



The Phoenix Flier

The Yarm Preparatory School Newsletter

Issue 808—Friday 25th April 2025

A message from Mr Sawyer

It has been lovely to welcome our pupils back as we begin the Summer Term. The return of familiar faces, cheerful chatter in the corridors, and the buzz of activity around the school marks a special moment for our community. There's something quite magical about coming back together after a break—shared purpose, new energy, and the excitement of what lies ahead. And what an exciting term we have in store! From rich curriculum adventures to off-site trips, from musical and dramatic performances to the broad array of clubs and activities, this term promises opportunities for growth, discovery, and joy in abundance.

Already, the first few days have been full of colour and spirit. Our talented choristers delighted the residents at Park House Care Home with a lively repertoire that brought smiles and song to all. Meanwhile, Friday's assembly allowed us to celebrate the appointment of our new class and house captains and vice captains. These roles are more than just badges—they're gateways for pupils to explore responsibility, develop collaboration skills, and discover the power of young leadership. Learning to lead at a young age builds confidence, empathy, and resilience—qualities that will serve our pupils for years to come. As we look ahead to the adventures of the term, we are reminded of the words of Helen Keller: "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing at all."

Bill Sawyer

Head's Challenge: I think of a number, double it, subtract 6, and then divide the result by 3 — the final answer is 10. What was my original number?



Tes Schools Awards 2024

Winner

Independent
Prep School
of the Year



Photo of the Week: Year 3 took to the streets of Yarm to identify map features as part of their geography work.

Year 3 Geography

We used maps of our local area to recognise features and landmarks. As we walked, we discussed the differences since our maps were produced and how the area has changed.

Mr Pengilley



Stefan Grossman Visit

Excitement filled the air as we welcomed legendary guitarist Stefan Grossman! Known around the world for his incredible fingerpicking skills and deep knowledge of blues and folk music, Stefan Grossman has inspired musicians for decades. But this time, he wasn't just here for a concert, he was visiting because his very own grandson is a very proud member of Year 4!

During his visit, Mr. Grossman shared stories from his fascinating musical journey, which began when he was just a young boy. He talked about learning from blues greats like Rev. Gary Davis and how their music shaped his unique style. The students were mesmerised as he picked up his guitar and played a few pieces, filling the room with the rich, soulful sounds of acoustic blues.

A highlight of the visit was a special workshop where Mr. Grossman demonstrated different guitar techniques and answered questions from our very inquisitive children. However, he was shocked that a small minority knew who Pink Floyd and Eric Clapton were! We may have some musical education to do here. It was truly an unforgettable experience for everyone, and we are so grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from such an iconic musician. Thank you, Stefan, for sharing your music and wisdom with us! And a special thank you to Bertie in Year 4 for bringing his talented grandfather to our school. Who knows? Maybe one of our own students will follow in his footsteps and become a music legend one day!

Mrs Jolly



End of Term Awards Assembly

Hockey Colours (PDU) – Rory Fitzgerald, Dax Cullingford, Charlie McGlade, James Booth, Ben O'Hare, Roland Morris, Stan Dugdale, Angus Ferguson, Elliott Edgar, Jenson Chen, Henry Stanley.

Netball Colours (RJ/NERS) – Daisy Callaghan, Manha Abdullah, Sophia Bundhoo, Evelyn Carter, Imogen Clark, Bella Mitchell, Georgina Proctor, Holly Birkin, Annalise Dixon.

Hockey Colours (NERS) – Georgina Proctor, Darcey Bowers.

Art Colours (RS) – Sandy Omar, Evelyn Carter, Amaya Sanghera, Olivia Tiew, Stan Dugdale, Annalise Dixon, Emily Booth.

