



Newsletter 8

19th December 2025

Headteacher Message



As we reach the end of a very busy term, I want to take a moment to reflect on the hard work, achievements and events we have enjoyed together. This term has been a fantastic one - our

children (and staff!) have consistently demonstrated our school values of love and determination in their work as well as all the festivities. It has been an absolute pleasure to see them throw themselves into Nativities, carol singing and other celebrations, and it is a testament to their hard work and the dedication of our exceptional staff that they have done so with such success. I'm sure you will agree that all three Nativities were wonderful and we hope they will be one of the highlights of Christmas 2025 for you all. The children have well and truly earned their two weeks off school!

It is always a joy to end the term with our Carol Service at St Nicholas' Church. Thank you to everyone who joined us. We will see you all on Monday 5th January, rested and raring to go into 2026!

From me and all the staff, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Kate Massey

Attendance



Did you know ...?

WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

- Good attendance at school is essential for children to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.
- Nurseries and first schools play a vital role in embedding good attendance habits.
- Even at first school, children with the highest attendance have higher rates of attainment.
- National data shows us that children not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths.
- For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for children's needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown there are clear links between regular absence from school and harm to children.

• 95% attendance = two weeks absence

• 90% attendance = 4 weeks absence

• 85% attendance = 6 weeks absence

• 80% attendance = more than half a term of absence

• 75% attendance = more than 9 weeks of absence

Please remember that I am unable to authorise absences during term time for family holidays. We would be grateful if parents/carers could also inform grandparents, family and friends, who may be looking to book birthday or Christmas trips away, that these do not fall under exceptional circumstances and will not be authorised.

If you need any support regarding attendance, please do not hesitate to come and speak to us as we can help you access support from the school nurse, attendance officer or other appropriate services.

We recognise that children may sometimes have a legitimate reason to be absent from school, and we are also aware that some families face difficulties which may impact on their child's education, therefore, the traffic light system has been put in place to support families by highlighting concerns at an early stage.

We hope that you will continue to support our school by promoting school attendance and by informing us if you feel there are any issues that are preventing your child from attending school regularly.

Our full school Attendance Policy can be found on our website.

"Improving school attendance is everyone's business." Please support us in promoting the benefits of good attendance with your child - not only for their education but, also, to support their wellbeing and future life chances.



1 - Mrs Jan Gurkin

If you would like to discuss this further, please get in touch with our attendance officer Jan Gurkin (jan.gurkin@clennelleducationsolutions.org).

Attendance Headlines

Whole school attendance:

- w/c 08/12/2025 - 95%
- w/c 15/12/2025 - 94%

Highest class attendance:

- w/c 08/12/2025 - Year 2 99%
- w/c 15/12/2025 - Year 1 98%

Absence Headlines

During this fortnight, 240 mins of learning time have been missed in school due to lateness. Please try to arrive on time at school, between 8:35am – 8:45am. Thank you. Our first lesson of the day is reading so children arriving late miss vital learning.

For children who arrive late, more than once in a week, we run a Friday lunchtime catch-up session with class teachers.

Whole school absence:

- w/c 08/12/2025 - 5%
- w/c 15/12/2025 - 6%

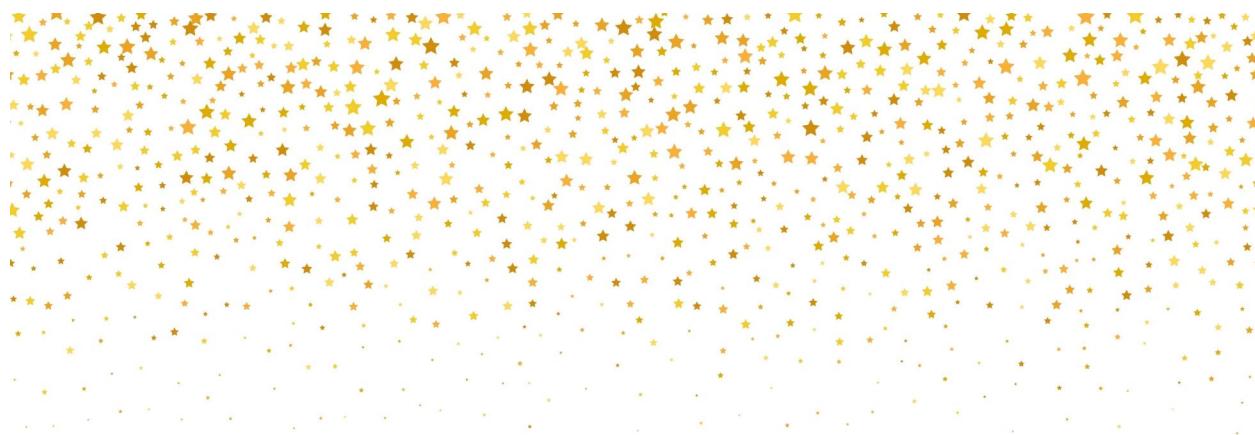
Absence caused by holidays:

