



# Parkside House School

**Newsletter Spring 2025**

April 2025



# Head Teacher Statement



**Belinda Young**

As we reach the end of the Spring Term, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the progress our pupils have made and express my gratitude for your continued support.

It has been so exciting having both the Ashington and Backworth sites working so well together, and this shared work can only support all Parkside House students in the future.

This term has been filled with exciting learning experiences, from engaging classroom activities to our off-site sporting activities and competitions. I am particularly proud of how our pupils have embraced challenges, showing resilience and determination in their learning. Their achievements, both academic and personal, are a testament to their hard work and the nurturing environment we strive to create at Parkside House School.

One of the highlights of this term has been our Enrichment visits, which have provided our pupils with the opportunity to explore new environments and experiences beyond the classroom. These visits not only enhance their learning but also foster a sense of curiosity and excitement about the world around them. It has been wonderful to see our pupils engage with these experiences enthusiastically, further developing their social skills and confidence.

As we look forward to the Summer Term, we remain committed to providing a safe and supportive environment where every pupil can thrive. We will continue to focus on enhancing our curriculum, ensuring it is both exciting and relevant, while also promoting self-esteem and critical thinking skills.

Thank you once again for your partnership and support. I wish you all a restful and enjoyable break, and I look forward to welcoming our pupils back for another term of growth and achievement.

Thank you

Belinda Young  
Head Teacher



## The Big School Birdwatch 2025

At Ashington, pupils enjoyed participating in Birdwatch, to further enrich their knowledge about birds' diet and habitats, by preparing seeds with suet mixtures and creating birdfeeders. They have also assembled and painted a birdhouse. All resources will be displayed in our garden, and we are hopeful that many bird species will visit us.

It is fair to say that January Birdwatch events have raised learners' interest and curiosity to not only observe and count bird species but also to learn about their traits, feeding and nesting habits.

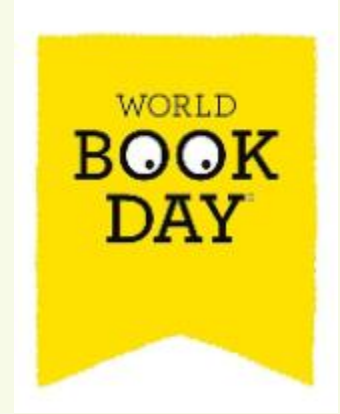


# World Book Day

## At Backworth

students embraced the joy of reading with a range of exciting activities. Each morning, students took part in various tasks including a fun guessing game, matching teachers' childhood photos to their favorite childhood books, sparking wonderful discussions about reading memories. Some students had the fantastic opportunity to visit Seven Stories, where they explored fascinating reading exhibitions, as captured in the photos.

Adding to the excitement, both staff and students dressed up as beloved book characters on World Book Day, bringing stories to life throughout the school. Alongside this, we had our *Book and Bake Break* which provided a chance for everyone to swap a book, enjoy a sweet treat, and engage in conversations about their favorite reads. We hope this week has inspired our students to continue their reading journey and discover the endless joy that books can bring!



## At Ashington

At our Ashington site, Our learners have celebrated World Book Day by impersonating their favourite characters; writing testimonials about books, authors and genres they enjoy reading about, in preparation for the 'Reading your way' Competition; taking part in this year's National Literacy Trust webinar (discovering what it takes to be a writer, with Benjamin Dean). We are planning a fantastic display board in our setting to recognize everyone's efforts and enthusiasm.

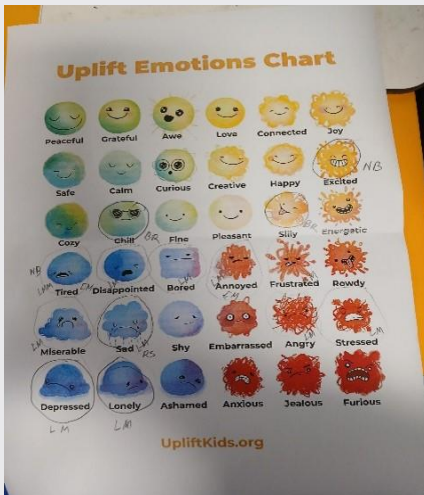




# World Book Day in Pictures







## Children's Mental Health Week @ Backworth

Many of the students and staff embraced the weeks activities and participated enthusiastically in the 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself' theme.

All students and staff were invited to an 'emotions workshop' to help make a 'emotions display'. This was to encourage active participation in working together, socialising with each other and to promote reducing stigma around mental health.

Whilst younger students took part in a 'know yourself grow yourself' power point, followed by an amusing 'game of emotions bingo', the older students who are coming up to exams later this year, benefited from an 'emotions and exam stress' presentation given by Miss Crawley our school OT.