OVERALL House Chess (JG): 1st STEPHENSON, 2nd Brunel, 3rd Arkwright, 4th Telford

OVERALL House Hockey (PDU) – 1st STEPHENSON, 2nd Brunel, 3rd Arkwright, 4th Telford

OVERALL House Netball (RJ/NERS) - 1st STEPHENSON, 2nd Arkwright, 3rd Brunel, 4th Telford

OVERALL House Football (GNS) - 1st STEPHENSON, 2nd Arkwright, 3rd Brunel, 4th Telford

OVERALL House Paper Planes (GNS) - 1st STEPHENSON, 2nd Arkwright, 3rd Telford, 4th Brunel

House Points - 1st BRUNEL (64.8 average, 3432 points), 2nd Stephenson (63.1 average, 3469 average), 3rd Arkwright (59.1 average, 3371 points), 4th Telford (53.8 average, 2690 points).

House competition winners this year:

Arkwright - Girls' Hockey, Quiz, Typing, Pancakes.

Brunel - Spring House Points.

Stephenson - Autumn Football, Cross-Country, Rugby, Spring Football, Chess, Netball, Boys' Hockey, Paper Planes.

Telford - Autumn House Points, Coding.

OVERALL HOUSE LEADERBOARD:

4th - Telford 1950 points; 3rd Brunel 2250 points; 2nd Arkwright 2650 points

1st STEPHENSON 2950 points.

Reduce- Reuse- Recycle



New Pre-Loved Uniform Shed!

YPSSC are excited to announce our Pre-Loved Uniform Shed is officially up and running!

We are located near to the entrance for Nursery on the Pre Prep site.



We provide & Collect Pre-Loved Uniform

Summer- Winter – PE – Games – Accessories

Nursery, Pre-Prep, Prep, Senior & Sixth Form

Come and have a browse-The shed will be manned periodically throughout the week by volunteers and enquiries can still be sent by email or **classlist**.

ypssc@yarmschool.org
Ypssc.co.uk

Key Events Coming Up

We hope you have enjoyed a restful break and look forward to seeing all of the children back in school at the start of the new term. Ahead of then, we wanted to keep you abreast of a number of key events coming up in the coming weeks here at Yarm and hope you find this information useful.

Monday 28th April - Clubs and activities begin

Pupils have been notified of the clubs and activities for the term via a sticker in their planners/learning journey prior to the Easter holidays. Please note any particular late collection times, as noted on these stickers, as well as any particular requirements for the clubs, [which can also be found in our clubs and activities booklet](#).

Monday 5th May - Bank Holiday; School closed

Tuesday 6th May - Class, U11 sports teams and music ensemble photographs

Please can all children from N-Y6 come to school in the correct summer uniform today. Children involved in the sports and music photos will also need to bring in their games kit and musical instrument.

Wednesday 7th May - Y4 Vindolanda residential

Year 4 depart to Northumbria today. They will return by 4pm on Friday 9th May.

Thursday 8th May - Yarm School/NESF STEM Day

Our Year 5 children will be welcoming numerous businesses and children from five local primary schools to take part in one of our STEM Days.

Saturday 10th May - Open Morning

We will be contacting you nearer the time for full details of this event. **Year 2 pupils** will be invited to participate in all of the activities we usually run as part of the Open Morning (although this is optional), so please keep this date in your diary.

Monday 12th May - Y5 Drama Week

Our **whole school photograph** will also be taken today. Please can all children come to school in the correct summer uniform.

It will be Year 5's turn to enjoy their Drama Week, with a view to putting on a performance to parents. This will take place in the new hall on Friday 16th May at 4pm - full details will be sent to parents nearer the time.

Arkwright Charity Day will also be taking place. Keep an eye out for further details in the coming weeks.

Monday 19th May - Y6 Lakes residential

Year 6 depart for the Lake District today. They will return at 7pm on Thursday 22nd May.

Wednesday 21st May - Y2 Edinburgh trip

Full details of this trip will be sent to parents shortly.

Thursday 22nd May - Half-term begins (after school)

This is the last school day before half-term. Please note that school is closed on Friday 23rd May.

