

Headteacher's Report to Governors

Inspire the child

Discover your future

Empower the community

Cleaswell Hill School

Introduction

'Summertime, and the living is easy....'



Not if you work at Cleaswell Hill School.

Although the majority of pupils, and staff, are usually settled by the summer term, it is never easy. The summer term is non-stop; finishing the work of this school year while preparing carefully for the next. Add to this the fact that we come into the Ofsted 'window' in July, alongside all the preparation involved in becoming familiar with and '**adapting**' — more on this later — to the new framework, it is fair to say that we have a very busy staff team.

Is it just me or is it slightly ironic that one of the areas Ofsted focuses on is workload reduction? I am sure they would argue that schools are not meant to do anything differently for an inspection. However, let's get back to reality. Firstly, we need to become familiar with the new framework. Secondly, we need to ensure that we have compelling evidence to hand, both through what inspectors will see in practice and through the documentation that supports it. We also need to put ourselves in the strongest possible position, particularly remembering that the new framework makes it harder to achieve the very highest judgements.

We started this latest stage of preparation, I thought that we would already have most of the information needed for the new framework and that it would largely be a case of aligning it. This has proved to be correct. That is because we began preparing immediately after the last inspection. We have also invested in support from Lynn Watson, our SIP, and Sharon Ballinger, Ascent Headteacher and Ofsted Inspector, to help us to sharpen our preparation.

However, we have not had to create something new for inspection. The work has been about ensuring that we can clearly articulate the school that already exists: a highly complex, ambitious and inclusive special school where leaders and staff

make thousands of thoughtful decisions each day to meet pupils' needs, reduce barriers and secure progress from individual starting points.

The work this term has therefore focused on clarity. We have refined the way we tell the Cleaswell story, strengthened the evidence that sits behind our self-evaluation, and ensured that leaders at all levels can explain the intent, implementation and impact of their work. This includes our curriculum pathways, integrated therapy offer, personal development programme, behaviour and attendance systems, safeguarding culture, Fusion Learning Hub, and the continued **adaptation** of provision for pupils with increasingly complex SEND.

It will not come as a surprise that the key word that defines leadership and governance at Cleaswell is **adaptation**. You may remember that I started putting together the Five Year Plan during the pandemic. If I am being honest, one of the primary drivers for this was to help me stay sane. However, it became, and remains, a strategic, values-led working document rooted in our responsibility to provide pupils with the safest, most ambitious and meaningful education possible.

It also proved to be the proactive catalyst for significant **adaptations** to our curriculum, staffing structures, physical environment, therapeutic offer, outreach work and leadership model. Many of these developments are explored further in this report.

As we prepare for inspection, the task is not to present a perfect school, but an honest, self-aware and constantly improving school that understands its context deeply and acts decisively in the best interests of pupils.

In many respects, preparing for Ofsted has not been a separate journey. It has helped bring our thinking together and sharpen our focus at a time when there are changes happening within our team. The new inspection framework has required a slightly different approach, but the substance was already in place: in the daily work of staff, the lived experience of pupils, the confidence of families, the quality of leadership and the ambition that continues to drive Cleaswell Hill forward.

The working practices at Cleaswell mean that we are, in effect, continually preparing for the next inspection. This is not because we are inspection-driven, but because we are improvement-driven.

Once again, the commitment of the staff team in preparing for the coming inspection cannot be commended enough. The plan is to be fully prepared by July, so perhaps, once we are there, the living may be easy after all.

Mike Jackson, June 26

'Summertime, and the living is easy...'

Definitely if you are Karyn McMahon.

That is because Karyn is retiring this summer. Karyn joined Cleaswell Hill in September 2017 and has played a crucial role in helping the school to become the place that it is today.

Amongst the diverse plethora of "living the dream" tasks that make up a Deputy Headteacher's role, Karyn has driven **adaptations** in teaching and learning, CPD, curriculum development and the increasingly complex minefield known as safeguarding. Karyn is particularly adept at the written narrative and we will certainly miss her references to obscure 19th-century French stews.

I would personally like to thank Karyn for the hard work, commitment and skill that she has given to Cleaswell Hill over the last nine years, and for probably her most difficult task of all: putting up with me.

On behalf of the governors, we wish you a very long, happy and well-deserved retirement.

Thanks Karyn.

