



St. Cuthbert's School Newsletter

#stcuthbertsns



Sunday 6th October 2024 www.northtynesidecatholic.org.uk/

Mass times online on Facebook and at St. Cuthbert's each Sunday at 11am. Fr. Chris Hughes can be contacted on 257 5801

Our children and staff took lots of learning outdoors last week and made the best of the lovely autumn weather. We have a wonderful and unique outdoor area at St. Cuthbert's which we have developed over the past 11 or 12 years and we work hard looking after our environment. We are also blessed to live in a naturally beautiful area full of fantastic places where we can take our learning. Part of our mission is to Care For Our Common Home and this begins by caring for our school grounds which are children, staff and families are brilliant at doing.



Congratulations to Year 1 who have won our Attendance of the Week Stars trophy for the second week in a row with a near perfect score of 99.3%! Can we remind all families that we ask you to contact school when your child is absent from school for any reason at all. There is information about the impact of attendance and punctuality on your child's education available on our school website, you can find it on the [Attendance and Term Dates](#) page.



Class	%
Reception	95.8
Year 1 🍌	99.3
Year 2	90.7
Year 3	92.9
Year 4	93.3
Year 5	97.3
Year 6	85.3
Whole school	93.9

Thank you to everyone who joined Fr. Chris and the parish catechists for the First Holy Communion meeting at St. Cuthbert's Church last week. If you were unable to make the meeting please get in touch with Fr. Chris as soon as you can to enroll your child on the programme which begins very soon.

Our year 3 children completed their 4 week block of intensive swimming lessons on Friday and enjoyed a great activity session full of games to mark the achievement. Thank you to all the families who were able to join the children last Thursday to see how brilliantly they have done, their progress has been excellent. Thank you also to our staff and children for making the sessions successful. The class travelled to the pool and back by Metro each day and we have received lots of compliments from the public telling us how well-mannered and kind our children are- well done year 3!

Some children have begun bringing very large bottles to school for their drinking water, some of the bottles are also very expensive. The large bottles are starting to cause problems in classrooms as they take up a lot of space at sink areas and on desks. Some children have also been upset when they have dropped bottles as they know how expensive they are. Children's water bottles don't need to be any larger than 1 litre, 500ml bottles are perfect as children can refill their bottles during the day when needed.



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We have worked hard with our children, staff, families and the wider community to develop our outdoor learning environment at St. Cuthbert's. Having special places to learn and play is very important and we all appreciate, enjoy and thrive when we are in environments, both indoors and outdoors, which inspire us, make us feel safe and help us develop independence and thrive. Part of our mission is to Care For Our Common Home and we learn to do this on our own school grounds first. We also take our learning outside as much as possible and this gives us lots of opportunities to work together, learn how to problem solve together and how to play together. It also helps us build each class into a team that helps and supports each other and this helps us build a school community where everyone is valued, respected and treat with care and compassion. There aren't many situations in life where we spend so much time with 29 other people our own age for seven or eight years, learning new things and taking on new challenges every day. The way our children and staff manage this experience is excellent and we have worked and continue to work with many other schools and organisations to share what we do and to keep us constantly evolving and improving. Everything we do is possible because of the support of St. Cuthbert's families and our school staff. Supporting each other and sharing a vision is incredibly important and we all want St. Cuthbert's children to be ready for the next stage in their education and life as confident, self-assured and compassionate young people who love learning, being a positive difference to the world around them and achieving their very best.





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Year 1 are moving onto a new book, *Seasons*, and as part of making them more word aware we want to make a bug hotel. This is taking a lead from our children's interest in their games club last week when they explored our beautiful Eco Garden. It will develop new vocabulary as they problem-solve, communicate and learn through play. It will also provide an opportunity for us all to get even closer to nature and learn about how balanced ecosystems and biodiversity work. Our children are wonderful and are not afraid of insects, giving them a better understanding of their role in our ecosystem and what they're bringing to your garden. Bugs are an important part of our ecosystem. Bug houses, provide a shelter for our little friends and welcome them into our eco garden. We hope by planning and making our bug hotel we may offer a refuge to solitary bees, give ladybugs somewhere to lay eggs or other wildlife a place to nest and feel secure. It will lend itself lovely to our word bank of care, kindness, family, friends, sanctuary, resting place, home, safe place in year 1. Bugs, such as woodlice or millipedes, also provide food for other wildlife such as hedgehogs, frogs and toads, which we want to encourage in our eco garden. It is so important to encourage biodiversity in our garden. We would be really grateful if anyone has any plant pots, wood, pallets, crates, plants etc. Many thanks in advance from your year 1 friends.

