



DUNNINGTON C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Clare Thompson

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Friday 9th January 2026

Dear parent/ carer,

As I mentioned in last week's newsletter, you will have received your child's school attendance to date this week. Our attendance here is generally excellent and well above national average – thank you to all of you for making this happen. Nevertheless, it is still important we do everything we can to support children to attend school as often as possible – this is why we are investing so much time and energy into our OPAL provision and into ensuring our school has a culture of inclusion and an ethos of belonging: we want our children to be here, and we want them to want to be here, to love their time at school and know that they matter to us.

If your child is unwell, it is really important they remain home until they are well enough to attend school. If you are ever in doubt, this is a good guide: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

We are required to report on, track and monitor children classed as persistent absentees, which means their attendance falls below 90%. 4.8% of our pupils are currently classed as persistent absentees. Whilst 90% is considered wonderful in most walks of life, an attendance below 90% means that the equivalent of at least one school day every two weeks is missed. If a child has more than 19 days off school in a year, they will be in this bracket and will inevitably miss out on lots of learning and social opportunities. I will be in touch today if your child's attendance is below 90% to see if there is anything we can do to support you or your child to attend school more regularly.

If your child's attendance is between 90 and 95%, please do let us know if there is anything else we can do to help, or if your child needs any additional support. We would much rather you let us know if there is a barrier to your child attending school, and are always happy to help in any way we can.

Goodbye Mrs Perks

I suspect there won't be a dry eye in school today as we say goodbye to the wonderful Mrs Perks. Mrs Perks has worked here for six years and is a phenomenal teaching assistant, colleague and friend. If you are lucky enough to have a child that has been supported by Mrs Perks, you will be well aware of how amazing she is! She has provided incredible support to some of our most vulnerable learners, she is loved by the children in her class, she works so hard to support her colleagues and she is funny, kind and caring. She will be incredibly missed and we are really sad to see her go, but



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know she is moving on to an incredibly opportunity which is perfect for her. Thanks for everything Mrs Perks – you have been amazing!

For the remainder of this half term, year 2 will be supported by Mr Longmore on a Monday and Tuesday, who is a very experienced teacher, and Mrs Collins, who currently works in year 3/4, on Wednesday - Friday. We are hoping to recruit for the rest of the year shortly.

OPAL – update and large loose parts

Autumn was a great start to OPAL with the many new areas for outdoor play. The children have really enjoyed the new digging and mud kitchen area and the wheels are a huge success! The joy of play at lunch is fantastic!

Thank you for providing wellies and waterproofs – we are in the process of having two new structures built (one for EYFS/KS1 and the other for KS2) including outdoor benches and wellie storage with a waterproof cover to make the changing of outdoor clothes a little easier. We will update on this as it progresses.

As part of our next phase with OPAL, we are looking to source a number of items called large loose parts. These will be used for making dens, hang out zones, obstacle courses, leaping and jumping zones, towers and many other play ideas that the children can create from their imagination. We are looking for the following; if you have any or know where we can source any from, then please do let us know. Please can we ask that no nails are in any wooden items. If you are able to provide any of the below, then please drop off at the main entrance. A huge thank you!

****Please avoid: glass, ceramics, or other easily broken objects***

- Wheelie/compost bins
- Large drainage pipes
- Large nets/tarpaulins
- Bread crates
- Plastic milk crates
- Traffic cones
- Planks
- Tyres – car (no winter tyres please)
- Hazel den poles
- Cable reels
- Recycled garden slides
- Tree stumps
- Boats – we would love to source one of these for a permanent structure to play on!
- Windbreaks
- Surf/windsurf boards
- Blue Barrels
- Wooden pallets
- Thick rope

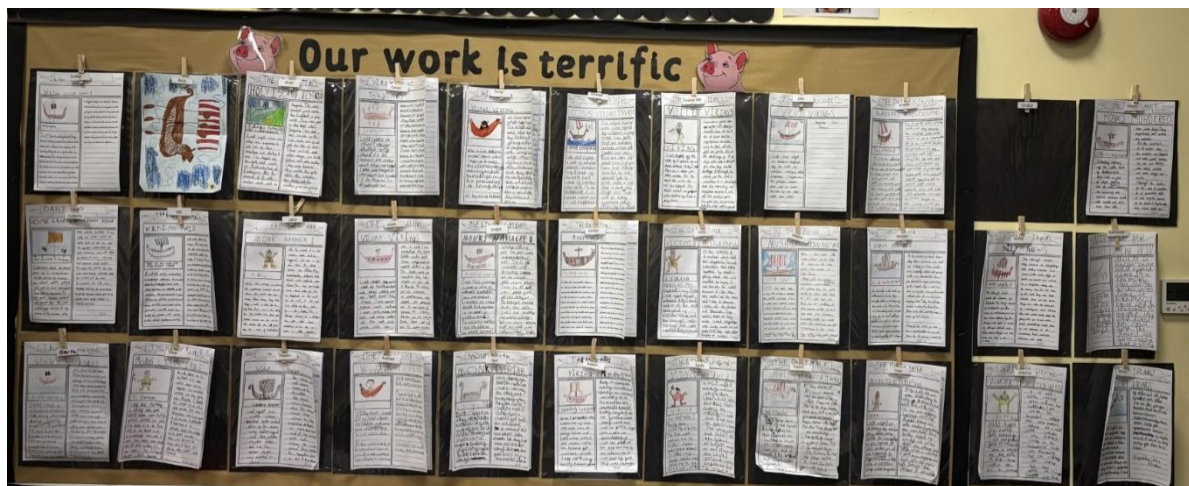
... and much more! If you think we can use it, then please just ask.

