

October 2026

October Diary Dates

6/11/26	Team Cowell Reading and Maths cafe
9/11/26	BigFoot Anti-bullying workshops
13/11/26	Children in Need day
13/11/26	Team Soundar Reading and Maths cafe
19/11/26	Y5/6 Career conversation
23/11/26	Liz Million – author visit
25/11/26	Team Cherry – Christmas journey
27/11/26	Team Morpurgo Reading and Maths cafe

Website

For the most up-to-date dates, please keep checking our website:
https://www.stanleycrook.durham.sch.uk

Making bird-feeders

Inspired by their class book, *The Robot and the Bluebird*, Team Cowell enjoyed spending time outdoors making bird feeders. The children thought carefully about how to help local birds and created some wonderful feeders to support wildlife in our school grounds.



Fire safety assembly

We were delighted to welcome firefighters from the local Fire Service into school for a special fire safety assembly. The children learned important messages about staying safe around fireworks and bonfires, as well as the impact that anti-social behaviour can have on the community. The firefighters shared practical safety advice and answered lots of thoughtful questions. To round off the visit, the children had an exciting opportunity to explore the fire engine and learn more about the equipment used to help keep us safe.



Reading and Maths cafes

Team Cherry and Team Donaldson recently welcomed parents and carers into school for their Reading and Maths Café sessions. It was wonderful to see so many families joining in with a range of engaging activities designed to support learning at home. The children thoroughly enjoyed sharing their skills, reading together and tackling maths challenges alongside their grown-ups. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the sessions such a success. We look forward to welcoming parents into school again soon for the KS2 cafes.





After-School Club Spotlight

Lingo-tots – French Fun

This term in Lingotots, we have been exploring lots of different foods in French! The children have done a fantastic job of identifying a variety of fruits and confidently expressing what they like and don't like in French. It has been wonderful to see their confidence growing as they learn and practise new vocabulary.

We have also been discovering even more types of food and getting into the festive spirit by learning some Christmas songs in French in preparation for Noël!

Lingotots will be continuing in the spring term, so if your child would like to join in the fun and start learning French in a fun and engaging way, there will be an opportunity to sign up. We would love to welcome some new little linguists!











Tip: duplicate this slide, replace the placeholder text/photos, then export as PDF.

BEST ATTENDANCE — Team **Cherry** had the best attendance this month at **96.5%**

Meeting Jacqueline Wilson

Ten lucky children who champion reading attended a special event with **Jacqueline Wilson**. She shared stories about her childhood, her dream of becoming a writer, and the inspirations behind some of her favourite books.
The children also enjoyed hearing her top writing tips and left feeling inspired to create stories of their own.

Save the date – Christmas performances

Please save the dates for our upcoming Christmas performances. We are looking forward to welcoming families to celebrate the festive season with us!

Key Stage 2 presents: *Bah Humbug!*
- **Monday 7th December**
- **Tuesday 8th December**

EYFS and Key Stage 1 present: *Born in a Barn*
- **Wednesday 9th December**
- **Thursday 10th December**

Further details regarding performance times and tickets will be shared nearer the dates. We can't wait to share these special performances with you!

Career conversation with a sports lawyer

Year 5 and 6 recently enjoyed a fascinating career conversation with a football lawyer, learning more about his role and the wide range of careers available within the football industry. The children were particularly engaged by the exciting "Guess the Player by Their Shirt" game and impressed everyone with their excellent football knowledge.

A special congratulations goes to Nancy, who was the only participant to correctly identify Alessia Russo, earning both herself and our school a special shout-out during the video call. Well done, Nancy!



Stone Age Fun





As part of their Forest School learning, Team Cowell created their own Stone Age hunting tools using natural materials. The children worked collaboratively to tie materials together and make spears and axes, demonstrating excellent teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Outdoor learning

Team Donaldson have enjoyed taking their learning outdoors, working together and exploring new ideas in the fresh air.



Outdoor learning provides a wonderful opportunity to build confidence, curiosity and a love of learning beyond the classroom

Online Safety

This month's Online Safety topic is about being 'Buying technology for children'.

internet matters.org

Buying tech for kids? Make safety your first feature

Give children independence safely – know what to look for before you buy.



Technology helps children learn, play and connect, but the best device isn't the newest one, it's the safest one.



Before you buy, think about how the device will fit your child's age, needs and confidence. Safety features can help you manage screen time, block inappropriate content and protect your child's privacy, giving them freedom to explore safely as they grow.