- w/c 08/12/2025 - 0.5%
- w/c 15/12/2025 - 1.5%

Other absences:

- w/c 08/12/2025 - 3.5%
- w/c 15/12/2025 - 4.5%

School Celebrations!





Demonstrating Love

Nursery

- Alvin
- Ayra

Reception

- Ollie
- Yusuf

Year 1

- George
- Lola

Year 2

- Yashika
- Aaidah

Year 3

- Ahmed
- Janvika

Year 4

- Phoebe
- Jesse

Staff

- Miss Cooper
- Miss Wears



Demonstrating Determination

Nursery

- Joshua
- Emmett

Reception

- Annabelle
- Billy

Year 1

- Marnie
- Isla

Year 2

- Mehr

- Evie

Year 3

- Kayden
- Ruby

Year 4

- Mabel
- Samuel

Staff

- Mr Brown
- Mrs Armstrong



TIMES TABLES ROCKSTARS

By the end of Year 4, children are expected to know all their multiplication tables up to 12×12 and Year 4 children undertake their statutory Multiplication Tables Check in the summer term.

TTRS - Highest engagement

Year 2- Carter

Year 3 - Benjamin

Year 4 - Teddy

TTRS - Highest accuracy

Year 2- Carter

Year 3 - Felix

Year 4 - Esim

Current Rank amongst nearby schools: 9th (First time we have been in the top 10!)

Mean studio speed (seconds per question): 3.25



HANDWRITING HEROES

As a school, we continue to have a real drive to improve handwriting, letter formation and presentation of work. Each week, class teachers will choose someone who has worked hard to improve their presentation or who consistently demonstrates exemplary standards of presentation. Well done and thank you to the following children:

Year 1

- Jude
- Sanjhbati

Year 2

- Hooriya
- Masa

Year 3

- Amaya
- Eisa

Year 4

- Isaac
- Indi

Social Action Groups



2 - Green Team



3 - Energy Champions



4 - Play Leaders



5 - Library Champions



6 - Hall Monitors



7 - Worship Council



8 - School Council



SCHOOL COUNCIL

School Council have been really busy this past few weeks making cards for members of our community. What a great term they have had, well done! We hope they all have a wonderful Christmas and are ready to get busy again in 2026!



WORSHIP COUNCIL

Worship Council have been **VERY** busy preparing for our end of term Carol Service. They have planned, organised and rehearsed their readings along with the order of the service. We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did!





PLAY LEADERS

The girls have tidied and organised all our equipment ready for a new start in January, we can't wait! As we break up for our Christmas holidays, we would like to thank our wonderful Play Leaders for all their hard work and enthusiasm over this term.



GREEN TEAM

Green Team have been out and about in the local area litter picking as well as observing and discussing idling cars on Christon Road. We learned about the increased traffic on Christon Road and nearby streets and the impact this is having on pedestrians and residents. We discussed the impact of exhaust fumes and air pollution on our bodies and the environment. Cleaner air around school would benefit everyone and we are keen to take action - watch this space!



YOUNG LEADERS

In our final meeting of 2025, our wonderful Young Leaders have shared their progress on the various challenges that they set themselves a fortnight ago. Mrs Ellwood was very impressed by all of the philanthropic and altruistic work that the children have done and we discussed how this feeds into our school values of Love and Determination. Well done everyone!



LIBRARY CHAMPIONS

A huge thank you to our Library Champions who have worked so hard this first term. We hope they all have a wonderful break, it is very well deserved! Well done Library Champions, you make such a difference to our school!

Clubs for Spring Term 1 (January)



We are delighted to be able to offer a range of extra-curricular activities for our children.

