



Oakfield

Friday Letter

Building strong foundations. Inspiring bright futures.

DATE

Friday 25th
September

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Oakfield Families,

🌟 Another Great Week at Oakfield!

What a lovely week we have had at Oakfield! It has been wonderful to see our children coming into school with smiles on their faces, ready to learn and make the most of every opportunity.

Across school, there has been a real buzz of learning, with children working hard, showing kindness to one another and demonstrating such positive attitudes. We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, resilience and care they show each day.

A huge thank you to our families too. Your continued support, encouragement and partnership with school make such a difference and are very much appreciated.

We hope you enjoy catching up on some of this week's highlights and celebrating all the fantastic things happening across Oakfield.

Have a wonderful weekend! 🧡

Best wishes,
Helen Hartness
Acting Headteacher

What's happening next week

Monday 28th September	Year 1/ 2 KM PE Year 1/ 2 CR PE Year 3 Outdoor PE Year 6 Indoor PE
Tuesday 29th September	Reception PE
Wednesday 30th September	Year 1/ 2 BG PE Year 1/ 2 KM PE Year 4 Outdoor PE 5M Indoor PE (Until February) 5D Swimming (Until February)
Thursday 1st October	Reception PE Year 4 Indoor PE Year 6 Outdoor PE (Forest School)
Friday 2nd October	Year 1/ 2 BG PE Year 1/ 2 CR PE Year 3 Indoor PE Year 5 Outdoor PE

OUR SIX
CHARACTER
THEMES



RESPECT

We value
ourselves and
others.



FAIRNESS

We treat people
fairly.



RESPONSIBILITY

We own our choices.



CARING

We show
kindness.



CITIZENSHIP

We contribute



TRUSTWORTHINESS

We are honest and
reliable.

Star points total

	This Week
R	255
1	1,1618
2	796
3	390
4	785
5	500
6	522



Hot Chocolate with the Head Teacher

A huge well done to all children awarded Hot Chocolate Award this week. You have been wonderful role models and spread kindness to others.

NOTICES & REMINDERS

Mobile Phones

We have updated our school policy about mobile phones use by children on school site and have attached a copy for parents.

We understand that some of our older children may bring a phone to school for safety reasons when travelling independently and the policy allows Year 5 and Year 6 children to do this. Once children arrive on the school site, however, phones should be **switched off and kept safely away**. During the school day, any phones brought into school will be stored securely in the school office in line with our school procedures. This helps us to keep our school site **safe, welcoming and focused on positive interactions** between children and families. We really appreciate your support in reinforcing this message with your child and helping us to keep our school community a happy and safe place for everyone.

School Football

Year 5 and year 6 football teams have both recently participated in knockout cup competitions run by Gateshead Felling FA. In each case they were group formats with only the winner of each group progressing to the final

Year 5 played 4 matches in their group, all tight affairs. Unfortunately, 2 draws and 2 losses meant that the tournament ended at this stage, but well done for your effort, and patience for a tournament that was postponed from last academic year.

Year 6 took part in 3 games within their group. After an initial win, conceding in the last minute in the second game led to a draw, before a hard-fought loss in the last game; a game they dominated. It is fair to say they were the best team on show, but as we know, this does not always lead to success that is deserved. Thank you to all parents for your support in transporting your child and the touchline support.

In two weeks' time, a second year 6 team start their cup competition before the league season begins after Christmas.

Reminder- Reception Phonics session

This will be a session led by Miss Hartness and Miss McGrory explaining how we teach Phonics to Reception children using our Little Wandle Phonics programme. It will start at 9am on Monday 28th September. Please come along to find out how children learn to read.

Beauty and the Beast



The talented junior section (including former Oakfield pupils) at Gateshead Musical Theatre Company are performing Beauty and the Beast in October at Park View Theatre in Chester Le Street. 🎭

★ *Together we learn. Together we grow.* ★



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SPOTLIGHT ON LEARNING

A snapshot of learning from across Oakfield this week

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Reception



Reception have been learning about simple maps. We created our own map on the top yard using chalk. We included roads, roundabouts and buildings and then drove around our map on the bikes and scooters.

