



MONKHOUSE MESSENGER



December 2025



It's been a busy month at Monkhouse and we want to thank all of the children, parents and staff for their hard work and support. Have a wonderful break over the Christmas holidays, spend lots of time together as a family and see you on Monday 5th January 2026.

Children's Christmas Wellbeing Advent Calendar in School

Monday 1st Create a Christmas decoration and decorate your classroom	Tuesday 2nd Whole school Christmas chalk art -9am	Wednesday 3rd Christmas dingbats	Thursday 4th Additional playtime PM with Christmas music	Friday 5th Christmas jumper and Christmas lunch day and draw with Rob Christmas theme.
Monday 8th Christmas pictictionary	Tuesday 9th Interclass hot chocolate and toast	Wednesday 10th Christmas songs and colouring	Thursday 11th Children's Christmas quiz	Friday 12th Christmas draw with Rob
Monday 15th Decorate a biscuit with Christmas theme	Tuesday 16th Additional 15 mins playtime	Wednesday 17th Christmas theme headband game	Thursday 18th Name the Christmas song	Friday 19th Playtime with Christmas songs and games

This year, we have continued our whole-school tradition of creating a Wellbeing Advent Calendar. We have designed a range of fun and meaningful activities to encourage mindful moments and promote spending quality time with friends, other classes and the whole school community. Activities include whole-school chalk drawing, Christmas songs, Christmas quizzes, art, extra playtime and even a cosy hot chocolate and toast treat. The calendar is a wonderful way to build excitement throughout December while supporting children's wellbeing, connection and joy. Thank you to Mrs Bryden for organising these wonderful opportunities.

Staffing Update

We welcome Miss Bradley to our support staff team from 12th January 2026. I know the staff, parents and children will make her feel very welcome.

We will be saying farewell to **Miss Sylwia** in January as she and her family return to their home in Poland after many years in England. Miss Sylwia has been a valued teaching assistant in Year 3 and across the school, and she will be greatly missed by the children, families, and staff at Monkhouse Community. We are incredibly grateful for all she has contributed during her time with us and wish her every happiness in the next chapter of her journey.

KS2 Parents Maths Sessions

Thank you to all the parents who joined us for the KS2 Mastering Number parent-and-child session; your involvement made the learning experience even more meaningful. We appreciate your support in helping strengthen your children's mathematical confidence, and we hope the session gave you a clear understanding of what Mastering Number looks like in school. Please remember, these sessions are opportunities to understand more about how children learn in school and we recognise not all families will be able to attend all events.



Rec & KS1 Parents Maths Sessions

Thank you for attending the Mastering Number parent session; we really appreciate your time and engagement. We hope it has given you a clearer understanding of how early numbers are taught and reinforced, including how manipulatives help children see the maths, supporting greater fluency, confidence, and understanding. Please remember, these sessions are opportunities to understand more about how children learn in school and we recognise not all families will be able to attend all events.



Reception Parents Book look

Reception had a lovely afternoon when our grown-ups joined us in class to enjoy a cuppa and a biscuit. The children were very proud to share their learning, spending time looking through their Learning Journeys and maths books together. We also enjoyed reading Christmas themed stories together, listening to Christmas songs and decorating a Christmas bauble, adding a festive touch to our time together. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the children's progress and enjoy some special time in the classroom.



Reception & Year 1 Nativity 11th December

Reception and Year 1 performed their Christmas show *Honky Tonky Donkey*, a wonderful retelling of the story of the First Christmas. All of the children have worked so hard over the last few weeks to learn their lines and songs, and they did a fantastic job on stage. We hope our grown-ups agree that they were absolutely brilliant!



Yr 2-6 Christingle Service Wednesday 17th December

The Christingle service for Years 2 to 6 at St Hilda's Church was a beautifully reflective and joyful occasion. The children took part with great enthusiasm, filling the church with song, light, and Christmas spirit. A warm thank you to Rev. Stephanie for welcoming us into the church, and to all the parents and carers who joined us and helped make the service so special.



Christmas Lunch - Friday 5th December 2025

The children had a wonderful time celebrating Christmas lunch today, happily pulling crackers and sharing lots of laughter with their friends. It was lovely to see them enjoying a festive meal together, chatting excitedly and soaking up the cheerful atmosphere. Staff and pupils alike truly enjoyed the special moment, making it a warm and memorable part of the school day.