- Choir with Charlotte from Music Partnership North - Monday 12:30pm email: admin@archbishop.newcastle.sch.uk
- All Stars Bible Club (run by a group of parents and church volunteers) - Tuesdays (fortnightly) 12:30pm email: beckymcbride90@gmail.com
- Violin - Monday after school with Charlotte from Music Partnership North
<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=wLSfsgQNn0q0YsEpSx4bR6HhZ8onp51DiB-iHdtAkHdUNzg1S08yUTdTR0hGRzJSMkQySU5PVUJFVi4u&route=shorturl>
- Guitar with Jack from Music Partnership North - Tuesdays after school
<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=wLSfsgQNn0q0YsEpSx4bR6HhZ8onp51DiB-iHdtAkHdUNzg1S08yUTdTR0hGRzJSMkQySU5PVUJFVi4u&route=shorturl>
- Gosforth Voices (Years 3 & 4) run by Music Partnership North on behalf of Gosforth Schools Trust <https://www.newcastlemusicservice.co.uk/ensembles>
- Gosforth Band run by Music Partnership North on behalf of Gosforth Schools Trust (Years 3 & 4) <https://www.newcastlemusicservice.co.uk/ensembles>
- Lacrosse with Kath from Whitley Bay Lacrosse Club (Years 2, 3 & 4) - Monday - 3.15-4.15pm - £4.00 per session - contact Kath on 07592 760881 to book.
- Football with Lee Sterry (Years 3 & 4) Tuesday 3:30-4:30pm <https://ls-sports-coaching.classforkids.io/info/848>

LACROSSE CLUB - JANUARY 2026 - and taster sessions

We're excited to be able to offer an after-school Lacrosse Club for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4! These fun, active sessions are a great way for children to build confidence, learn new skills and enjoy teamwork in a supportive environment. Sessions are paid for in advance each term and work out at just £4 per week, paid directly into the club's bank account. To book a place, please text Kath directly on **07592 760881**. Spaces are limited, so get in touch soon!

Kath will be in school on Thursday 8th January to carry out some taster sessions, so hopefully this will be enjoyed by many and lots of children will be keen to attend the evening sessions!



9 - Breakfast Club runs daily, 7:45am - 8:45am

We are pleased to offer our own Breakfast Club (7.45am - 8.45am) and After School Club (3.15pm - 5.30pm) in our school hall. If you have any queries regarding menus or activities, please email wraparound@archbishop.newcastle.sch.uk

Breakfast Club sessions cost £6.00 and include a breakfast of cereal/toast and milk/orange juice. Children must arrive before 8.15am if they require breakfast. Afterschool Club, until 4:15pm is £6.00 and, until 5:30pm, is £12.50 per session and includes a snack and drink.

Bookings for Wraparound Care are managed by Childcare Bookings for Schools. You can pay using either a debit/credit card or using childcare vouchers.

The URL to access the booking system is <https://archbishop-runcie.cbfs.uk/>

Contact email address: archbishopruncie@childcarebookingsforschools.co.uk

Contact phone number: 01444 523335

Collective Worship

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

This fortnight, worship has focussed on Advent and the first Christmas. We have listened to different versions of the story and reflected on the core message which centres on the *Incarnation* — the belief that God became human in the form of a baby to live among people and offer salvation and hope to humanity. Some long words and tricky concepts that have got us all thinking deeply about this special time of year.





Church Links



ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH SERVICES

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Wednesday 24th December at 3:30pm - Crib service

