

Newsletter

Summer Term 2026

Week 11



Please note, school will be open as normal on Monday 6th July following the England game on Sunday night. We ask that children are in full school uniform, and are in school on time.

Free School Meals - September 2026

We are writing to inform you that the Government are making national changes to how free school meals are provided from September 2026, and this may affect your child's entitlement.

What is Changing?

From September 2026, all children whose families receive Universal Credit will be entitled to free school meals. However, the system will now have two categories depending on household income.

Types of Free School Meals

Targeted Free School Meals: For families receiving Universal Credit with yearly household earnings of £7,400 or less.

Children in this group will continue to receive additional support such as:

- Access to Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) program
- Extended school transport support (where applicable)

Expanded Free School Meals: For families receiving Universal Credit with earnings above £7,400.

Children in this group will still receive a free school meal each day. If your child currently accesses the extended right to school transport this will continue for the academic year 2026/27.

Changes to Existing Entitlement

Since April 2018, transitional protection has meant that children kept their free school meals even if family circumstances changed. This protection will finish at the end of the 2025-2026 school year.

From September 2026, all pupils will be reassessed and must meet the new eligibility criteria to continue receiving free school meals.

What This Means for Your Child

If your child currently receives a free school meal they will be reassessed before September. Your child will then fall into one of the following groups:

- Continue to receive free school meals and additional support (Targeted FSM)
- Continue to receive free school meals only (Expanded FSM)
- No longer be eligible for free school meals

If your child is no longer eligible, you will need to pay for school meals from September 2026.

Universal infant free school meals (UIFSM) provides funding for all government-funded schools to offer free school meals to pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2.

If you believe that your child will become eligible from September 2026 you will be able to apply online or via the school office prior to September. The Government has provided the Council with new checking system that is not fully operation at the moment so we cannot take applications for the new criteria just yet. When we can accept

new applications, we will update our website and let your school know.

What Happens Next?

The Council will begin reassessing all pupils who receive free school meals as soon as we can. At first, we will identify those who meet the Targeted FSM criteria.

Once the new system is fully in place, we will write to you again to confirm your child's updated eligibility status.

If you are making a new application for the expanded free school meal criteria, we will let you and your child's school know the outcome. Please provide a valid email address on your application.

If you feel you meet the targeted free school meals criteria now you can continue to apply via <https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/schools-and-education/free-school-meals-clothing-vouchers-and-activities/free-school-meals-and-clothing-vouchers>

Further Information and Support

If you have general free school meals enquiries please contact

fsm.clothinggrants@cumberland.gov.uk

If you would like further information on available cost of living support please

visit; Cost of living support | Cumberland Council

World Cup Sports Wear

In support of England playing their World Cup matches, we are allowing children to come into school wearing football kits and sports wear on these days ONLY.



Year 6 Leavers

Check out the Times and Star the week of 17th July to see photographs of our year 6 leavers!

Wellbeing Guide

Screens are now part of everyday family life, but for very young children, clear and predictable boundaries can help screen time feel calm rather than constant.

Our latest #WakeUpWednesday guide shares practical advice for families, nurseries and early years settings on supporting healthier digital habits for under-fives.

The guide covers:

- Choosing age-appropriate content
- Protecting bedtime routines
- Keeping devices in shared spaces
- Co-viewing and talking about what children see
- Using simple scripts and transition warnings
- Modelling balanced device use as adults

With supportive tips and realistic routines, this guide helps adults manage screen time with greater confidence.

Guide at the end of the newsletter.

Team Bassenthwaite

Another very busy week for Team Bassenthwaite.

This week we have been completing our end of year assessments. We can't believe we're here already!

We have persevered to complete reading, writing and maths assessments as well as continuing our learning in the afternoons.

As scientists this week we have collected our final results from the experiment we were observing over time. We collected the data and put it into tables and graphs. We found out that plants definitely need water to grow as the plant that had no water actually got shorter.

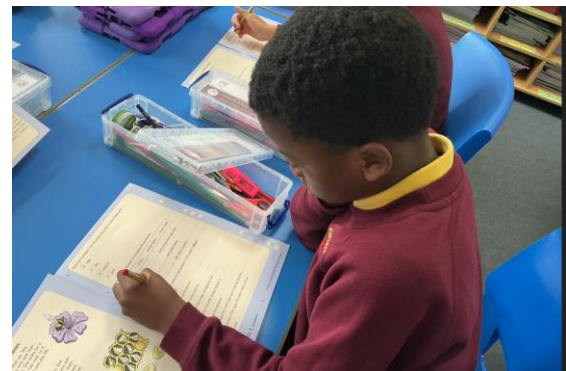
As mathematicians this week we have spent a bit of time looking at time. We have looked at some different clock faces and matched them to different times. We know that clocks have a minute hand and an hour and that some also have a second hand. We looked at half past, quarter past, quarter to and o'clock. We have also started reading a lovely book called 'Lucy in the Lakes', which goes with our geography topic of the Lake District.