We send out all our letters and forms to families through ParentMail and last week a number of forms were sent out that we need you to complete and return as soon as possible please. The data form with your contact details, medical information and any other information we need is very important. You can change any of the information on it at any time, including details of named contacts, who can drop children off and pick them up from school and medical information. We use Twitter to share what is happening at school, our account is locked so you need to request access to follow us. If you want to follow our Twitter account our name is stcuthbertsns, if you don't get permission to follow let us know and we'll get you on. We use Tapestry to share more detailed information about what your child is doing at school. Tapestry is fantastic at keeping you up to date with everything and we love it when you press the 'like' button on Tapestry and Twitter- it shows us that you are getting to see what is happening and it also shows everyone at school that you appreciate what they are doing. If you have any trouble accessing any of these apps please let us know, they are important and great ways to keep up to date with everything going on at our very exciting and busy school.

Every week we publish a poster with information and advice on keeping children safe online. The posters we use come from the National Online Safety organisation and we use their resources at school when teaching our E-Safety lessons for all children. These lessons follow similar themes as the posters we share with you and the lessons at school are all taught at a level appropriate to the children. Our children know how to stay safe both online and offline and they know we have systems such as Smoothwall at school which help keep everyone safe.



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If you have any concerns about your child's, or another child's safety, including their online safety, or questions about behaviour we always ask that you speak to us at school. It is important that we are part of discussions that may be happening around children's behaviour and welfare. We record incidents and concerns electronically on our CPOMS system and we work very closely with Clennell Education Solutions to make sure all our staff are up to date with the best safeguarding training available and to provide leading professional advice when requested. This means that we have a broad picture of anything that is happening at school and, with your help, we can make sure any concerns are addressed quickly and do not escalate or lead to children or families falling out. If you have a concern that you feel needs attention immediately, and it is outside of normal school hours, you can contact the North Tyneside Safeguarding Team's Front Door service on 0345 2000 109 during office hours or 0330 333 7475 during the evening or at weekends. We work in partnership with the team and they will inform us at school of any referrals made to them during weekends, evenings, and holidays when school is closed. You can also find out more information about safeguarding in North Tyneside on their [website](#) and our [school website](#).



Information was sent out last week about clubs for this half term, please make sure you check ParentMail and book whichever clubs your child would like to be part of. All our clubs are free of charge and our staff give up their own time to make sure your children can have a great time taking part in activities they love. All clubs after school begin at 3.30pm finish at 4.30pm and children must be collected from the school car park at 4.30pm. **Please do not park in the school car park after school. When you are collecting children at 4.30pm you can park outside school, parking restrictions are not in place at this time.** Clubs next half term are:

Day & Time	Club	Class	Staff
Monday lunchtimes	Rockstar Maths	Year 4	Mrs Massie
Tuesday 8.10am	Mini Mini Vinnies	Rec, Y1 & Y2	Mrs Cottiss & Miss Collins
Tuesday 8.10am	Cycling Club		Miss Fielding, Miss Southgate, Mr Capper
Tuesday 3.30pm	Family Club (children must have an adult at the club)	Nursery & Reception	St. Cuthbert's staff
Wednesday lunchtime	Music- Winter Sing prep	Years 3,4.5 &6	Mrs Brown
Wednesday 3.30pm	Chatterbooks	Years 2 & 3	Mrs McArdle
Wednesday 3.30pm	Games Club	Year 1	Mrs Cottiss & Mr Dillon
Thursday 3.30pm	Mini Vinnies	Years 3,4,5 & 6	Mrs Cottiss, Mrs Stephens, Miss Fielding
Thursday 3.30pm	Science Club	Years 3,4,5 & 6	Mrs Allott



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Thursday 3.30pm	Football Club	Year 3,4,5 & 6	Miss Collings, Mr Capper, Mr Smart, Mr Dillon
Friday 3.30pm	Campfire Club	Year 5 & siblings	Mrs Cottiss & Mr Dillon

Can we also remind all families that you must let us know who is collecting a child after school if you, the person who would normally do the collection, isn't? If you need to change arrangements at the last minute please phone the school office and let us know, this helps avoid asking the person who has come to collect the child waiting around unnecessarily and helps us ensure all our children are where they are supposed to be. If the person collecting your child is someone we don't know or haven't met often we may ask you for a word or phrase that they can repeat to us, therefore confirming who they are.