School Meals and Pre Ordering Food

We continue to work with Hutchison's catering company to ensure the food served is tasty and nutritious. Just to remind parents, you can pre order food for your child through the appetite system:

<https://appetite.hutchisoncatering.co.uk/> as all families have a login. On this system you will also be able to see the live menus.

Rocksteady Performance

The Rocksteady performances in school were absolutely amazing, showcasing the children's confidence, talent, and teamwork. We are all incredibly proud of each child for shining 'on stage' and sharing their fantastic musical skills with us.



AJ's Brain visits Yr 3

AJ visited Year 3 to share information about what it means to have autism and how she has developed strategies to support herself in everyday life. She spoke openly about her experiences, helping the children to better understand how autism can affect people in different ways. AJ's visit helped build empathy and understanding, while also showing children with autism that they are not alone and that there are ways to thrive and succeed.



Christmas is Coming!

Christmas can be a very exciting time for children but the anticipation, coupled with changes to routines can be unsettling for many children, not just those who are neurodivergent.

AJ's tips can help families negotiate any challenges and help the festive period run more smoothly. Click the link to access a variety of resources.

[Packs](#)

Nursery Show 11th December

The Nursery Christmas show was lovely, and it was wonderful to see how much the children enjoyed performing. They showed great resilience and confidence, making everyone incredibly proud.



Santa Dash Friday 12th December

We had a special visitor to Monkhouse, he had some special deliveries for our children and cheered our children on as they completed the Santa Dash! We had an amazing time and enjoyed our little run and meeting Santa.



Pupil Leaders

A massive thank you for all of your donations for The Bay Foodbank. They will be really appreciated, especially at this time of the year for those who may be struggling. We are really grateful for your continued support and generosity.



PTA

Thank you to the Parents and Grandparents who helped make the school look festive with Christmas decorations and organised the Christmas stall for pupils. We are very grateful for all your time and support.



Year 4 - That History Bloke Viking Session

Year 4 were engrossed during their session all about the Vikings with Richard from 'That History Bloke'. They loved listening to the Viking story about Lindworm, getting to know what some Viking men tended to wear as well as being able to explore different artefacts, some of which have been found during an archaeological dig in York! It brought so much joy to Miss Gibson to see how inquisitive the children were and how much fun they had.



Year 2 Beamish Outreach Visit

The children enjoyed a fascinating visit from Beamish, where they explored what everyday life was like in homes before electricity. Through hands on activities, they discovered how families cooked and cleaned using traditional tools and methods, and learned about the many ways people adapted to manage their daily tasks. It was an engaging and eye opening experience that brought history to life in a memorable way.



Animal Antics Nursery & Reception

Nursery and Reception enjoyed a visit from Animal Antics to support and enhance our learning about nocturnal animals and animals that hibernate. We met a millipede, rabbit, tortoise, mice, hedgehog, gecko and even an owl, to name just a few!

The children were very brave as they held or stroked the animals, showing our school values of respect and courage throughout the session.



Spotlight on British Values

Fundamental British Values underpin what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse Great Britain valuing our community and celebrating diversity of the UK. These values are **Democracy, Mutual Respect, Rule of Law, Respect and Tolerance and Individual Liberty.**

Christmas Assembly

We were delighted to welcome Claire Earl back to our school this week! Claire shared a wonderful story from the Bible that reminded us all about the true meaning of Christmas. Her warmth, enthusiasm, and a touch of “magic” brought the story to life in a way that captivated everyone. We always love seeing Claire, and we’re grateful for the joy and inspiration she brings to our school community.



Creating a Safer Culture

12 days of Clickmas

As part of our 12 Days of Clickmas, we are sharing daily tips to help families stay safe online, especially in the run-up to Christmas. Each day highlights a key area of e-safety for parents to consider, from managing screen time to setting up privacy controls. With many children receiving new devices such as phones, tablets, or gaming consoles, these reminders support you in making informed choices and ensuring a safe digital start to the new year.

Online safety parents meeting

At the Online Safety Parents Meeting, we outlined expectations for safe iPad use.

- Children must not store images of other children on their iPads; these will be checked and deleted weekly.
- Age-inappropriate apps will be automatically blocked, including apps such as Roblox or any that are later re-categorised.
- Parents can use the Jamf Parent app at home to set additional restrictions on their child’s iPad, including screen time limits and blocking specific games or websites.