## Children's Mental Health Week @ Ashington

Our progress coach Nicola is usually very colourful and bubbly, and she nominated herself to wear dark dull clothes all week, to show the effect colour has on her Mental Health and wellbeing. Staff and learners have been sponsoring her to raise money for Place2be charity. This year's theme for Children's Mental Health is **Know Yourself, Grow Yourself.**

*'I am very surprised by how this has had a negative effect on my mood. I don't feel myself at all and have had a bad head at the end of each day, with all the feelings of sadness and grief! Where has the colour gone?! 😞'*

*Quite a few learners have commented to say I look 'boring', that it 'doesn't look right' and they 'can't cope with this all week!' Oops – sorry everyone!*

Learners have participated in wellness activities throughout the week, and wore PJ's or something yellow and green

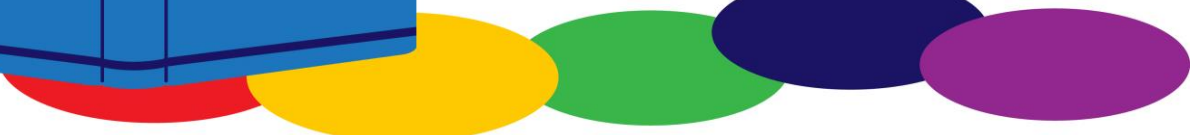




# Reading Rewards



A group of students enjoyed a well-deserved local trip as a reward for their dedication to the reading intervention programme with Miss Towse this term. The outing began with a relaxing visit to Costa, where everyone enjoyed a drink together. Afterwards, we headed to The Works, where each student had the chance to choose a new reading book and a small gift as a token of recognition for their hard work and progress. It was a lovely way to celebrate their efforts and encourage their continued love of reading.







## Visit To The Theatre



On Wednesday 9th April, a class of students visited the Sunderland Empire to watch a performance of *An Inspector Calls*. The trip was a thoroughly enjoyable experience for everyone involved, offering a unique opportunity to see the text they have been studying in class brought to life on stage. The powerful production helped deepen their understanding of the play's characters, themes, and dramatic techniques, making it an invaluable part of their preparation for the GCSE Literature exam.





## British Science Week

British Science Week was an exciting time for our students, filled with hands-on experiments, museum visits, and fascinating discoveries. They explored natural history at the Hancock Museum, learned about engineering at the Discovery Museum, and engaged with interactive exhibits at the Centre for Life.

In the classroom, they conducted thrilling experiments, from testing surface tension with black pepper and dish soap to inflating balloons with baking soda and vinegar, recreating animal cells with jelly, and investigating surface friction etc. This immersive week ignited curiosity and inspired young minds, making science both fun and educational.





# Celebrating 40 years of Comic Relief



Pupils from Ashington enjoyed celebrating 40 years of comic relief . learners participated in a four mile walk to Newbiggin by the sea.

We raised £55, well done everyone that took part





## Sports Events



*A small group of learners from our Ashington site, went to GOALS, Newcastle in March to take part in an inter school football competition. Despite being the smallest school to take part, our learners demonstrated resilience, teamwork and leadership skills throughout the day. They encouraged one and another and displayed great sportsmanship. Everyone had a fabulous time.*



*In March a group of learners attended a basketball competition at the Vertu Arena in Newcastle, home to the Eagles. Throughout the event, the learners displayed team work, resilience and leadership skills. They communicated with each other and supported one another throughout the day, as well as celebrating the wins together. Throughout the event, our learners were polite and courteous with all those they interacted with, proving themselves to be fine ambassadors for Buzz. There was also the opportunity to watch some of the Eagles train.*





# Careers



Throughout the Spring term, Parkside House School have facilitated a robust careers curriculum. Each teaching group has a bespoke Careers programme, tailored to their ability and/or year group, whichever is most appropriate. The content delivered to the young people is a mix of OFG's Incredible Futures Careers Curriculum and one created by Buzz's Careers Lead.

Lessons this term include Jobs in the Community, Applications, CV and Cover Letters, Independent Living, Finances and Tax (for Global Money Week) Careers Week and National Apprenticeship Week.

Young people also took part in practical activities such as a visit to AkzoNobel where all school learners had a tour of the facility and were introduced to the different departments and job roles within the most sustainable paint factory in the world, right here in Ashington. Alongside weekly employability and careers lessons in the Spring term, all young people from Year 10 to Year 14 have been given a careers interview by our Careers Advisor, Michala Mason, Northumberland County Council Career Advisor, Michael Holliday or Buzz College Employability and Careers Lead, Hannah Harighi. These interviews, along with physical visits to other post-16 provisions have helped inform college learners, their parents and Local Authority as to what will be the learner's preferred destination in September 2025.

In February, Claire Angus from the DWP visited the school to deliver a session on Interview Techniques.