As a school St. Cuthbert's were involved in being part of the management committee that set up the PACT MumSpace group that runs in North Shields. MumSpace is a warm, welcoming, friendly group, for mothers run by mothers. MumSpace is a charity run so free to join. Within the group, mums have half an hour of "their time" whilst the amazing volunteers look after the children. This space and time can be used to have a hot cup of coffee and a chat, talk to other mums alike, or invite outside organisations in to give advice, it's the mothers' space it's up to them to decide what to do with it. The group is for pregnant mums or mums with children up to the age of 4. MumSpace is run on a Thursday morning from St Cuthbert's Church from 9.30-11am or Tuesday afternoon 12.30-2pm at St Luke's Church in Wallsend on Frank Street just off the Metro station. For more information see their Facebook page = MumSpace North Tyneside or contact Wendy McConnell at 07950426786 or wendy.mcconnell@citizensuk.org



As part of our work with PACT we are inviting families with children between the ages of 2 and 4 to join us for our Book Sharing Course which we are hosting at school with Wendy. The sessions take place at school from 2.15pm- 3.15pm. We have run these sessions in the past and they have been very successful and a brilliant way to get ideas and support in helping develop children's love of stories, books and language. Further information about the programme is near the end of this newsletter.

We are asking all families to make sure you pre-order your children's lunches as this is the only way to ensure they get what they want each lunchtime. All children who have a school lunch must pre-order- this includes children in Reception Class, Year 1 and Year 2 who are all entitled to free school meals through the Infant Free School meals scheme.

Thank you once again to everyone who has signed up for your Appetite account and to everyone who is using it to pre-order children's school lunches. It is very, very important that you get your account set up as it allows you to see the menu for the coming weeks, including all the dietary and nutritional information you might want to see. No child will ever be left hungry and the staff in our kitchen know all our children well. If you have any questions about the new school meals system or menu, or need help with the app or using the Appetite service online, please get in touch with us at school.



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Mass times online on Facebook and at St. Cuthbert's each Sunday at 11am. Fr. Chris Hughes can be contacted on 257 5801. We get lots of questions at school about keeping children safe online when they are away from school. We have begun information posters from National Online Safety and these will be helpful as they provide up-to-date advice on how to manage different services and apps for children at home. The Think You Know website is also very useful for advice and information and you can find it by clicking the link below. The site is aimed at adults and the subjects are about keeping children safe online.

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



We would like to remind families that we have a no-jewellery policy for children at St. Cuthbert's, the only exceptions to this are that children can wear a watch and if they have their ears pierced they can wear a small stud- not hoops. Can you please make sure your child doesn't wear any jewellery to school, especially on their outdoor learning day when a few have started to wear chains, necklaces, or bracelets. Outdoor learning day clothes should be old clothes, suitable for the weather, that will get dirty and, most likely smell of smoke by the end of the day.

Can we please remind families that for all classes from reception through to year 6 the school day has a 'soft start' meaning that the school gates and doors will open at 8.40 am and children should go straight to their class when they come on to the playground from 8.40 am. The doors and gates then close at 8.55 am when all children should be in their class- anyone who arrives at school after 8.55 am should come to school through the main office. **Children cannot wait alone on the playground or at school gates before 8.40 am as all staff are supervising gates, doors, corridors and classrooms with teachers beginning their teaching at 8.40 am.** Can we also remind everyone that no adults should be in the school building in the morning or at the end of the school day. If you need to speak to a class teacher you can contact them through Tapestry, phone the school office to make an appointment or pass on a message or catch them at the end of the school day once all children have been passed over to their families. Our school day ends at 3.25 pm for all children. Can we also please remind families that dogs, no matter how small, are not permitted through the school gates or on the school playground. We have over 500 people on the playground at the start and end of each day and we all greatly appreciate your help and support in keeping our school as safe as possible and our school days running smoothly for everyone.

Thank you to everyone who is using Easyfundraising.

There are no catches to using the site, you don't need to share bank or payment details, just sign up and choose to support St. Cuthbert's. all you then need to do is search for your chosen store or seller on the easyfundraising site and do your online shopping as normal. If you are booking a holiday, buying any insurance, changing internet suppliers, mobile phone providers, etc. online, and doing so through the site they make quite big donations to school! It's really easy to get set up and running, all you need to do is:



1. Head to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stcuthbertsrcprimary/> and join for free.
2. Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first to find the site you want and start shopping.



