



Newsletter – Spring Term 2026

'Inspiring young minds to unlock their potential to grow.'

Last half term certainly brought plenty of rain — and even a little snow. However, the darker, wetter days did not slow us down. I have been incredibly impressed by how hard pupils are working, particularly in developing their oracy skills in lessons. The quality of discussion, reasoning and respectful debate across classrooms has been excellent. You may already be noticing your children confidently explaining their thinking, building on others' ideas or presenting well-reasoned arguments at home. These are skills we are deliberately teaching and practising, and it is wonderful to see them growing in confidence.

Maths Masters

On Thursday 22 January 2026, four of our KS2 pupils attended the EMET Maths Masters competition at Chellaston Junior School. This was Hollywell's first-time taking part, alongside ten schools from across the Trust. Each team included one pupil from Years 3–6.

The event was highly engaging and challenging. Pupils began with an individual round, answering ten mathematical questions against peers in their year group. This was followed by a fast-paced team problem-solving round, where pupils collaborated to tackle word problems drawn from across the KS2 curriculum.

Although we did not win on the night, every pupil performed brilliantly and represented Hollywell with pride. Their teamwork, resilience and mathematical reasoning were excellent. Well done to all involved.



Sporting News - Cross Country Success



A huge congratulations to our five Year 5 runners who competed at the Nottinghamshire County Schools Cross Country Championships, having qualified through the Broxtowe event.

They ran exceptionally well against strong competition from both Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. A particular congratulations goes to Florence in Year 5, who achieved an outstanding 2nd place in the girls' race. We are incredibly proud of all of them.

World Book Day – Thursday 5th March 2026

This year we will be celebrating World Book Day in a slightly different way. Rather than dressing up (which we do every three years), our focus will be on talking about books and further developing pupils' oracy skills.

Throughout the day, children will:

- Engage in structured partner talk and book discussions
- Retell stories and learn poems to perform
- Share reading across different classes
- Take part in interactive story experiences



Our aim is to deepen children's understanding of texts through discussion — helping them explain opinions, ask thoughtful questions and share ideas confidently. We are looking forward to a day full of stories, conversation and a shared love of reading.

Parent Questionnaire – We Value Your Voice

Thank you to the many parents who completed our questionnaire during Parents' Evening. If you did not have the opportunity, we would very much welcome your feedback via the annual survey link here:

<https://edurio.com/poll/cMKkG4> . Or using the QR code below.



Your views are invaluable in helping us strengthen communication, enhance learning opportunities and continue improving our provision. Whether celebrating what works well or suggesting areas for development, your feedback genuinely shapes our work.

Community Effort – Eastwood Food Bank Collection

At our Christmas Fair, a group of enterprising Year 6 pupils asked to run a stall to raise money for Eastwood Food Bank. They designed and made items using their 3D printers at home.

They raised £78, and I had the pleasure of taking them shopping in Kimberley to purchase food items to donate. The pupils demonstrated initiative, teamwork and generosity, and we are extremely proud of their community spirit.

The food bank expressed particular gratitude, as donations are typically lower at this time of year. Thank you to everyone who also contributed additional items.

If you require support, or know someone who would benefit, please contact Eastwood Volunteer Bureau on 01773 535255.



Year 6 Visit from Nottingham University

Year 6 pupils enjoyed an exciting visit from scientists from Nottingham University, who led a range of practical experiments.

Children:

- Extracted DNA from bananas (humans and bananas share approximately 40–60% DNA)
- Used microscopes to study onion cells
- Examined natural objects, including an animal skull
- Planted sunflower seeds

The visiting lecturers were highly complimentary about the children's focus, enthusiasm and respectful behaviour. It was a fabulous afternoon of scientific enquiry.



First Aid Learning



As part of our enrichment offer, Year 2 and Year 5 pupils each year learn essential first aid skills.

They practise treating minor injuries, placing someone in the recovery position, delivering CPR and knowing how to call for help in an emergency.

These are vital life skills which contribute to children's confidence and independence

PE Kits – Reminder

A reminder that children should have their PE kits in school every day.

PE kit consists of:

- Red shorts
- Plain white round-necked t-shirt
- Trainers
- Tracksuit (black or dark colour) for outdoor PE in colder weather

Please ensure your child has the correct kit to enable them to participate fully.

School clubs – Spring 2 (Feb - Mar)

Tuesdays	8.00 – 8.45am	KS2 Yoga	Y3 – Y6
Tuesdays	3.30 – 4.30pm	KS1 Nerf Wars	Y1 & Y2
Tuesdays	3.30 – 4.15pm	Ukulele Club	Y2 – Y6
Wednesdays	8.00 – 8.45am	KS2 Table Tennis	Y3 – Y6
Wednesdays	3.30 – 4.30pm	KS2 Nerf Wars	Y3 – Y6
Fridays	3.30 – 4.30pm	SH Active Fencing	Y1 – Y6

GROWTH Enrichment

GROWTH is our bespoke personal development programme and forms a golden thread throughout the Hollywell curriculum. It develops our core values: Growing, Resilience, Open-Mindedness, Wonder, Teamwork and Happiness.