Wednesday 24th December at 6:00pm - Nine lessons and carols

Wednesday 24th December at 11:30pm - Midnight Mass

Thursday 25th December at 10am - Sung Eucharist

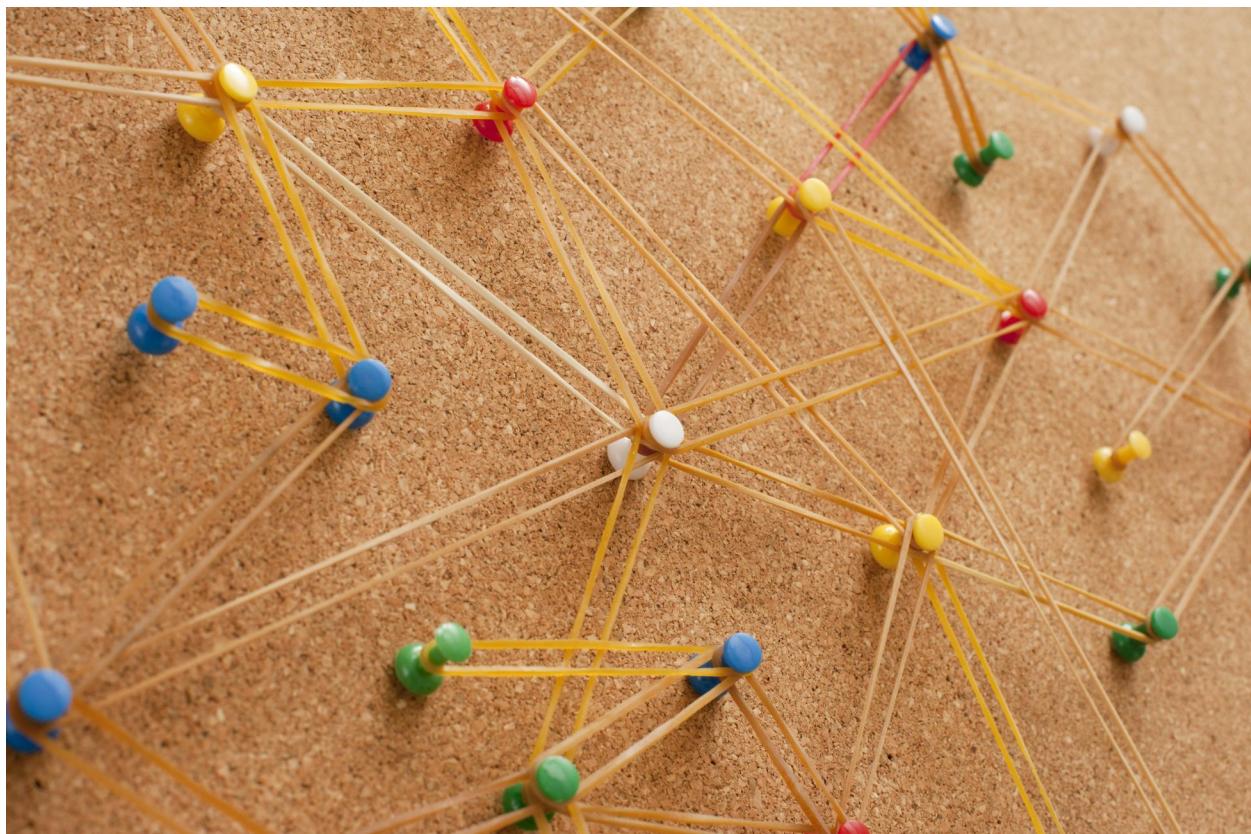


10 - All Saints' Angels

ALL SAINTS ANGELS

Thank you to all the children in Years 3 and 4 that made an angel to display at All Saints' - they look amazing!

[School News](#)





AMAZON WISHLIST

Whilst there is absolutely no pressure to do so, several parents have suggested we set up an Amazon Wishlist to enable friends of our school to make a donation. You can find a list of items we are wishing for here: <https://amzn.eu/1E02d6C>

Our wish list includes:

- craft materials
- forest school resources and consumables e.g. marshmallow
- reading books
- first aid resources

If you have a suggestion of something that we might benefit from, we'd love to hear from you!
Please make sure you get items delivered directly to school! Thank you



PTFA UPDATE

Last Thursday, the PTFA met for the AGM and discussed plans for the year ahead. Our PTFA is open to all members of the school community (grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends of the school are all welcome) and many hands make light work so please try to come along to our next meeting on **Tuesday 13th January at 9:00am**.

Class Reps are a point of contact for anyone with ideas, suggestions or feedback.

- Nursery - Becky McBride
- Reception - Hannah Ballard
- Y1 - Shela Close
- Y2 - VACANT - (Please let us know if you would like to volunteer)
- Y3 - Haley Cohen
- Y4 - Sarah McRea

Chair- Angela Nicholson

Secretary- Sarah MacRea

Treasurer - Hannah Ballard



11 - An easy way to help us raise money!

EASY FUNDARISING

Easyfundraising works by partnering with over 8,000 retailers who donate a percentage of your purchase to a cause of your choice when you shop through the easyfundraising website or app. It is a free service for both shoppers and the causes they support, as the cost of the donation is covered by the retailer and comes at no extra cost to you. To use it, you register an account, select a cause to support, and then shop online as you normally would via the easyfundraising site or app, which directs you to the retailer's site.