As you will know, the second half of the Summer term is very busy indeed! We will send out key details closer to the time but in the meantime, here are a few dates for your diaries:

- **Monday 2nd June** - Pupils return to school. Last Y3 swimming of the year.
- **Tuesday 3rd June** - Prep Sports Day at Middlesbrough Sports Village (please note this is earlier than usual!)
- **Wednesday 11th June** - Induction Day for current Year 6 at the Senior School.
- **Friday 13th June** - Bring Your Grown Ups to School Day (Pre-Prep).
- **Tuesday 17th June** - Prep Summer concert.
- **Wednesday 18th June** - Y3 York residential departs (return on Thursday 19th June); Nursery Sports Afternoon.
- **Thursday 19th June** - Yarm/NESF STEM Day for Year 6.
- **Friday 20th June** - Summer Fair (2-5pm - full details coming in early May).
- **Monday 23rd June** - Prep Induction Morning (N2-Y5).
- **Tuesday 24th June** - Open Afternoon (Y3-6); Nursery and Reception Musical Showcases.
- **Wednesday 25th June** - Pre-Prep Sports Morning; Y6 Pupils v Parents Sports; Welcome to Reception Evening.
- **Thursday 26th June** - Year 2 Transition Event for Parents.
- **Friday 27th June** - All clubs and activities finish today.
- **Monday 30th June** - Pre-Prep Celebration (5pm; PAA).
- **Tuesday 1st July** - Prep Prize Giving (5.45pm; PAA).
- **Wednesday 2nd** - Nursery Celebration (2pm; Studio Hall).
- **Thursday 4th July** - End of term at 12 noon; no after

school care; Water Run.

Thank you as always for your support.

Mr Stone

Year 5 Homework—Play Review

Animal Farm at Leeds Playhouse

The Olivier Award Nominated production, adapted for stage by Tatty Hennesy and directed by Amy Leach provides a poignant and timely reminder of the themes of George Orwell's 1945 novel. Although written about the Russian Revolution, the timeless themes of struggle, loss of identity, the seductive allure of privilege and the corrupting nature of political power is as relevant today as when it was first written.

The set, with the farmhouse set on stilts above the stage and the animals at the bottom of the stage gave a visual representation of the farmer (humans) at the top of the hierarchy and the animals at the bottom. From the opening scene, we were confronted with the brutality of life on the farm with a pig giving birth, only to have all her piglet's taken by the whip cracking farmer. Old Major, the prize boar, sets the first stone rolling in the events to overthrow the farmer by giving the animals hope of a better fairer society for them. After Old Major was brutally murdered by the farmer the animals rose up and chased the farmer away to take control of

the farm in a combination of drama and visual art. After the revolution, the animals unite and Snowball, the pig, leads the

way in forming the seven commandments which reflect their hope of creating a world where the animals could be equal, happier and free with the powerful final commandment, "All Animals are Equal". During the play, we see these hopes and dreams being slowly dismantled by the treachery and propaganda of Napoleon and Squealer the pigs aided by their henchman/ dog Blue through the eyes of Clover, the horse and Benjamin the donkey. In the devastating final scene, we see that, "All Animals are Equal but some are more equal than others" and that the pigs, had themselves become just like humans.

The most powerful and devastating scene in the play, for me, was near the end of the play when Napoleon cynically bragged to the other farmers how his animals "sing for me, cheer for me, love me and sleep in the dirt while I am here in my feather bed safe, and why, because they believe they're serving something bigger, a farm run by animals A dream"

Henry S. (6H)



Enrolling now

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DRAMA STUDIO

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session

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PROFESSIONAL ACTRESS
TV/FILM CREDITS
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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. **Trigger Warning:** This guide contains mention of suicide, which may be distressing for some readers.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE

In today's digital world, it's increasingly common for children to form friendships with people they've never met in person. While online connections can offer children a sense of belonging, they also carry significant risks. Around 19% of children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales have chatted online with someone they've never met face to face. This guide offers expert advice for parents and educators on helping children navigate online friendships safely.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ONLINE GROOMING THREATS