Mike Jackson

Section 1 - School Development

Whole School Targets (WSTs)

Our whole school targets for 2025-26 are:

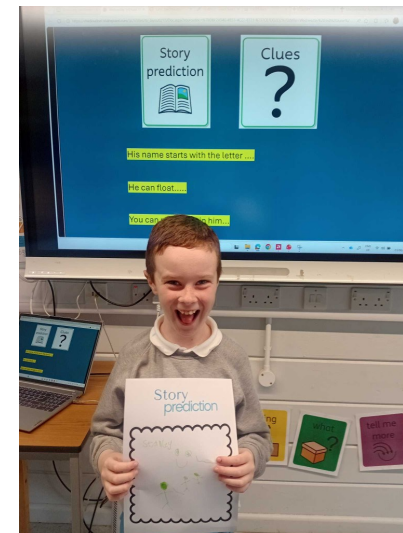
Leadership and Governance

Improved pupil outcomes result from continuous school development, staff career progression and strategic succession planning driven by the Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Curriculum and Teaching

High-quality, ambitious and coherently planned curricula based on strong foundational learning that inclusively meet the needs of all pupils.

Consistently exceptional teaching delivered by confident, deliberate practitioners.



Achievement

Pupils achieve highly positive outcomes through secure foundational knowledge, personalised progress tracking and preparation for future education, training, or employment.

Attendance and Behaviour

Attendance tracking and monitoring enables successful strategies which support maintained/improved attendance for individuals and pupil groups including severely absent, persistently absent and disadvantaged (FSM).

All staff have the insight and tools to impact positively on pupils' lives.

Inclusion

To embed a culture of equity, ambition and belonging for every learner.

Personal Development and Wellbeing

Promote holistic personal development to cultivate confident, safe and enriched learners, integrating sustainability, civic engagement and enrichment opportunities to enhance understanding and expand horizons.

Ofsted

'Cleaswell Hill School remains an outstanding school'. We have no identified area for development.

Overview of the New Ofsted Inspection Framework

The new Education Inspection Framework introduces significant structural and focus changes. From November 2025, all schools – including special schools – will be evaluated across several distinct areas, with each area graded on a five-point scale rather than receiving a single overall grade.

Five-point scale:

- Exceptional
- Strong standard
- Expected standard
- Needs attention
- Urgent improvement

Evaluation areas:

- Safeguarding (met / not met)
- Inclusion
- Curriculum & Teaching
- Achievement
- Attendance & Behaviour
- Personal Development & Well-being
- Leadership & Governance



Mike Jackson

School Improvement Partner (SIP)

Since Easter Lynn Watson has been in school numerous times since Easter supporting us to prepare for the next Ofsted inspection. In addition, Lynn will be carrying out the summer term SIP visit on 23 June alongside Sharon Ballinger (Ofsted Inspector). Lynn will be providing feedback on our Ofsted preparation journey at the start of the summer full governing body meeting.

Section 2 - Curriculum

Curriculum and Teaching

School Leaders have meticulously designed and implemented a coherently planned and sequenced curriculum through each Pathway. A tailored and highly effective creative curricula have been crafted and run alongside statutory Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Leaders are particularly astute in their thinking when it comes to adapting and evolving the curriculum to ensure that pupils are taught the most powerful skills and knowledge for success. Leaders have carefully considered how they can reduce pupils' significant barriers to learning and engagement through ensuring integrated therapeutic education.

Leaders are data-driven in their careful refinement to the curriculum in response to the ever-changing needs and aptitudes of pupils. An example being the analysis of data that ensured continued learning and progress within the Core Pathway foundation subjects when analysis highlighted that pupils were not making expected progress because of the knowledge-heavy National Curriculum.

Over time, this sustained curriculum focus has been very successful in engaging and re-engaging pupils in their learning while equipping them with essential skills and knowledge across the wider curriculum, with transferable skills for activities of daily living.

Leaders make sure that all pupils gain secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics, regardless of previous difficulties and commensurate with pupils starting point and needs.

Leaders rigorously check that pupils learn what they should. Pupils, including additionally disadvantaged pupils and those who face other considerable difficulties in their lives, benefit significantly from the curriculum offer and all pupils' learning builds securely over time.

School data, pupil feedback and parent testimonials provide strong evidence of the positive impact of the curriculum across all Pathways.

Curriculum and teaching at Cleaswell Hill requires leaders to consider many complex factors, some of which are captured in the visual on the following page:

*High-quality, ambitious and coherently designed curricula based on strong foundational learning
that inclusively meet the diverse and complex SEND of all pupils*

Exceptional teaching delivered by confident deliberate practitioners

Complexity of Need HYPERLINK SEF

- 262 pupils with diverse, complex and often co-occurring needs requiring highly-adapted teaching and curriculum delivery
- Leaders and teachers recognise that non-linear progress requires flexible, dynamic assessment of learning and responsive teaching
- Learning environments are deliberately adapted so that pupils are supported to attend, engage and learn well