From EYFS to Year 6, pupils engage in four strands:

1. The Great Outdoors
2. A Sporting Difference
3. Healthy Body and Mind
4. Community Action

Through GROWTH, children take risks, learn new skills and step beyond their comfort zones in a supportive environment. Experiences include:

- Forest Schools
- Ice skating
- Learning musical instruments
- Healthy cooking
- Orienteering
- Team building
- Growing and cooking produce
- Coding and sewing
- A wide range of sports (including disability sports)
- Emergency first aid

We are proud of the breadth and depth of opportunity this programme provides and the resilience and confidence it builds.



Staffing Update

Since beginning her maternity leave in October, Mrs Stone welcomed a beautiful baby boy, Arthur, in December. She has also relocated to be closer to family and has therefore decided she will not be returning to Hollywell.

Mrs Stone has given seven years of dedicated service to our school community and will be greatly missed. We thank her for her commitment to the children of Hollywell and wish her and her family every happiness. She has promised to visit in the coming months.

Friday 20th March – Red Nose Day

On Friday 20th March we will be supporting Comic Relief by taking part in Red Nose Day.

This year's theme is 'Take Yourself Funny for Money'. Pupils are invited to come to school wearing funny, mismatched or colourful clothes and bring a £1 donation to help us raise money for this important cause.

We look forward to a fun day supporting a charity that makes a real difference to children and families both in the UK and around the world.



Key Dates

5 th March	World Book Day
12 th March	Y2 Yorkshire Wildlife Park Visit
13 th March	Last KS2 GROWTH (block 2)
18 th March	Guitar & Ukulele Recital 9.15am
19 th March	Drum & Piano Recital 9.15am
20 th March	Community fundraiser & coffee morning
25 th March	Y3 & Y4 Performance 9.30am & 4pm
30- 10 th Apr	Easter Holidays
13 th April	Return to school
17 th April	KS1 GROWTH (block 1 X6wks)
28 th April	Y1 Victorian Day Visit
4 th May	May Bank Holiday
11-14 th May	Y6 SATS
14 th May	Y5 Planetarium Visit
19-22 nd May	Y6 Residential (Walesby Forest)
22 nd May	Last KS1 GROWTH (block 1)
25-29 th May	Half Term
1 st June	Return to school
1-10 th June	MTC check window
5 th June	KS1 GROWTH starts (block 2 x6wks)
7-12 th June	Phonics screening
22-24 th June	Y5 Residential (provisional) - Beaumanor
25 – 26 th June	Y4 Residential – The Mill
3 rd July	Sports Day 1.15pm
8 th July	Y5 & Y6 Production 9.30am & 5pm
9-10 th July	Y6 Transition days TKS
10 th July	Whole school transition day
15 th July	Open afternoon 2-4pm
23 rd July	Disco
24 th July	Leavers assembly 9.30am
24 th July	Children finish for the summer
27 th July	INSET Day
27- 31 st Aug	Summer Holidays

Thank you for your continued support. As always, we value the strong partnership between home and school and look forward to another productive half term ahead.

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

▶ YOUTUBE ▶

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows YouTube. The Google-owned site lets anyone upload videos to be shared around the world, and as a result, it's an incredible resource with instant free access to material covering every conceivable topic. But with over 500 hours of video uploaded every minute, not all of it will be appropriate for young eyes.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate content. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but it can also lead to binge-watching and screen addiction – especially if 'auto-play' is active. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

RADICALISATION

YouTube's algorithm tends to promote content that's getting the most traffic – a lot of which can be quite extreme. This can be fine for harmless topics, but YouTube isn't regulated like television, and that means that conspiracy theories, fake news and hateful ideologies can occasionally surface to warp impressionable minds all too easily. Remember – the more they watch, the more they'll be recommended.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as message other users directly. Connecting with strangers online can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, cyberbullying and – in the worst cases – online predators. If a child is creating content themselves, this can increase the likelihood of them becoming a target.

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends and challenges, some of which are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may cause physical or emotional harm to children who watch or copy them. The painful 'salt and ice challenge' – where people use these two ingredients to burn their skin – is just one of many examples.

SNEAKY SCAMMERS

The comments sections of popular content creators regularly have scammers posing as that influencer, attempting to lure users into clicking on their phishing links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and often offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users aren't who they claim to be.

Advice for Parents & Educators

APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

For older children, Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate material (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence, and sexual content) to underage viewers. To prevent children from chancing across age-inappropriate content on the platform, we would recommend enabling Restricted Mode on each device that they use to access YouTube. It's worth also turning the auto-play feature off, to prevent YouTube's algorithm automatically recommending something inappropriate.



TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows parents and carers to monitor what their child is watching, uploading, and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches, and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives a parent or carer oversight of how their child uses sites like YouTube and helps to ensure that they are only accessing appropriate content.



MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them under 18. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course. You may want to keep an eye on how children interact with this material – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand what they're interested in. Remember that creators often share content outside of YouTube, so don't ignore their web presence elsewhere!



CONSIDER YOUTUBE KIDS

It's possible to sidestep most inappropriate content completely via Google's own YouTube Kids app for Android handsets and iPhone. This lets you filter content by 'preschool' (4 and under), 'younger' (ages 5 to 8) and 'older' (ages 9 to 12). This isn't a perfect substitute for personal supervision, as the app's filtering system is automated, and Google can't manually review all videos.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that a child is subscribed to can be hidden. If the child is only uploading videos set as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.



LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases. For example, users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch. If you'd like to avoid children purchasing content online, limit their access to online payment methods. Many parents have discovered the hard way that a child happily consuming a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!



Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.