Predators can use games, chat apps or social media platforms to build relationships with children and gain their trust. This may quickly develop into grooming or exploitation. Between April 2017 and March 2023, UK police recorded nearly 34,000 online grooming offences – an 82% increase in just five years.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Children may encounter distressing or explicit material while interacting with online contacts – especially via TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. This is evidenced in a survey by the Children's Commissioner for England, which found that 45% of children aged 8 to 17 had seen content online that made them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

PRIVACY AND DATA RISKS

Children and young people often overshare personal details – such as where they live or go to school – without understanding the consequences. In fact, 4.4% of 10 to 15-year-olds in the UK have met up in real life with someone they'd only spoken to online.

COMPROMISED PERSONAL SAFETY

Meeting an online 'friend' in real life risks placing a child in serious danger. From abduction to coercion, the consequences can be devastating. Reports of children being harmed after such meetings are becoming increasingly common in the UK, highlighting the need for safeguarding intervention.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Online harm – such as cyberbullying, grooming or exposure to disturbing content – can lead to long-term emotional issues, including anxiety, depression and PTSD. 'Sextortion' gangs, who threaten to release sexual information about a person unless they pay them money, have reportedly targeted children as young as 11, leaving them traumatised and ashamed.

LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS

Children exposed to harmful online relationships early on may develop unhealthy beliefs about relationships, consent, or self-worth. In a recent case, a 26-year-old posed as a girl on Snapchat to befriend children aged 10 to 16, manipulating them into sexual activity and causing profound emotional distress. One 12-year-old tragically died by suicide, highlighting the long-term psychological harm online friendships with strangers can cause.

26 FRIENDS ONLINE NOW

Advice for Parents & Educators

TEACH SAFE ONLINE HABITS

Help children understand how to use privacy settings, protect their personal information, spot fake profiles, and report anything suspicious or concerning, like pressure tactics. Encourage them to think critically about what they share – and whom they're talking to.

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Let children know they can talk to you about their online life. Avoid reacting with anger or judgement, as this may prevent them from opening up in the future. A child who feels listened to is more likely to disclose problems before they escalate.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

Support children in building friendships through school, clubs, hobbies and activities in the real world. Strong offline relationships help reduce children's reliance on online platforms for social interaction, and can help them develop resilience and social confidence.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings on devices, games and apps can help manage screen time, filter out inappropriate content, and monitor activity. While no system is perfect, they provide a valuable layer of protection as children explore digital spaces.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with over 30 years' experience in supporting children, families, and adults across education, local authority, and mental health settings – both in the UK (including at Parliamentary level) and internationally.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College®

Tooled Up Education

We hope that you and your families are settling into the new summer term. We are writing as we wanted to remind you that our school subscribes to Toolled Up Education.

This gives you privileged access to an online platform packed full of resources, podcasts, webinars, activities and practical advice to help support you in all matters to do with parenting and family life.

Here are two quick resources highlighting how you can make the most of your Toolled Up membership.

- [10 Things About Toolled Up Parent Benefit Sheet](#) - this can be viewed by clicking here.
- [Tooled Up Tour Video Link](#) - this is a 5 minute video walk through of the platform, showing you how to navigate its features

If you have already signed up for an account: simply click this [link](#) to access.

To register for your free account now: click [Create my Toolled Up Account](#), enter your email address and our unique school PIN (available below).

To view the platform on your phone: click this [link](#) or scan the QR code with your phone camera.



If you have any question, please just click on the '[Support](#)' button on the website and one of the Toolled Up team will be happy to assist you.

The Toolled Up library is already packed with almost 350 evidence-based resources, including interviews with over 80 leading experts from around the world. But, it's your library and we want to know how else we can help you? What new resources would you like to see? Which ones do you love? What could we do better?

We always value your feedback and want to ensure that we are giving you the resources that you need. Email us at research@tooledupeducation.com to let us know how we are doing!