Promoting Positive Attendance

We want every child to have the best start in life, and regular attendance and punctuality play a key role in achieving this. Children who attend school **96% of the time or higher** are more likely to keep up with learning, build confidence, and reach their full potential. Missing even a week or two can make it harder to keep up with learning. We kindly remind families that holidays during term time may result in fines, so please plan trips during the school holidays whenever possible.

Term Time Holidays

Just to remind parents that all second holidays of 10 sessions (5 days) or more within a 10 week period will receive an automatic fixed penalty notice fine and any first holidays where attendance is below 90% will also receive a fixed penalty notice fine. Where parents have had one fixed penalty notice fine, the second fine will then increase as per government guidelines. All letters sent out are standard letters from North Tyneside Council.

Outdoor Adventurous Play

Our outdoor activities have been a huge hit this month! Whatever the weather, we're making sure pupils get the most out of their time outside. We've introduced themed days and brand-new play equipment, including brooms for sweeping, hoops for throwing and catching, balance boards and a variety of ball games. These activities help children develop their physical strength, coordination, balance, and overall fitness, all while having fun and being creative. It's fantastic to see our pupils enjoying every moment outdoors, learning new skills, and making the most of this exciting season!



Family Opportunities Outside School

North Tyneside - easeINTO

Exciting Opportunity for Families Receiving Free School Meals! Sports Camps NE ([Fun Sports Camps for Kids](#) | [SportsCampsNE](#)) is thrilled to offer three days of festive fun at Whitehouse Primary School, thanks to funding from Holiday activities and food programme (HAF) for children in years 1-6

Dates & Times:

- 22nd December
- 29th December
- 2nd January

Time: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM We still have a few free places available, and we'd love for families to take advantage of this opportunity!

How to Book:

- Visit easeinto.northtyneside.gov.uk
- Or contact Chris on 07741488604 if you need any help.

Don't miss out—secure your spot today!

Thank you,

Sports Camps NE

You may have seen in the news that the Government has agreed to fund HAF (Holiday Activities and Food programme) for the next 3 years. In North Tyneside, our HAF programme is known as easeINTO and this is great news for families.

The HAF provides funded places for school aged children in receipt of benefits related free school meals. We have a great list of fun activities within clubs across the whole borough across the Christmas holiday. A full list of activities will also be found on our website from November. Funded spaces are also available if your child fits one of these criteria too.

There are a small number of free spaces available for children who are not eligible for income-related free school meals, these are called 'non-eligible' spaces. The criteria for these 'non-eligible' spaces includes:

- children with a special educational need or disability (SEND)
- children in care
- young carers
- children on EHCP plans

- children and young people from low-income working families
- children and young people known to social care
- children of refugees and asylum seekers
- young people between 16 and 18 with SEND If your child has a special educational need or disability (SEND)

*Please make sure you fill in this information when you register on the booking system. Your child can then be approved to access non-eligible spaces. Places will be limited but please use the waiting list option so providers can contact you if a place becomes available. Please remember these are funded places and include a meal per child so no-shows still cost money if the place cannot be filled. Register now so you are ready for when the activities appear mid-November:

<https://easeinto.northtyneside.gov.uk/>

Dates for your Diary

Future Statutory Assessment Dates

11th - 15th May 2026 Year 6 SATs week

8th June - 12th June 2026 Year 1 Phonic Screener

1st June - 12th June 2026 Year 4 Multiplication Check

HOLIDAY DATES 2025 - 2026

	School Closes <i>(last day of term)</i>	School Re-opens
<u>AUTUMN TERM 2025</u>		
OCTOBER MID TERM	Friday 24 th Oct 2025	Monday 3 rd Nov 2025
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY	Friday 19 th Dec 2025	Monday 5 th Jan 2026
<u>SPRING TERM 2026</u>		
SPRING MID TERM	Friday 13 th Feb 2026	Tuesday 24 th Feb 2026
EASTER HOLIDAY	Thurs 2 nd April 2026	Monday 20 th April 2026
<u>SUMMER TERM 2026</u>		
SUMMER MID TERM	Thurs 21 st May 2026	Monday 1 st June 2026
SUMMER HOLIDAYS	Friday 17 th July 2026	

TRAINING DAYS

School will be closed on the 3 following days:

Monday 1 st September 2025	Monday 23 rd February 2026
Friday 22 nd May 2026	

BANK HOLIDAY - SCHOOL IS CLOSED TO ALL PUPILS ON THIS DAY:

MONDAY 4TH MAY 2026