You can join here, and then select **Archbishop Runcie First School PTFA**

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how-it-works/>



NEW UNIFORM PROVIDER

We are delighted to let you know that Etika will be sourcing ARFS uniform in addition to Tots to Teams at Kingston Park.

In line with our school ethos and values, Etika Uniforms believe that what children wear to school should reflect fairness, sustainability and compassion. By choosing ethically made uniforms, we set a powerful example and give parents an ethical choice. Etika garments are made under fair working conditions, with environmentally friendly materials, and designed to last, supporting workers' rights, reducing environmental impact and turning uniforms into a true symbol of integrity and kindness.

A portion of each Etika school uniform sale directly funds educational initiatives in vulnerable communities in the UK and India.

From providing bicycles that aid children in travelling to school to supplying essential items such as shoes, stationery and uniforms, Etika are dedicated to breaking down barriers to education and creating real opportunities for learning and growth.

To place an order, you can select ARFS at

RL ADD

Christmas



NATIVITIES

I am sure you will agree that all three nativities were wonderful. Thank you for all your help with costumes, learning lines and songs as well as being a fabulous audience for our children. Please remember that group pictures should not be shared on social media, please, as not all of our children have permission for pictures to be used. Thank you for your ongoing understanding and co-operation.





CAROL SERVICE



12 - Our wonderful choir who performed this afternoon!



13 - Our fabulous Worship Council who planned and led the service.



14 - Amazing actors brought the story to life.

The Carol Service this afternoon was a wonderful way to end the term - the choir sang beautifully and our Worship Council read clearly and with excellent accuracy and intonation. Thank you to everyone who joined us!



15 - Dream Team! Miss Cooper, Miss Wears & Mrs Hunt

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

As always, Christmas lunch was a massive success here at ARFS. We need to say a huge thank you to Miss Cooper and Miss Wears for all their preparation and hard work. Christmas lunch is one of my favourite days of the year when all the staff, children and governors share a meal and enjoy time with each other. We are lucky that, as a small school, we can all (just!) squeeze into the hall and enjoy this together as a whole school community.



PLAYGROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY

Playgroup Christmas party was very well attended! The children enjoyed icing biscuits, making party hats and sharing party food together before a special visitor arrived with gifts. Thank you to Mrs Francis and Mrs Armstrong for organising and running this event - it was a really lovely afternoon with our wider school community.



PTFA CHRISTMAS HAMPER WINNERS

Mrs Coates contacted the winners of our 8 spectacular hampers yesterday. If you have not already done so, please collect them from the main school office.

Many thanks, once again, to everyone who donated gifts and treats to include.



WONDE VOUCHERS

Supermarket vouchers for eligible children are scheduled to be sent by email on Monday 22nd December. These will cover the two week period at a total of £30.

Volunteer with us!



We are always looking for people to come and help in school! If you are interested in helping in school, please contact Mrs Lowe in the school office (admin@archbishop.newcastle.sch.uk). All volunteers will require DBS clearance, and will need to provide references in line with our commitment to Safer Recruitment.

Please note that volunteers must not use their mobile phones during school visits and they must maintain confidentiality at all times. All volunteers will need enhanced DBS checks for this role.



EDUCATIONAL VISITS

We often need helpers to support us on educational visits out of school. Visits may be full or part days and may be with any class in school. Helping on educational visits will include supporting a small group to achieve the intended learning outcome, promoting high quality discussions, supporting positive behaviour and respectful attitudes of a group of pupils and ensuring the risk assessment is adhered to.

Please note that volunteers must not use their mobile phones during school visits and they must maintain confidentiality at all times.

If you think you might be able to help, please let Class Teachers know. Thank you!



LIBRARIAN / VOLUNTEER

Mrs Crozier and the Library Champions are in the process of giving the library a revamp and they are looking for a helping hand from a "Library Volunteer". This will involve tidying books shelves, checking and replacing labels, revamping displays, categorising new books and generally helping to promote the school library and class libraries. If you are interested in helping on a weekly or fortnightly basis, please contact Mrs Crozier (Emily.Crozier@archbishop.newcastle.sch.uk).

Please note that volunteers must not use their mobile phones during school visits and they must maintain confidentiality at all times. All volunteers will need DBS clearance.



READING BUDDIES

Could you or a grandparent spare 20 - 30 minutes once or twice a week to help children with reading? We operate a successful reading buddy scheme with parents, grandparents and friends of the school, sharing books with children in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two. If you could spare an hour or two a week (ideally in the afternoons!), please contact the school office. You will require enhanced DBS checks through the school - please contact Mrs Coates.