Team Buttermere

This week has been another busy and successful one in our classroom! In Guided Reading, we have been reading 'Lucy and the Lakes', using our VIPERS

skills to develop our understanding of the text through thoughtful discussion and comprehension activities. It has also been assessment week, and the children have worked incredibly hard to complete their Reading, Maths and SPaG papers. Well done to everyone for showing such resilience and determination. We have continued practising for our exciting summer show and have begun creating our enterprise products, which we are looking forward to selling soon. On Tuesday, we welcomed the Year 2 children for their transition day, and our class did a fantastic job helping them settle in by getting to know them and showing them around the playground in the afternoon. Fantastic effort from everyone this week, keep up the great work!



Team Crummock

As artists this week, we have been exploring the work of William Morris, and have used his work to inspire us to create our own version of 'The Strawberry Thief'. As mathematicians

this week, we have been revising some of the topics that we have learnt this year, and have then put our knowledge to the test during our assessments. As writers this week, we have made a plan and wrote a first draft of a story, which we will then edit and publish next week. In PE this week, we have been looking at the different techniques that we can use to develop our jumping for distance. Throughout the week, we have been going to the hall to practice our performance for the Summer Show next week. On Tuesday, we welcomed the year 2s to the school as they came across to see their new class. We all got together and had some fun on the field. On Wednesday, we went to the hall where we were met by Mr Milner on the piano. He was supporting one of our work experience pupils, George, who treated us to a rendition of Somewhere Over the Rainbow on his saxophone.



Team Derwentwater

It has been another fantastic week of learning in Derwentwater. Pupils have continued to work hard across the curriculum, showing enthusiasm, resilience and a positive attitude in every lesson.

In Literacy, pupils have been learning how to use titles and subheadings to organise their writing clearly. They have explored how these features help readers locate information and make texts easier to understand.

In Maths, our focus has been on symmetry. Pupils have identified lines of symmetry in a range of 2D shapes and created their own symmetrical patterns using careful observation and accuracy. To round off our Science topic, pupils completed their end-of-topic assessment. They have worked incredibly hard throughout the unit, and this was a great opportunity to demonstrate all they have learned.

In PE, pupils have been developing their athletics skills. They have practised running, jumping and throwing techniques while focusing on improving their speed, coordination and teamwork. In Computing, pupils have continued programming a game. They have used coding skills to create interactive games, debugging their programs and adding exciting features to improve gameplay. Our Music lessons have been dedicated to summer production rehearsals. Pupils

have been practising enthusiastically and are looking forward to performing with confidence.

In Keyboards, pupils have been rehearsing a song for their final performance. Their confidence and musical ability continue to grow with each practice session.

In RE, pupils have been learning about how the Qur'an and Hadith influence Muslims. They explored how these important texts provide guidance and shape the daily lives and beliefs of Muslims.

This week in French, pupils discovered classic French dishes. They learned the names of traditional foods while developing their pronunciation and cultural understanding.

Team Coniston

Another fantastic week here in Team Coniston.

As **writers** this week, we have been story writing using a picture as a stimulus. The children have been asked to include as many skills they have been taught this year. We have some amazing story writers.

Our reading lessons have continued to look at explanatory texts, especially looking at Food and digestion as this is what we are learning about in our science lessons.

As mathematicians this week, we began by learning how to read and plot co-ordinates and then went on to identifying different types of triangles. As scientists, we learned what a food chain is and some new scientific vocabulary.

In RE we continued to learn about the Prophet Mohammed and in French we continued to say our opinions about food.

As geographers, we continued to look at Cumbria and the Mediterranean. This week we began to compare food and languages.

As part of our PSHE lessons we discussed how food is a fuel for our bodies.

Alongside this, Team Coniston are busy rehearsing for the Summer show.

Look out for the photographs on Class Dojo. Keep working hard Team Coniston



Team Loweswater

This week team Loweswater have been working very hard to complete their final assessments of the year. In literacy, we have been planning our writing

assessment piece. In maths we have been learning about time. We looked at the 12- and 24-hour clocks and how to convert between units of time. In science this week we have completed a cross-curricular piece of writing. We have written an explanation text all about the digestive system. We wrote an introduction and explanations for what happens during each stage of digestion. In another science lesson we have been learning about food chains. In French we have been learning about classic French dishes. This week we have also been practicing for the summer show which we are all looking forward to!



Team Ullswater

We have had a great week in Team Ullswater, ending with a fantastic performance in Vulcans Park.

This week, we have practised our songs for the Summer Show, sorted out our costumes and made sure we are all ready for our performance next Wednesday.