Curriculum, Pedagogy & Assessment

- Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are intentionally aligned, ensuring teaching builds systematically on prior learning and addresses barriers promptly. Bringing the best of these together well, forms the essence of effective education
- Designing multiple curricula pathways around pupils' developmental profiles to meet need, PIA and EHCP priorities
- Teaching is evidence-based and rooted in deep knowledge of each pupil and how they learn best.
- Assessment is used purposefully to inform teaching recognising small steps, developmental gains and broader outcomes
- Sustaining pupil progress overtime by removing barriers to learning
- Integrated therapeutic approaches support pupils to sustain learning and make progress over time by removing barriers

Professional Capital

- Leaders have a clear shared understanding of curriculum intent, implementation and impact and can articulate how pathways meet pupils' needs
- Teaching is
- Creative, sustainable ways to enhance teacher autonomy and expertise, with time for reflection, collaboration and professional growth in the current school and educational landscape affecting teacher agency and workload

Taken from Y5 Strategic Plan HYPERLINK

HYPERLINK SIP Report

HYPERLINK Policy

• Goal A-Exceptional pioneering provision

Transformational impact which improves the quality of life for pupils and families

• Goal B- Community Hub for SEND excellence

Cleaswell Hill provides high-quality, evidence-based support to regional services and partners

• Goal C-Enquiry-based culture

Research-led practice, sustained over years, develops teachers and positions school as a centre of excellence in SEND which impacts on SEND provision beyond the region

CONTEXT &
CHALLENGES

PROVISION-
INTENTIONS

CURRICULUM
& TEACHING

IMPACT-
ALIGNED TO 5-Y
STRATEGIC PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION
ACROSS
PATHWAYS

Curriculum

- Curriculum and teaching are ambitious, coherent and inclusive, rooted in a deep understanding of all pupils and developed by a skilled workforce so that pupils learn securely, make meaningful progress and are well prepared for adulthood
- 3 Pathways for different learner profiles
- Ambitious, well-sequenced and coherently designed curriculum recognising distinct profiles and developmental trajectories
- Clear, evidence-based rationales for each Pathway informed by multidisciplinary assessment, EHCP priorities and pupil strengths/interests-see hyperlinks below
- Strong foundations are deliberately planned so pupils can access learning successfully and build knowledge, skills and independence overtime, recognising that progress is non-linear
- Curriculum designed and well-structured so that pupils are well-prepared for future outcomes, including accreditation and qualifications, community learning and activities for daily living support preparation for adulthood
- Teachers understand curriculum progression and assessment deeply and intended impact enabling pupils to learn more securely and meaningfully overtime

Therapeutic Integration

- Therapeutic strategies are purposely integrated into curriculum delivery to support communication, regulation, independence and physical development
- Teaching addresses wellbeing, health and readiness to learn as integral to achievement
- The curriculum reflects consistent collaborative working between education, therapy teams and families to ensure provision meets pupils' complex and overlapping needs

Teaching & Professional Development

- Teaching is delivered confidently and deliberately by practitioners with strong pedagogical and specialist knowledge of SEND
- Teaching is consistent and coherently implemented across the school, ensuring pupils experience continuity and security
- Professional Learning & Development (PL&D) Programme uses a clear theory of change, with a clear line of sight between staff development, teaching quality and pupil outcomes **HYPERLINK TO PROGRAMME**
- PL&D is embedded at whole-school, pathway and individual levels, ensuring consistency of practice and high expectations across the curriculum
- Teachers as Researchers engage in enquiry-based practice, strengthening professional agency, reflective teaching and continual curriculum improvement **HYPERLINK TO PROJECTS & UNIVERSITY ARTICLE**
- Induction and ECT support ensures new staff rapidly develop the competence to deliver the curriculum effectively for pupils **HYPERLINK**
- Fusion Learning Hub (**HYPERLINK**) supports inclusion beyond Cleaswell Hill and places us as civic leaders, contributing to system-wide improvement including local and national networks

Whole School

- Strategic Leaders have a comprehensive and sophisticated understanding of each curriculum design and learner journey and clearly articulate the narrative and evidence-base
- Consistent teaching of curricula across school using evidence-based metacognitive practice of how pupils learn best ensures pupil success
- Support in lessons for holistic EHCP targets for all learners
- Discrete teaching of English, reading (**HYPERLINK**), handwriting/written output (**HYPERLINK**), maths, Physical Development, PSHEE/RSE & PIA form strong foundational learning in Core & Extended Pathways
- Assessment is used effectively to ensure teaching remains highly responsive and inclusive
- Across all Pathways, pupils are supported to learn well, develop independence and move confidently towards next stages
- Staff are supported through collaboration, reflection and professional trust, enabling high-quality teaching despite workforce pressures

• Engagement Pathway HYPERLINK TO RATIONALE

- Personalised, therapy-rich curriculum focussing on communication, regulation, activities for daily living and EHCP-driven targets, delivered through immersive learning experiences in enabling environments

• Core Pathway HYPERLINK TO RATIONALE

- Skills-oriented curriculum with strong PIA focus, community learning and integrated therapy, delivered through meaningful project-based learning in the foundation subjects

• Extended Pathway HYPERLINK TO RATIONALE

- Long Term Schemes of Work
- Knowledge-rich adapted national curriculum with clear sequencing supported by teacher knowledge organisers and vocabulary development
- Vocational options aligned to pupil interests and skills

The school's approach to teaching is based on an evidence-informed understanding of effective SEND pedagogy and how our pupils learn best.