Please note that volunteers must not use their mobile phones during school visits and they must maintain confidentiality at all times.



PLAYGROUP VOLUNTEER

Mrs Francis is looking for a couple of warm and friendly faces to support in our pre-school playgroup every Wednesday afternoon. This would involve setting up games and activities for our young visitors, welcoming families to school and interacting with pre-schoolers before helping to tidy up the hall. If you think you might be interested, or would like to know more, please contact Mrs Francis (Kathleen.Francis@archbishop.newcastle.sch.uk).

Please note that volunteers must not use their mobile phones during school visits and they must maintain confidentiality at all times. All volunteers will need enhanced DBS checks for this role.

Dates for your diaries



Please see diary dates attached. Dates can also be viewed on the school calendar at
<https://archbishop-runcie.eschools.co.uk/web/calendar>

Mrs Coates regularly puts reminders of events on Facebook and Instagram to prompt parents too - please follow us to keep up with what's happening in school!

Safeguarding





WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD?

Mrs Massey, Mrs Francis, Mrs Crozier and Mrs Ellwood are our school's Designated Safeguarding Leaders (DSLs). Mr Brown is DSL for Wraparound care. Children are regularly reminded who they can talk to if they are worried about something in school.

If you have concerns about a child, please contact one of us. **If it is an emergency and a child is in immediate danger, please call the police.** Members of the public can also report concerns to Children's Social Care directly. If you have a concern about a child please contact one of the following:

If you have a non-emergency concern about a child contact:

- Initial Response Service – 0191 277 2500
- Emergency Duty Team – 0191 278 7878 (out of hours)
- Northumbria Police – 101 (in an emergency always dial 999)
- NSPCC Helpline – 0808 800 5000

There is also a secure online referral form available for you to explain your concern, if you are a member of the public. <https://nccportal.newcastle.gov.uk/forms/referral/public>

All concerns that a child or young person is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm must be referred directly to the Initial Response Service of Children's Social Care in accordance with the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board Procedures. Please refer to the Newcastle

Safeguarding Children Partnership website for safeguarding policies and procedures. For more information, you can read our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy on our school website.



E-SAFETY UPDATE FROM ALAN MACKENZIE (ONLINE SAFETY SPECIALIST)

Roblox - Polybuzz

Apparently there is game within Roblox called Polybuzz (sometimes referred to as Polyfuzz). Polybuzz is an Ai chat app rated 18+ app and therefore undoubtedly there is going to be content/chat unsuitable for children. What is disappointing from the context of Roblox is that age-inappropriate ads are being shown to children when Roblox are supposed to know the ages of their users and therefore serve age-appropriate content/ads.

With the Christmas holidays coming up, parents should remember that that Roblox has parental settings they can use. It may also be worth reminding children not to click on pop-ups but to seek the advice of their parents/carers first.

Roblox parental settings can be found [HERE](#).



16 - Alan Mackenzie (Online Safety Specialist)

Community Notices





SEND PARENTS & CARERS SUPPORT GROUP

Does your child have a special educational need or disability? Would you like to talk to other parents/carers or get advice from professionals? Whether your child has a formal diagnosis or not, you are invited to drop in to the SEND Support Group for an informal place to chat and get advice.

These sessions run every Friday 10:00am-11:30am and Tuesdays 4:00-5:30pm at Gosforth Civic Theatre. No need to book - just turn up!

COMMUNITY HUB NORTH

Children & Families Newcastle is part of a community network providing activities and services across four localities in the city for babies, children, young people and families. We are part of the North Community Hub. Community hubs link to other buildings in the locality to create a network of venues that offer activities and services.

The community hubs also offer a range of services including – health visiting, family support, community midwifery, mental health support, children’s therapies, youth provision, training opportunities, childcare and employability services. To find out what is available near you, telephone your local Community Hub at Fawdon Children’s Centre, Cairns Way, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2SN. Telephone 0191 2115773 Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm.

<https://www.newcastlesupportdirectory.org.uk/north>



17 - For family support, please scan.



18 - To see what is happening in the city, please scan.

Contact Us



Archbishop Runcie CE First School

Christon Road

Gosforth

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE31US

Visit us on the web at <https://archbishop-runcie.eschools.co.uk/web>

Tel: 0191 285 2663

email: admin@archbishop.newcastle.sch.uk