Ambulance

You may have noticed that we had an ambulance visit school yesterday. Reception to year 4 visited the ambulance in the morning and then the paramedics taught year 5 and 6 how to do CPR in the afternoon. It was a great experience for all of the children – thank you so much to the ambulance service for providing this opportunity.



Owens Class



Owens Class have worked really hard on their writing. They have been learning to write newspaper reports and they have used their knowledge to write these brilliant articles about the Viking raid on Lindisfarne.

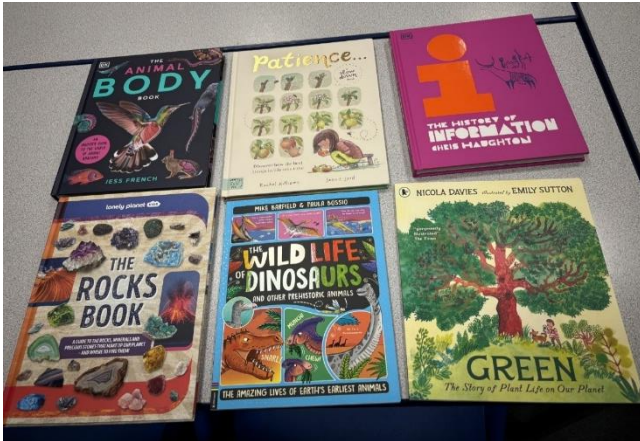
Yousafzai Class

In Gymnastics, Yr4/5 Yousafzai have been developing their creativity and control skills on the apparatus under the guidance of Mr Sellers. Having fun and keeping fit at the same time! Children have demonstrated some impressive holds, carefully controlled vaulting moves and brilliant balance work on the beams. They have also displayed beautifully our school values through the encouragement and support they have shown each other during PE lessons. Mrs Pilkington is proud of you all, well done.



Science Book Club

This week was the first meeting of our science book club. The school has been asked to review six new children's science books. Our reviews and thoughts will be submitted to the Royal Society, along with lots of other schools across the country to determine which book wins the prize. The best bit is we get to keep the books.



These are the books we have been asked to review. They look amazing.

RESPECT – well done to all of the children – and Mrs Perks - who have epitomised our school values this week, to Sam for getting a Bee certificate for some flawless weaving and to our Numbots and TTRS superstars!



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Dates for your Diary

Next academic year dates:

2026/2027 academic calendar

	Term begins	Term Ends
Autumn term 1	7 th September 2026	23 rd October 2026
Autumn term 2	2 nd November 2026	18 th December 2026
Spring term 1	4 th January 2027	5 th February 2027
Spring term 2	15 th February 2027	19 th March 2027
Summer term 1	5 th April 2027	28 th May 2027
Summer term 2	7 th June 2027	26 th July 2027

Training Days

Monday 7th September 2026

Friday 23rd October 2026

Monday 4th January 2027

Friday 28th May 2027

Monday 26th July 2027

Bank Holiday

Monday 3rd May 2027

New dates will be added in bold each week

January 2026	
Year 6 sit past SATS papers	Monday 12 th January – Friday 16 th January 2026
SATS evening for year 6 parents	Tuesday 27 th January 2026 @ 5pm
February 2026	
Imam visit	Wednesday 11 th February 2026

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Last Day of Spring 1	Friday 13 th February 2026
Half term	Monday 16 th February 2026 – Friday 20 th February 2026
First day of Spring 2 – Children return to school	Monday 23 rd February 2026
March 2026	
Year 6 sit past SATS papers	Monday 2 nd March – Friday 6 th March 2026
Yoyo Easter visit	Monday 23 rd March
Parent consultations	Tuesday 24 th March 2026 Wednesday 25 th March 2026
Last day of the Spring term for pupils	Thursday 26 th March
Inset Day – School closed for pupils	Friday 27 th March

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

With very best wishes,

Clare Thompson

Attachments:

- 2026-2027 Term Dates
- Parent Carer Forum Newsletter

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Mozart
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Weber
Clarinet Concerto No.2
in E flat major, Opus 74

Mahler
Symphony No.5

Julian Bliss
Clarinet

Simon Wright
Conductor

Fiona Love
Leader



Julian Bliss

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