Year 1 / 2



Year 1/ 2 are learning about what life was like in the past. We have made a super toy museum and are loving playing with toys that our parents or grandparents might have played with

Year 3



Year 3 have been loving their Tag Rugby lessons in PE this term! We have been learning how to hold the ball correctly, pass backwards, tag and score tries.

Well done, Year 3

Year 4



Year 4 have thoroughly enjoyed computing this week, taking on the role of trainee journalists. We have been researching the story of an animal escaping from a zoo, gathering important information and exploring what makes an effective news report. We are looking forward to using our research to create our own newspaper reports next week!

Year 5



This week, Year 5 have been busy learning all about the **life cycles of mammals in Science**

We have been investigating the different stages of a mammal's life, from **birth and infancy through to adulthood**, and thinking about the changes that happen as mammals grow and develop. We have enjoyed comparing the life cycles of different mammals and spotting similarities and differences between them. It has been fantastic to see the children asking thoughtful questions, sharing their ideas and building their scientific understanding.

What a great week of scientific discovery, Year 5!

Year 6



this week at forest school 6R had an autumn art theme and were inspired by the Finnish traditional tale of Meilikki the forest goddess who painted the leaves the colours of autumn for the arrival of winter. We also looked at some photographs of artwork by the amazing Andy Goldsworthy for inspiration. We used natural materials to create images inspired by the story of Meilikki and by the changing of the seasons.

★ *Together we learn. Together we grow.* ★

2026-2027 Term Dates	
Term	Dates
Autumn 1	02/09/26 – 22/10/26
Autumn 2	02/11/26 – 18/12/26
Spring 1	04/01/27 – 12/02/27
Spring 2	22/02/27 – 25/03/27
Summer 1	12/04/27 – 28/05/27
Summer 2	07/06/27 – 15/07/27
PD days & other non-school days	01/09/26 23/10/26 03/05/27 – bank holiday 16/07/27 – occasional day

School attendance and Punctuality

School year	Attendance	
	This Week	
	Attendance	% marks late
Junior Overall	97.9%	0.26%
Infant Overall	98.1	0.39%
6	97.5%	0.47%
5	96.3%	0.34%
4	98.8%	0.00%
3	98.8%	0.47%
2	98.9%	0.28%
1	98.3%	0.76%
R	96.8%	0.00%



Safeguarding

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. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT

As the best-selling game in history, Minecraft has made a name for itself by empowering audiences of all ages to harness their creativity. Originally an indie hit, it's become a cultural phenomenon with merchandise, spin-off titles, and wider media adaptations. Even if you don't know your Creepers from your Endermen, this guide will explore the risks of Minecraft in 2026 and explain how to support a safe gaming experience for the children in your care.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

PUBLIC SERVER COMMUNICATION

Many players enjoy Minecraft with others, including friends and unknown players online. In-game text chat is commonly used to coordinate building projects and gameplay, and this can extend to adding friends to voice chat. While often harmless, this creates risks around contact with strangers, and in some cases server hosts may expose IP addresses (if hosting independently), which raises privacy and security concerns.

GRIEFING BEHAVIOUR

Some players deliberately damage or destroy other players' creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying that can undo hours of effort and cause frustration or distress to affected players. Although many servers treat griefing as a serious offence, enforcement varies. Children who prefer to build independently may feel safer working on private worlds or controlled servers.

ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY LOOPS

Minecraft's creative focus can make it easy for players to lose track of time. The cycle of gathering resources and building projects can be highly engaging, which may challenge agreed screen-time limits. If not managed effectively, this can impact children's sleep, schoolwork, and real-world social interaction.