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3. After you've checked out, that retailer will donate to St. Cuthbert's at no extra cost to you whatsoever!

There are no catches or hidden charges and we would be grateful for your support and donations which will go towards all our children.

Thank you to everyone who has been using Tapestry, our keepingintouch@stcuthbertsrcprimary.co.uk email, and school phone to keep in touch with school staff. Lines of communication must be kept as open and honest as possible between school and home as we work hard to keep our open-door policy and approach going by making so many ways to keep in touch available. **As highlighted in the past we don't use Facebook or WhatsApp or any other social media apart from Twitter (which we don't use to answer questions)**, and we won't be setting up accounts on either medium. If you have any questions, or concerns, or need to chat with a member of staff at school please make sure you use one of three methods we have put in place:

- Message a member of staff on Tapestry with messages regarding work, arrangements for the school day for your child, etc. All staff have access to Tapestry.
- **Email keepingintouch@stcuthbertsrcprimary.co.uk. You should email this address if you want to discuss or inform of us anything that is more confidential. Emails to this address are only read by Mrs. Cottiss and Mr. Dillon. Please do not use this email for day-to-day things like questions about what is happening at school. We cannot guarantee that your question will be answered on time this will only happen by contacting the school office.**
- Phone 0191 691 9876 and arrange an agreed time to chat with someone. Use the school phone number to advise us of absence from school, and for questions about day-to-day things. **Phoning school during the school day remains the best way to get in touch.**

If you have not yet activated your Tapestry account or if you are having trouble accessing it please let us know as soon as possible. Tapestry is one of the main ways we keep in touch with families and it is important that you can receive messages and posts from it even if you don't use it a lot yourself.

If you haven't joined our school lottery yet it is really easy and gives you a chance of winning our school jackpot each week and gives you an entry to a much bigger weekly jackpot. All profits from the lottery go towards helping us make sure our children continue to have the fantastic opportunities they get every week at St. Cuthbert's. Our weekly prize currently stands at £19.80, you will also be entered into a national school lottery for a £25,000 draw each week. You can sign up at

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/st-cuthberts-rc-primary>

We work continuously with all staff and children to keep children and everyone at St. Cuthbert's safe at all times. Our current Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and further information is on our school website,

<https://www.stcuthbertsrcprimary.co.uk/safeguarding> and they outline our approaches and policies to safeguarding throughout school. You will also find a copy of our safeguarding policy that we share with the children. It has been written to be accessible to the children and goes alongside all the work we do with them throughout the year. We teach safeguarding and staying safe through many different subjects and you will see the weekly online safety posters we add to every newsletter that we send out. Throughout the year we also have online safety lessons with all children and these range in topic from what to do if a child feels unsafe, how to create the best usernames and passwords and how to judge if



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We already have quite a few events and activities planned for this half-term and we will send you a list of key dates next week once we have confirmed a few details. We will be celebrating our new school year whole school Mass with Fr. Chris and the parish of St. Cuthbert's soon and classes will take turns joining the parish for Mass on Wednesday mornings throughout the term. We would love everyone to join us for Mass and we would also love you all to join us for our first activity morning of 2024 which will be on the list of dates we send out. We are also planning meetings about how we teach reading and how to help your child read at home, how we teach maths and as we approach the end of the term we'll be inviting you all to join us for collective worship at school. Dates are also added to your weekly newsletter and any changes are sent out to you as soon as possible.

We will be sending out information about clubs next week and you will be able to book places on ParentMail. Our clubs start the week beginning Monday 16th September and are a very big part of life at St. Cuthbert's. Our staff give up their time to make sure that all children across school have the opportunity to take part in clubs throughout the year. Family Club will be for our Nursery and Reception families and lots of our staff will be taking part in the club with families and having fun cooking, getting artistic and creative and playing games and keeping active!

Thank you for your amazing continued support, stay safe and God bless,
Shaun Dillon



At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about IN-GAME CHAT

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Video games are continuing to grow in popularity – including, of course, among children and young people – and the emergence of gaming communities has been accelerated by the inclusion of chat functionality across many different titles. While in-game chat isn't inherently a bad thing, it can create some concerns about online safety and the people that children might be interacting with.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAT

There are a number of ways that gamers commonly chat with one another online. As the name would suggest, in-game chat happens within the game itself. There's also party chat: a group voice conversation that console users can have with anyone on the same platform. This tends to be more commonly used by players who already know each other. Finally, many gamers – especially on PC – will chat via a third-party app such as Discord.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Whether it's text- or voice-based, in-game chat is frequently open to all players to use. Many games default to making it an opt-in function, but some don't: meaning a child could start seeing messages within the game from people they're playing with, regardless of whether they know those individuals or not. While most strangers won't necessarily have ill intent, there are some who may behave inappropriately when chatting to a child – intentionally or otherwise.