As Scientists, we are starting to investigate and recognise the different stages of life that human go through. This week, we have focussed on Birth - puberty and all of the wonderful things children learn in such a short space of time.

As Writers, we completed our final piece of writing, using all of the work we have produced over the last few weeks. This was a significant piece of writing which was inspired by images alone and so the descriptions created by the children really was a fantastic way for them to use their own imagination as much as they liked.

As Artists, we are using our sketching techniques to focus on creation shape and dimension. We all completed a step-by-step lesson on how to draw a male and female side profile, using symmetry, shading and hatching techniques, to create a 3D illusion. The children were pleased with their work and could see how following certain Artistic rules, helps the final piece and outcome.



Team Grasmere

In Maths and Grammar this week, we have been revising for our end of year assessments.

This week we have persevered in this weather and worked hard to complete our assessments.

In science, we have been learning about how the blood travels through our body and what it carries.

In History, we have been learning about why immigrants may be faced with prejudice when migrating to the UK.

Today we are going to have our lunch and watch the Odd Socks performance in the park.

Well done Grasmere, we're nearly there! Keep up the fantastic work.



Team Ennerdale

Ennerdale have enjoyed a slightly cooler week and have been working hard across the curriculum. In English, we have been researching and gathering

information about Mars in preparation for writing our own non-chronological reports. In Maths, we have started a new unit focusing on angles and have been revisiting how to identify and classify them. In Science, pupils learned about sexual reproduction, labelled the male and female reproductive systems and explored the function of each part. During PE with Kane, the children made the most of the sunshine by heading outdoors and creating their own athletics activities and challenges. We have also continued rehearsing for our Summer Show, and the performance is really starting to come together. Finally, a huge congratulations to Freyja, who was our Reading Heroes Competition winner this week and also the lucky winner of our Class Dojo Draw!



Team Thirlmere

It's been another busy week for Team Thirlmere!

We have been working hard to prepare for our end of year performances. We have been practicing our songs for the Leavers Assembly and rehearsing with Mr Milner and Miss Morton for Mr Milner's musical about the history of Workington.

Thirlmere have been working on our Enterprise ideas and getting some of our stock ready to go.

We have been writing some setting descriptions using pictures of the same forest from day to night.

On Thursday, everyone visited their secondary school for the day, I am sure everyone had a great time!

Well done everyone, not long to go!



Team Windermere

This week Windermere have had a very busy week preparing for various performances for the end of the year.

We have been rehearsing the dance and songs for Mr Milner's musical all about the history of Workington, there are some great performances that I am sure parents will be very proud of.

Windermere and the rest of Year 6 have also been rehearsing for their Leavers Assembly which takes place in the last week of term. We have been rehearsing the songs and pulling a script together with lots of memories to share.

We have been taking part in some maths challenges involving booking trains and hotels for a trip to London, but organising this with a budget in mind.

In English we have been writing setting descriptions using two contrasting pictures of the same forest. There were some excellent examples of descriptive language used.