SCARY GAME ELEMENTS

Although often compared to digital construction toys, some gameplay modes include hostile creatures with unsettling sounds and sudden encounters. While there is no graphic violence, younger players may still find zombies, spiders, or dark environments frightening. These experiences can lead to anxiety or reluctance to play, depending on the child's age and sensitivity.

IN-GAME SPENDING

Minecraft requires a one-off purchase after a free trial, usually around £5, but additional spending is possible. Players can buy cosmetic content or subscribe to Minecraft 'Realms' for private servers. Without supervision, children may make unintended purchases. Subscription services and add-ons can also increase overall costs over time if not monitored.

ONLINE INTERACTIONS

Playing with others can introduce broader online safety concerns, including exposure to inappropriate language or behaviour. Some players may attempt to move conversations beyond the game, which can increase risks to children's safety and welfare. Children may not always recognise these situations, meaning guidance and ongoing conversations about safe interactions are essential.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHOOSE SUITABLE GAME MODES

Creative or Peaceful modes remove hostile creatures and reduce the pressure during gameplay. These options allow children to focus on building and exploration without fear of attack. They are also ideal for shared play between adults and children, creating a calmer environment to learn the game and enjoy collaborative projects.

USE PRIVATE SERVERS

Setting up a private server helps control who can join a child's game. Access can be limited to trusted friends through passwords or invitations. This reduces the likelihood of unwanted interactions and gives adults greater oversight. While some options involve a subscription fee, they offer a safer and more controlled multiplayer experience.

DISCUSS ONLINE STRANGERS

Children should understand that not everyone they meet online is who they claim to be. Clear guidance about not sharing personal information is essential. Encourage children to report any worrying or uncomfortable interactions and reassure them that they can seek help without fear of punishment. Open, ongoing conversations help build their confidence and awareness of these issues.

SET SPENDING BOUNDARIES

Agree on clear rules around purchases before letting children play, and use device settings or platform controls to restrict spending within agreed limits. Explaining that in-game currency uses real-world money can help children make informed decisions. Regularly reviewing purchases together can also prevent unexpected costs and encourage responsible behaviour.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes spent 7 years in games media, before moving into the games industry via PR and marketing. A parent himself to a Minecraft-loving son, he understands why it's so important to stay safe online.



[See full reference list on our website](#)

#WakeUpWednesday The National College

[@wake_up_weds](#) [/www.thenationalcollege](#) [@wake.up.wednesday](#) [@wake.up.weds](#)

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 20.05.2026

We have a duty of care to safeguard all children and pass on any concerns to Children's Services.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr. M. Thompson. Deputy safeguarding leads are Miss H Hartness, Mrs. J McCormack, Mrs. D Simpson, and Mrs. C Allan. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

H. Hartness, Acting Head Teacher

*Thank you for your
continued support!*

Diary Dates for 2026-2027		
New / amended events added are highlighted in yellow after week 1		
2/09/26	Autumn 1 begin	Time
28/09/26	Reception Phonics Family Learning	9am
W/B 12/10/26	Parents' Evenings	
19/10/26	Tempest Photographs	
21/10/26	Year 1/ 2 Harvest Festival	2pm
23/10/26	Half term holiday	
9/11/26	Year 3 Family Learning	
10/11/26	Flu Vaccinations	
11/11/26	Year 4 Family Learning Rec Family Learning	
12/11/26	Year 5 Family Learning Year 1 Family Learning	
13/11/26	Year 6 Family Learning Year 2 Family Learning	
18/11/26	Year 6 at Lockerbie	
1/12/26	Christmas Fayre	
8/12/26	Reception Nativity	2pm
9/12/26	Year 1/ 2 Christmas Singalong	2pm
10/12/26	KS2 Pantomime	
14/12/26	Year 5 Christmas party	PM
15/12/26	Year 4 Christmas party	PM
16/12/26	Year 3 Christmas party Reception Christmas party	PM
17/12/26	Year 6 Christmas party Year 1/ 2 Christmas party	PM
18/12/26	KS2 Carols Under the Veranda	TBC