DANGER OF GROOMING

It's been reported that some young gamers have encountered older players online who pretend to be a lower age to manipulate children, sending gifts in exchange for chatting and sending photos. Just as on any messaging platform, it's good to advise young people to avoid speaking to strangers; emphasise that they shouldn't accept gifts from anyone online that they don't know.

BULLYING AND ABUSE

While some in-game chat can turn toxic because of how a match plays out, others turn that way because of people who engage in trolling – in essence, behaving in an offensive and abusive way simply to cause pain or get a rise out of whoever they're talking to. These 'trolls' often lean on racial slurs, anti-LGBT sentiment and other hateful rhetoric; they normally feel most confident preying on younger, more impressionable gamers.

POTENTIAL FOR PRIVATE CHAT

If a player would like a re-match with a stranger after meeting them in the game, they can send a friend request, or use the party chat together in the future. For the most part, this is harmless – but it might lead to messages being exchanged in private. This could then escalate to the sharing of private information, and potentially attempts to manipulate or scam younger players.

COMPETITIVE ATMOSPHERE

Certain games are very competitive, and players can sometimes get upset if they feel a teammate is underperforming, an opponent won unfairly, or they're just a bad loser. This can lead to unpleasant messages that stray away from playful 'trash talk' and wander into the territory of bullying. Some players have been known to get incredibly abusive in situations like this, and the impact of this on a young gamer's emotional wellbeing could be severe.

Advice for Parents & Educators

LOCK-DOWN IN-GAME CHAT

In-game chat can often be disabled in the game's settings. This allows children to play without risk of contact from strangers – but it will need to be done in each individual game. Text chat appears in the corner of the screen in many titles, so it's normally easy to take a quick glance and see what's being said. With voice chat, explain to children what behaviour is inappropriate, so they can spot the dangers themselves.

REPORT POTENTIAL OFFENDERS

Most games offer a robust means of reporting other players, so you can flag an account as potentially harmful. This normally leads to the account not being matched with yours in the future and, if that person's conduct breaks any of the game's rules, they may be banned from playing entirely. This is done within the game itself, so each title has a slightly different process, but these tend to be designed for simplicity.

CONSIDER OTHER CHAT OPTIONS

If a child wants to play with people they know, consider using party chat or a third-party service like Discord. This allows everyone involved to chat on a private server and even enjoy each other's company while playing different games. It's also far more secure, as anyone looking to join will need to request and be granted access – normally by whoever is hosting the chat.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Make sure children understand the differences between being competitive and being abusive. Talk about what constitutes unusual or inappropriate behaviour from strangers online. Be clear that if anything ever concerns or worries them, they should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Empower children to identify the risks of in-game chat for themselves and reassure them they won't get in trouble for seeking help if anything goes wrong.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is the Editor in Chief of GGRecon and has been working in the games media industry for five years. He's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his work has been published at sites including IGN, TechRadar, and plenty more.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at nationalcollege.com/guides/in-game-chat



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PE and Roundhouse Timetables 2024/2025

Children should come to school wearing their PE kit on their PE day. All classes from Year 1- Year 6 will take part in cricket sessions every Wednesday this half term, this is in addition to their PE lessons and outdoor learning sessions. Year 3 begin four weeks of swimming sessions, every morning, on Monday 9th September.

PE	
Day	Class
Monday	Year 5
Tuesday	Reception Class
Wednesday	KS1 & KS2 Cricket
Thursday	Year 6. Year 2, Year 3
Friday	Year 1 and Year 4

We have a timetable for outdoor learning but classes will take learning outdoors as often as they can throughout the week. Children should wear old clothes on their outdoor learning day, PE kit on PE day and school uniform on all other days. If an outdoor learning day is the same as a PE or cricket day then children should wear PE kit that is suitable for outdoors and whatever weather we are forecast to have.

Roundhouse/ Outdoor Learning Dates	
Nursery	(Friday)
Reception	(Friday)
Year 1	(Tuesdays)
Year 2	(Tuesdays)
Year 3	(Wednesdays)
Year 4	(Wednesdays)
Year 5	(Mondays)
Year 6	(Mondays)