# Wellbeing News

"A Therapeutic, safe learning environment, where the holistic development of every individual is nurtured to protect and support emotional wellbeing and mental health"

## Wellbeing Award We Did It!

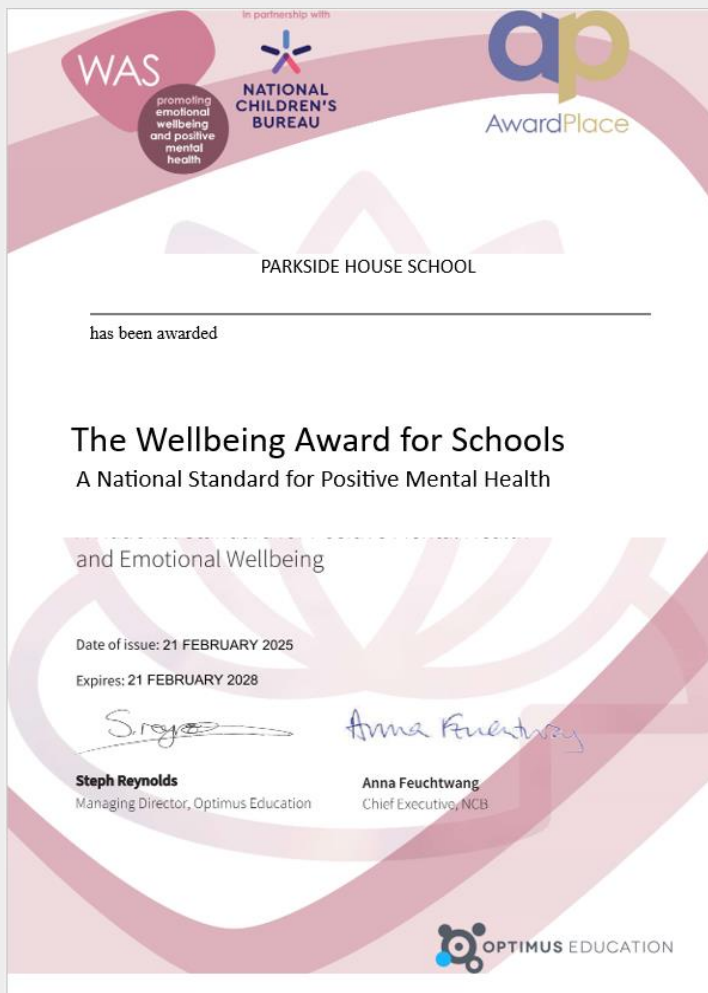
## Meet Our Wellbeing Team

### Wellbeing Leads

Mr Turnbull



Mrs Towse



### Wellbeing Champions



We are thrilled to announce we have been awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS).

The opening line of the report:

**"Parkside House School provides a caring, supportive and inclusive environment, which has high expectations and values all members within the school community"**

The WAS Report celebrated the school's caring supportive and inclusive environment, and included the following quotes from parents:

**"We felt really proud at parent's evening, and heard so many positive things which doesn't normally happen. The school has supported the wellbeing of all of us and life at home is so much better."**

**'I would a million percent recommend Parkside House as it is the most amazing school for my child's needs and support'.**





# End of Term Awards



**100%**

**D Atkinson, L Butler,  
S V Vrouwerf, L Strain,  
L M McNestrie**

**Gold - < 95%**

**L Campbell, C Hill, A Gigja, E  
Bloomfield, L Gormley,  
Z Cleathero L Lamie, L Rutherford,  
R Slater, O Webster, L Dryden,  
A McAuley, D L Adams,**

**Silver – 90%- 95%**

**CT Walker, D Cina, A Smith-  
Paul, R Ritson, A Yearnshire, J  
McAlle, JoYearnshire, L McKeith**

**Most Improved Attendance @  
Ashington  
Peyton Grey**



**Pupil of the Term**

**Aurora Gigja**

**Sports Person of The**



**Simon Van Vrouwerf**

**Helping Hands Award**



**Dylan Lee Adams**

**Most Improved Award**



**Jermaine McAlle**

**Highest Dojo Rewards**

**Jacob Pallister**

**Nominations for Special  
Recognition of  
Achievement**

**Ruby Grist, Jacob Pallister, Haylee  
Allan, Leah Cochrane, Peyton Grey**

**Special Recognition of  
Achievement Award**

**Isabella Souter**





# School Term Dates

## Backworth

**Summer Term starts Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

Holiday	School Will Close	Pupils Return <u>To</u> School
Bank Holiday	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
Summer Half Term 2025	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2025	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2025
Summer Term End	Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2025

## Ashington

Easter	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> April 2025	Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
May Day	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2025
May Half Term	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2025	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2025
Summer	Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	





