



St Pius Spotlight

'To renew all things in Christ'



05.12.25

Dear Parents and Carers,

With only two weeks to go until the Christmas break, we have been working very hard to get ourselves ready for the birth of Christ. Advent is a time of reflection and prayer, but also of joyous preparation! We have been thinking about the things we can do for others and how we can share the Hope, Love, Joy and Peace of the season with others. With this in mind, our Mini Vinnies have been making Christmas cards to share with members of our parish who may be lonely and we are now taking donations for the food bank to support our local community. Please see below for more information.

Next week, Class 3 have their final Road Safety workshop on Monday afternoon. Please can they bring warm clothes in for the session and a change of footwear as the weather is so unpredictable at the moment?

Best wishes as always,

Miss Hudson

Attendance

During celebration assembly on Friday, we have been celebrating whole class attendance and each week the class with the highest attendance will receive our Anna the Attendance Cat to live in their class all week! Well done to Class 1 who won this week.



Week beginning: Monday 1st December 2025	
Year group	Attendance percentage
Class 1	100%
Class 2	93.81%
Class 3	96.67%
Class 4	98.62%



Our overall school attendance this week was 96.97%. Our attendance target is 97%.

Advent Food Bank

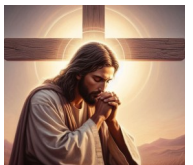
Our Minnie Vinnies and School Council will be organising donations to Consett Food bank over the next two weeks. Donations can be dropped off at school at any point and we will be making our trip to donate on Wednesday 17th December in the morning.



Please see the poster included in the newsletter for items that are sorely needed!



This Sunday is the second Sunday in Advent.
May we continue the festive season with Peace.



ADVENT FOOD BANK



URGENTLY NEEDED FOOD ITEMS

LONG LIFE FRUIT JUICE

JAM & PRESERVES

SAVOURY TREATS

TINNED TOMATOES

COFFEE

TOILETRIES

WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF

PASTA

TINNED VEGETABLES

MEAT

BAKED BEANS

PASTA SAUCE

SOUP



WE WILL BE GATHERING DONATIONS FOR THE CONSETT FOOD BANK UNTIL WEDNESDAY 17TH DECEMBER 2025. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DROP OFF DONATIONS AT SCHOOL AND WE WILL TAKE ALL OF THE FOOD ALONG AT THE END OF TERM.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **SCHOOL AVOIDANCE**

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.



PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.



COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.



LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.



CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.



Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.



MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.



FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.



RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them. Such an approach can go a long way.



Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance

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Spotlight Celebration

School life this week

This week, we have been decorating the school ready for Christmas. Thank you so much to all those who donated items to school—it is much appreciated!



In this section, we celebrate our achievements both in and out of school. If you have something you would like us to share for your child—an achievement, work of art, event they attended - please send it to school via email and we will include it in the newsletter!

Dates for Your Diary

16.12.25: Class 1 and 2 Nativity 2pm

17.12.25: Class 3 and 4 Carol Concert and Christmas Raffle 2pm

18.12.25: Pantomime Trip 1.30pm

19.12.25: Christmas Party Morning

19.12.25: Whole school Mass in school 1.30pm—all are welcome

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS 20.12.25–04.01.26

05.01.26: Spring Term begins

14.01.26: Class 3 Team building festival PM—please wear PE kits

16.01.26: Year 3 Games Festival PM—please wear PE kits

16.01.26: Class 1 Celebration of the Word 2.45pm (followed by Coffee and chat)

21.01.26: Class 4 Assembly 9am

30.01.26: Class 2 Celebration of the Word 2.45pm (followed by Coffee and chat)

04.02.26: Class 3 Assembly 9am

06.02.26: Non-uniform day—bring a bottle

18.02.26: Ash Wednesday Service in school—time TBC

HALF TERM 21.02.26–01.03.26

04.03.26: Class 1 PE trip PM—please wear warm, outdoor clothes

05.03.26: World Book Day

06.03.26: Class 3 Celebration of the Word 2.45pm (followed by Coffee and chat)

11.03.26: Class 2 Assembly 9am

13.03.26: Class 2 Invasion games festival PM—please wear PE kits

13.03.26: Non-uniform day—crafts, chocolates, toys

20.03.26: Class 4 Celebration of the Word 2.45pm (followed by Coffee and chat)

23.03.26 and 24.03.26: Parents evening Spring Term 3.30–5.30pm

25.03.26: Class 1 Assembly 9am

25.03.06: Class 4 Rugby skills trip PM— please wear PE kits

30.03.26: Palm Sunday Procession 2.45pm

02.04.26: Easter Raffle and Easter Egg Competition awards 2pm

EASTER HOLIDAYS 03.04.26–19.04.26

08.12.25: Class 3 Road safety workshop session 2 in school—outdoor clothing needed

11.12.25: Christmas Jumper Day

12.12.25: Christmas Fayre 2.30pm onwards

20.04.26: Summer Term begins

24.04.26: Class 2 Celebration of the Word 2.45pm (followed by Coffee and chat)

29.04.26: Class 3 Assembly 9am

06.05.26: Class 4 Assembly 9am

Dates for Your Diary Continued

08.05.26: Non-uniform day—bring a bottle

11.05.26–14.05.26: KS2 SATs

15.05.26: Class 1 Celebration of the Word 2.45pm (followed by Coffee and chat)

22.05.26: Pentecost Procession 2.45pm

22.05.26: Non-uniform day crafts, chocolates, toys

HALF TERM 23.05.26–31.05.26

05.06.26: Class 4 Celebration of the Word 2.45pm (followed by Coffee and chat)

10.06.26: Class 1 Assembly

12.06.26: Non-uniform day—bring a bottle

19.06.26: Class 3 Celebration of the Word 2.45pm (followed by Coffee and chat)

24.06.26: Class 2 Assembly

25.06.26: St Bede's Uniform evening for Y6 parents

26.06.26: Non-uniform day—crafts, chocolates, toys

01.07.26–02.07.26: St Bede's Transition days for Year 6

02.07.26: Transition day in school

03.07.26: Non-uniform day—£1 contribution

10.07.26: Sports Day and School Fayre

13.07.26: School Raffle Draw 2pm

13.07.26–15.07.26: Robinwood residential for Class 4

Due to the residential dates, the Year 6 Leavers Mass—Time TBC and Year 6 Leavers Performance 4pm, will be rearranged—we will let you know the new dates asap.

Monday 20th July - Monday 31st August - Summer Holidays 2026