that fidget toys can help some people focus better and feel less anxious, especially those with ADHD. They allow people to move around without distracting others. More research is needed around the benefits of fidget toys.

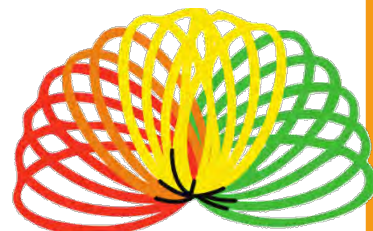


What should you think about?

Fidget toys may not help every child stay focused or calm. It's important to talk to the school before bringing a fidget toy for your child to use in the classroom. Some fidget toys are good for helping kids stay focused, while others help them stay calm but may distract them. If your child uses a fidget toy at home, ask the school if they could use it in class too. For example, if a fidget toy helps them stay calm in noisy places, could they use it in the lunchroom or during assembly?

Your child's school should check if the fidget toy is helping your child. If it's not, they might need to try something else, like letting the child take short breaks or giving them a quiet space.

Even though your child might like playing with fidget toys at home, they might not need them in the classroom.



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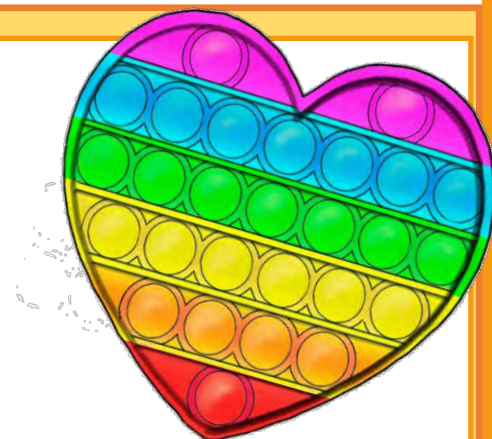


Be you

Be Remarkable

How to talk about fidget toys with your child...

It can be hard for kids to understand why some kids have fidget toys and others don't. Here are some simple ways to explain it:



"Some kids have fidget toys to help them stay calm and listen. Not everyone needs a fidget toy to do this."



"Fidget toys help some kids who feel fidgety focus better."



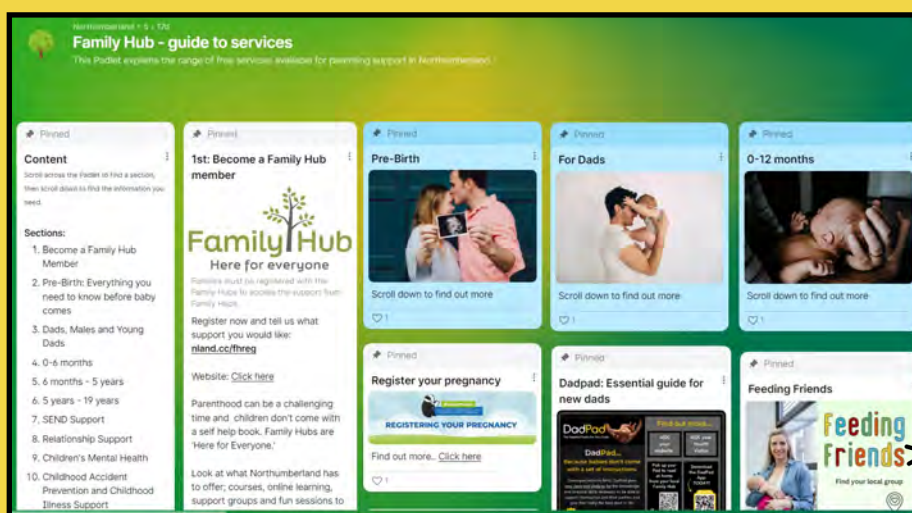
"Everyone needs different things to learn. You might have things that help you too."



"We're all unique. Just like you wear special shoes to run fast, some kids need fidget toys to help them focus in class."

More Information

For more details, you can check the Northumberland's [Ordinarily Available Provision Guidance](#), which talks about how schools can support all students.



A padlet of resources and information explaining the range of free services available for parenting support in Northumberland. Click the picture to the left to access.



Do you have a child aged 0-19 years? Come along for a cuppa and chat and to meet other parents. No diagnosis needed!

JOIN US ON:

Wednesday 15th January 2025 10am-12 at Alnwick Family Hub

On St Michaels School Site, Howling Lane, NE66 1DJ

Thursday 13th February 2025 1-3pm at Berwick Family Hub

Ladywell Place, Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 2AE

Tuesday 14th January 2025 10am-12 at Hexham Family Hub

On Hexham First School Site, Beaufront Avenue, NE46 1JD

Wednesday 29th January 2025 1-3pm at Haltwhistle Family Hub

On Haltwhistle Primary Academy Site, Park Avenue, NE49 9BA

Tuesday 21st January 2025 10am-12 at Ashington Family Hub

Alexandra Road, NE63 9EF

Monday 3rd February 2025 1-3pm at The Community Hub at Cramlington

Forum Way, Manor Walks Shopping Centre, NE23 6YB (Next to Concordia)

Tuesday 18th February 2025 10am-12 at Morpeth Library

Morpeth Sports and Leisure Centre, Gas House Lane, NE61 1SR

If you have any questions, please contact your local Family Hub or email us at:
robyn.robinson@northumberland.gov.uk or adelle.hicks@northumberland.gov.uk