Another busy week in Windermere



**Please note:
Diary dates are subject to
change - please check back
weekly for updates**

**Do you have concerns
about a child in Cumberland?**



**If you are worried that a child is at risk of immediate
harm please contact:**

**Cumberland Safeguarding Hub on
0333 240 1727**

Email: safeguarding.hub@cumberland.gov.uk

**(PLEASE PASSWORD PROTECT THE EMAIL AND SEND THE PASSWORD
IN A FURTHER EMAIL)**

**Out of working hours – contact the
Emergency Duty Team on 0300 373 2724**

**To speak to a Local Authority Designated Officer
(LADO) for advice call**

0300 303 3892

or email lado@cumbria.gov.uk

To speak to the Cumberland Early Help Team call

0300 303 3896

Or email early.help@cumberland.gov.uk

Kym Allen Safeguarding, Health and Safety Consultants Ltd.
April 2025

July

8th - Summer Show at Carnegie Theatre

9th - End of year discos

10th - Enterprise Day

13th - Year 4 Phunky Foods

14th - Year 6 Prom

14th - Crummock class to LEVELS

15th - Year 6 Leavers Assembly

17th - Break up for Summer 1pm

Victoria School

Nursery, Infant and Junior Term Dates 2025/2026

Autumn Term 2025

Starts: Wednesday 3rd September 2025

Half Term: Monday 27th - Friday 31st October 2025

Ends: Friday 19th December 2025

Spring Term 2026

Starts: Tuesday 6th January 2026

Half Term: Monday 16th - Friday 20th February 2026

Ends: Friday 27th March 2026

Summer Term 2026

Starts: Monday 13th April 2026

Half Term: Friday 22nd May - Friday 29th May 2026

Ends: Friday 17th July 2026

Good Friday: 3rd April

Easter Sunday: 5th April

Easter Monday: 6th April

May bank holiday: Monday 4th May 2026

INSET DAYS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026

INSET are determined locally

Please note these may differ from Cumbria County Council term dates

Victoria School Nursery, Infant and Junior Term Dates 2026/2027

Autumn Term 2026

Starts: Wednesday 2nd September 2026

Half Term: Monday 26th - Friday 30th October 2026

Ends: Friday 18th December 2026

Spring Term 2027

Starts: Tuesday 5th January 2027

Half Term: Monday 15th - Friday 19th February 2027

Ends: Thursday 25th March 2027

Summer Term 2027

Starts: Monday 12th April 2027

Half Term: Friday 28th May - Friday 4th June 2027

Ends: Friday 16th July 2027

Good Friday: 26th March

Easter Sunday: 28th March

Easter Monday: 29th March

May bank holiday: Monday 3rd May 2027

INSET DAYS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-2027

INSET are determined locally

Please note these may differ from Cumberland Council term dates

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

MANAGING DIGITAL BOUNDARIES FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Screens are part of everyday life, but they should not take over early childhood routines. For under-fives, healthy digital habits are built through simple, steady boundaries that protect sleep, play, connection, and development. Current UK guidance advises avoiding screen time for children under two – except for shared activities such as video calls – while children aged two to five should ideally have no more than one hour a day.

1 ASK A GROWN-UP FIRST

For under-fives, autonomy is important, but not when it comes to choosing digital content. Establish an 'ask a grown-up first' rule early, whether at home or in an early years setting. Adults should choose the video, app, or game, therefore helping children avoid unsuitable content and understand that devices are tools to be guided, not toys to control.

2 PROTECT SLEEP BUFFERS

Screens can make it harder for young children to wind down, especially when content is bright, noisy, or fast-paced. Aim for a screen-free hour before sleep or start with 30 minutes if that feels more realistic. Use this time for calming routines such as stories, bath time, quiet play, or cuddles, helping children recognise that bedtime is approaching.

3 CO-VIEW AND CHAT

Screen time is safer and more meaningful when adults are involved. Sit with children, even briefly, and talk about what they're watching. Ask simple questions like, "What can you see?" or "How does that character feel?" This turns passive viewing into shared interaction, supports language development, and helps adults spot adverts, unsuitable content, or confusing messages.

4 KEEP DEVICES HIDDEN

Young children are more likely to ask for screens when they can see or reach them. Keep devices out of sight when they're not being used, and consider casting content to a shared screen instead of handing over a phone or tablet to a child. This reduces private scrolling, supports shared viewing, and helps adults stay in control of what appears next.

5 PLAN THE TRANSITION

The hardest part of screen time is often stopping. Before the screen goes off, tell the child what's coming next and offer two acceptable choices, such as blocks or drawing. This gives them a sense of agency without removing the boundary. A planned next activity prevents a sudden gap, which can quickly become frustration or distress.

6 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children notice adult habits long before they understand adult explanations. If they're expected to put their screens away, they need to see adults doing the same thing during meals, play, and conversations. Create a shared 'phone home', such as a basket or shelf, to show that technology has a place in daily life but does not need constant attention.

7 MAKE SCREENS PREDICTABLE

Young children do not always understand minutes, but they quickly learn patterns. When screen time happens at a regular point in the day, it becomes a routine rather than a negotiation. Use the same start and finish signals each time, such as a timer, goodbye wave, or tidy-away moment, so children know what to expect next.

8 CREATE SCREEN ZONES

Physical boundaries help children understand digital boundaries. Keep screens out of bedrooms to protect their sleep and away from tables to preserve mealtime connections. Choose one agreed 'yes space', such as a shared living room area or supervised classroom corner. This makes limits feel less personal and more like a clear family or setting routine.

9 USE SIMPLE SCRIPTS

Transitions are easier when children hear the same calm language each time. Use short, repeatable phrases such as, "First tidy, then tablet," or "When the timer beeps, we stop." Avoid long explanations during emotional moments. Simple scripts reduce negotiation, help adults stay consistent, and give children clear expectations they can gradually understand and follow.

10 PRIORITISE SLOW CONTENT

Not all screen time feels the same to a young child's brain. Fast-paced clips, loud sounds, and rapid scene changes can make it harder for some children to settle down afterwards. Choose slower content with simple stories, gentle voices, and natural pauses. Think of digital content like food, with more calm, nourishing choices than fast-paced, digital 'sugar rushes'.

Meet Our Expert

Neha Agarwal is the founder of Cyber Ved Kids, an innovative educational initiative that transforms complex cybersecurity concepts into engaging, age-appropriate adventures for children aged 3-10. With her unique background leading cybersecurity services for corporates and serving as an expert panel advisor on Internet Matters, Neha brings corporate-grade cybersecurity expertise to the early years world.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

See full references list on our website

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