Children's needs will change over time:

- **Ages 6-10 –** stronger limits, simpler features and more supervision
- **Ages 11-13 –** a balance of independence and support
- **Ages 14+ –** greater privacy, guided by trust and open conversations
- **Children with additional needs –** look for accessibility and customisation options that make using tech easier and safer

Before you buy checklist

Before choosing any new device, ask yourself:

1. Does it include clear parental controls and privacy settings?
2. Can I adjust them as my child grows?
3. Does it work with other tools we already use?
4. Is it accessible for my child's needs?
5. Do I know how to set it up safely?

Also consider:

- **A protective case** or insurance for peace of mind
- **Child-friendly data plans** with capped usage
- Setting **consistent digital** rules across devices



Mobile phones

A mobile phone can help children stay in touch and gain independence, but it's important to choose one that suits their age and maturity.

Younger children (around 6-10):

Many younger children don't yet need a mobile phone. However, if you decide they're ready, it's best to choose a **feature phone** **(sometimes called a "dumb phone")** rather than a smartphone. These simpler devices allow calls and texts but have limited or no internet access, which helps children stay connected safely without the risks that come with full online access.

Older children and teens:

Smartphones offer more flexibility for learning, creativity and communication, but they need clear boundaries and the right settings in place. Also, it's important to discuss how they will use the phone to choose the right one for them.

Questions to consider

- Is it just for safety on their way to and from school?
- Will they need to access the internet or download apps for school, socialising and entertainment?
- What do they want to do with their phone?

Features to look for

- Built-in **parental controls** (e.g. Screen Time on Apple devices or Parental Controls on Android devices)
- **Content filters** for apps and web use
- **Contact management** for trusted communication
- **Location sharing** that can be switched on/off
- **Data and spending limits** to manage use and costs
- **App store controls** to restrict or require approval for new app downloads
- **Child-friendly network plans,** such as capped-data tariffs or safer SIMs for teens

Buying tips

- Check that the phone model still gets security updates to protect from malware and scams.
- Pick a **network with child-safe features** consider child-safe features offered by some networks (eg. EE Safer SIMs).
- Look for durable, budget-friendly models with good battery life.
- Get insurance to protect against damage or loss of devices.
- Choose a phone that supports parental controls.
- Consider phones designed specifically for children, like HMD Fuse or Fusion X1.

For **hand-me down phones,** make sure to reset and update before giving them to a child.

▸ Explore our **mobile phone safety guide** for setup steps and advice by age.





Laptops & tablets

Children often use laptops and tablets for schoolwork, gaming and creativity, so safety and usability both matter.

Questions to consider

- Is this mainly for schoolwork, creative play or both?
- Will the device be shared, or is it just for your child?
- Where will it be used – mostly at home, or on the go?
- Do you need a device that can be monitored easily or kept in a shared space?

Features to look for

- Ability to create **child or supervised accounts**
- **Web filtering and app permissions** for age-appropriate content
- **Privacy settings** to manage data sharing and ads
- Built-in or easy-to-install **parental controls**
- **Durability and usability** suited to their age

Buying tips

- Choose devices that support **family accounts** (e.g. Windows, Samsung Kids, macOS, ChromeOS).
- For younger children, look for **"kids mode"** or restricted profiles to simplify use.
- Prioritise **durability,** invest in a sturdy case and consider extended warranty or insurance.



Visit our **laptops and tablets guide** for setup steps and safety settings.



Games consoles

Consoles offer fun, creativity and connection with friends, but they're also social spaces where children can interact with others.

Questions to consider

- Will your child mostly play solo games or online with friends?
- Do they already play online at a friend's house?
- How much time do you want them to spend gaming each day?
- Are you comfortable with in-game chats and purchases?

Features to look for

- **Age and PEGI-based restrictions** for games and apps
- **Chat and friend controls** to manage who children can talk to
- **Spending limits** to prevent unapproved purchases
- **Screen time settings** to encourage balance
- **Privacy options** to limit data sharing and streaming

Buying tips

- Choose consoles that support **individual child accounts** with separate settings.
- Check **subscription requirements** (for online gaming) before buying.
- Consider consoles with **offline or local play** options for younger players.
- Download the **console's family app** (PlayStation, Xbox, Nintendo) to manage settings easily.

Visit our **games console guide** for setup instructions and parental control tips.