A quick reminder :

As a parent at a Toolled Up school, you have full unlimited access to the Toolled Up library. If you have not created your account yet, click [here to register for an account](#). It takes less than 2 minutes to enter your details and unique school PIN: YPS1103 and if you need assistance, we are always happy to help.

If you already have an account and you have forgotten your password, then simply click on any of the resource links above, click "Lost your password" and follow the instructions.

Dr Kathy Weston

TOOLED UP[®]
BECAUSE EVIDENCE MATTERS

Coming Up

You can find the Yarm School calendar for the Summer Term by clicking here

APRIL 2025

- Mon 28
- Clubs and Activities begin
YPSSC AGM (Library; 5.30pm)
Knockout Chess begins
- Tue 29
- Reception trip to Highfield Care Home
- Wed 30
- School Council (Lab; 1pm)

MAY 2025

- Thu 1
- Pre-Prep Poetry Competition
Junior Maths Challenge
- Fri 2
- LAMDA examinations (all day)
U10/11 Boys' Cricket v Teesside High and NSB (home; 2pm start)
- Sun 4
- UK Chess Challenge Mega Final (PAA; 10am-5pm)
- Mon 5
- School closed; Bank Holiday
- Tue 6
- Class Photographs
Curiosity Emporium (Library; 1pm)
Reception trip to Highfield Care Home
U8 Girls' Cricket v Queen Mary's (away; 2pm start, 4.15pm return)
- Wed 7
- Year 4 Vindolanda residential departs
- Thu 8
- Yarm/NESF STEM Day
- Fri 9
- Year 4 return from Vindolanda
U10/11 Boys' Cricket v Durham (away; 2pm start, 4.30pm return)
U10/11 Girls' Cricket v Durham School (home; 2.15pm start)
- Sat 10
- Open Morning (9am-12noon)
- Mon 12
- Year 5 Drama Week
Whole School Photograph (9am)
Food Council (1pm)
Arkwright Charity Day
Teesside Mind assembly
Activities Carousel 4 begins (Y4-6)
- Tue 13
- School Captains Day
Summer Fair prep begins for Year 6
U8 Boys' Cricket v Cundall Manor (away; 2pm start, 4.15pm return)
Reception trip to Highfield Care Home
- Wed 14
- Year 6 Heart Workshops (Science Lab)
- Fri 16
- Year 5 Drama Week Performance (Hall; 4pm)
U11 Girls' Cricket v Red House (home; 2pm start)
- Mon 19
- Year 6 Lakes residential departs
- Tue 20
- Year 3 Sports Afternoon

- Yarm Primary Schools Quiz (Hall; 10am)
Yarm Clay Day
- Wed 21
- Year 2 Trip to Edinburgh
- Thu 22
- Year 4 Sports Afternoon
Year 6 return from the Lakes (7pm)
End of term; After School Care as usual
- Fri 23
- School Closed

Term Dates

Summer Term, 2025

- Half term begins
- Thursday, 22nd May 2025 (after school)
- Pupils return
- Monday, 2nd June 2025
- Term ends (after Prize Giving)
- Thursday, 3rd July 2025

Autumn Term, 2025

- Preparation Day 1
- Tuesday, 26th August 2025
- Preparation Day 2
- Wednesday, 27th August 2025
- All Pupils Return
- Thursday, 28th August 2025
- Half Term Begins
- Friday, 17th October 2025 (after school)
- Pupils Return
- Monday, 3rd November 2025
- Finish
- Friday, 12th December 2025 (after school)

Celebration Assembly		
	Values	Endeavour
3B	Annabel B.	Heidi H.
3J	Meera S.	Aria T.
3P	William A.	Jack B.
4F	Daniel S.	Senon W.
4J	Noah S.	Ned F.
4SU	Austen F.	Felicity T.
5G	Paari M.	Beatrice T.
5S	Monty B.	Freddie B.
5W	Harriet A.	Hugo K.
6H	Annalise D.	James B.
6K	Sophia B.	Roland M.
6L	Stan D.	Darcey B.