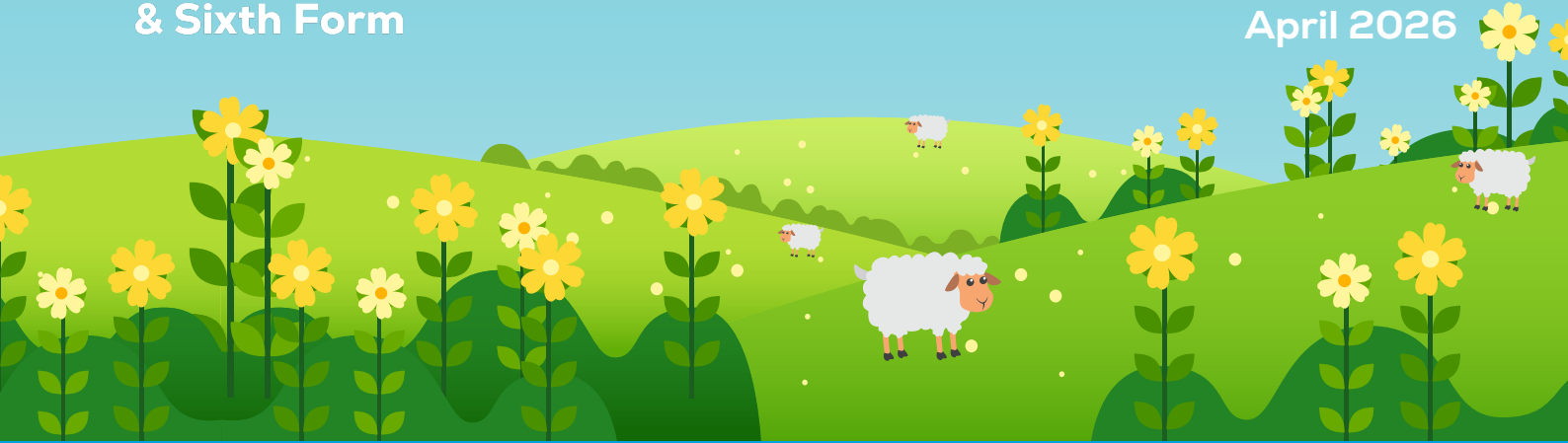




Teesdale School
& Sixth Form

Parent/Carer Newsletter

April 2026



Revision boosters

As we move towards the summer term, the longer evenings for us signal exam season is upon us. We wish all of our students the greatest success during their exams and are here to support them every step of the way.

During the Easter break, we'd like to remind you that a number of subject booster sessions will be running in school to support Year 11 students with their upcoming exams. These sessions are a valuable opportunity for students to strengthen

their understanding, build confidence, and receive targeted support from our staff.

To help us plan group sizes and ensure appropriate supervision, a Microsoft Forms link has been sent out to all Year 11 parents.

Please complete this form as soon as possible if your child will be attending any of the sessions. Students will only be able to take part if a parent or carer has completed the form.

Going Green for Mental Health

For Mental Health Awareness Week in February, we as a community shared strategies, stories and emphasised the importance of caring for our mental wellbeing. From handing out positive mantra stickers, to taking part in collective singing in the vibrancy area, we decorated our school green to demonstrate that we are here and present for one another in support of positive mental wellbeing. Colouring, calming, self-reflection and emotion regulation activities were all available in the vibrancy area on a daily basis, in addition to a theme which ran through the week following an assembly discussing our invisible 'mental health backpacks'.

Dates for your diary

May Bank Holiday - 4th May 2026

Year 10 Parents evening - 6th May 2026

Year 11 and 13 Exams begin - 11th May 2026

School closes for half term holiday - Friday 22nd May 2026

School returns for final half term - 1st June 2026

NELT Trust Athletics Festival - 9th July 2026

Work experience for Year 10 and Year 12 - 13th - 15th July 2026

Activities Days for KS3 - 13th - 15th July 2026

Sports Day 17th July 2026

School breaks for summer holidays - 17th July 2026 (INSET day on Monday, 20th July 2026)

BBC in Barney

We were thrilled to welcome Laura Ellis who is Head of Emerging Technologies at the BBC into school this month. Laura delivered some fascinating seminars to Year 9, 10 and 12 students with a particular focus on the reality of the rapid AI revolution in addition to the myriad of career opportunities this presents.



Year 9 visit London

A group of Year 9 students enjoyed an exciting trip to London, where they visited both The National Archives and the Natural History Museum. During their visit, students had the opportunity to view authentic artefacts from World War I and gain a deeper understanding of the period.

A particular highlight was the chance to handle genuine wartime documents, bringing history to life in a truly memorable and engaging way.



Planning for activities week – KS3

We'd like to thank all parents/carers who have supported their children in completing their preferences for activities week - Monday 13th July – Wednesday 15th July. We have now begun the process of allocating all children in Years 7, 8 and 9 to activities for those three days and will confirm allocations with each student in writing in the weeks after the Easter holidays. Once allocations have been made and these letters sent to students, at this point the relevant trips will be added to each student account on ParentPay allowing you to make payment for activities ahead of the deadline date of Monday 1st June. Indemnity forms will be sent to you for completion by the trip lead in addition to further information about the requirements for each trip.

GCSE PE students take to the climbing walls at ROF59...

GCSE students visited ROF 59 Activity Centre at Newton Aycliffe. Some had climbed before but many had not, this did not deter our GCSE PE students who all participated in a rock climbing activity day at ROF 59 earlier this term. Students demonstrated determination, resilience and increasing skill as they pushed themselves to reach further, stretch higher and gather evidence for their GCSE practical course elements. Well done, everyone and thanks for ROF59 for their commitment to sharing their love of climbing.



Sixth form road safety

Our Year 12 students benefitted from the knowledge and experience of specialists at our local Fire Station in taking them through the Young Driver programme, during which they learnt sobering and lifesaving facts about road safety.

We're grateful to Emma and the team at the Barnard Castle Fire Station and wish all of our young people many, many years of safe and happy miles as many are embarking upon driving lessons, theory and practical driving assessments.



Robotics team award



Our robotics team delivered an outstanding performance at a recent FIRST Tech Challenge UK event, winning both the Judges' Award and the Winning Alliance, and securing an impressive second place overall.

The judges made special mention of the phenomenal teamwork demonstrated, especially to the amazing girls on the team, who continue to be inspiring role models and strong ambassadors for girls in STEM. Having spent months designing, making and perfecting their robot, it took careful driving and nerves of steel to hold it together in a real nail-biting final match at the Royal Grammar School in Newcastle earlier this month.

Well done to the students who work hard on a weekly basis to build and prepare these robots ready for battle and of course to Mr Bergin who most certainly is their wing man!



National Careers Week and sharing our love of reading

Each year we work with our friends at TCR Hub to provide the opportunity for our students to attend a careers fair. This year, Ms Ward organised a week-long careers event which coincided with World Book Day – allowing her to work closely with Ms Heaton (our reading lead) to create a wealth of creative opportunities to share more information about skills and careers.

We were also delighted to host an author on Friday, who inspired all Year 7 groups with her love of literature and encouraged them to let their imaginations run wild. Character creation and book cover competitions added to the excitement, alongside staff dressing up as famous characters to share their enthusiasm for reading and provide plenty of laughs!