Teachers have expert specialist knowledge along with a strong, shared understanding of the different Pathway curricula, approaches to teaching and assessment for pupils with different SEND profiles.



School leaders have built a strong culture of teacher professionalism.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is consistently taught well and that teaching remains highly effective across all pathways so barriers to learning are reduced or removed for pupils in response to the complexity of our all-age cohort of SEND learners.

Leaders have oversight that class leads are maintaining high standards in the quality of teaching and assure themselves that the curriculum is taught well. We maintain our understanding through well-established quality assurance processes including learning walks, professional conversations and structured formal classroom observations.

Teaching expertise is developed through sustained, curriculum aligned professional development. Identified misconceptions in teacher knowledge or gaps in practice are corrected swiftly, as leaders take effective action to carefully refine teaching practice and support teachers to develop the expertise needed to adapt their practice, through providing evidence-based professional development and learning opportunities.

Teachers are supported to be particularly adept in adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. This includes identifying and precisely addressing gaps in pupils' prior knowledge, alongside teaching a curriculum that is age and stage appropriate, while remaining highly ambitious.

All teachers and class leads have completed annual class-based action research for over 5 years, totalling 95 enquiry projects. School leaders are mindful that there is the risk of professional agency being squeezed out of the teacher role due to the narrow compliance demands being made by Government, therefore it is vital that school leaders redress the balance, valuing and championing practitioner enquiry and professional curiosity. Leaders ensure this receives the rigour it deserves in the process of building professional credibility, transparency and integrity into our classroom practice, elevating it through our insightful, rich understanding of how our learners really learn best.



Teachers/Class Leads Metacognitive Research Proposals for 2025-2026

- Does instruction from a professional chef influence students' willingness to increase the scope of their diet and enhance their culinary skills? (ability to prepare, cook and present food, encompassing practical techniques and broader knowledge of food safety and menu planning)
- Does introducing a 10-minute daily regulation routine using adult-led reading and child-initiated art improve calm and readiness for home time in SEN pupils?
- How does engagement differ between children with PDA traits participating in creative health interventions and those engaged in traditional educational or therapeutic approaches?
- How effective are developmentally appropriate, play-based activities - delivered at a child's own pace - in reducing sensory aversions to foods, food smells

and textures among children with special educational needs?

- Does removing high levels of adult supervision reverse the prevalence of learned helplessness observed in a group of teenage learners, and subsequently, support with their independence in activities of daily living in preparation for adulthood?
- Can Integrating emerging STEM technologies into classroom practice, where students utilise these tools to design and produce items of their own choice, significantly enhance engagement and foster independent learning?
- Does incorporating physical movement into problem-solving tasks improve pupils' ability to plan and monitor multi-step maths challenges?
- How does embedding vocabulary development strategies (e.g. analogies, idioms and multiple meanings) into English starter activities support speech and language development in SEN learners?
- Does the use of carousel learning within a maths lesson in the Extended Pathway make an impact on reflective learning, retrieval of skills and support with structured movement for KS3 learners?
- How effective are school reward systems in shaping behaviour and lesson engagement, within the Extended Pathway?
- Does a brief, guided post-break / post-lunch reflection, linked to the Zones of Regulation, reduce incidents of dysregulated behaviour during the following unstructured session and increase pupils' use of regulation strategies?
- Shhh! The Quiet Project
 - ◆ Does implementing a quiet classroom approach alongside increased gestural prompts improve learners' regulation, expressive language and receptive language skills?
 - ◆ How does reducing adult voice alongside using simple, consistent core-word vocabulary influence the regulation, independence and communication of learners with complex needs?
 - ◆ Does decreasing the use of verbal prompts while increasing non-verbal communication strategies support the development of greater independence?
 - ◆ Does a communication-rich environment promote initiation during a play session?
 - ◆ Does removing staff verbal prompts support pupil initiation of communicating wants and needs with increasing independence?
 - ◆ How does implementing a visual noise indicator in the classroom af-

fect engagement and communicative behaviours in class?

The outcome of a range of these research projects will be shared by class leads on 24 June 2026 Professors from Northumbria University and Lynn Watson, School Improvement Partner, will be in attendance. We would be pleased if Governors were able to join us.

Karyn McMahon



Achievement

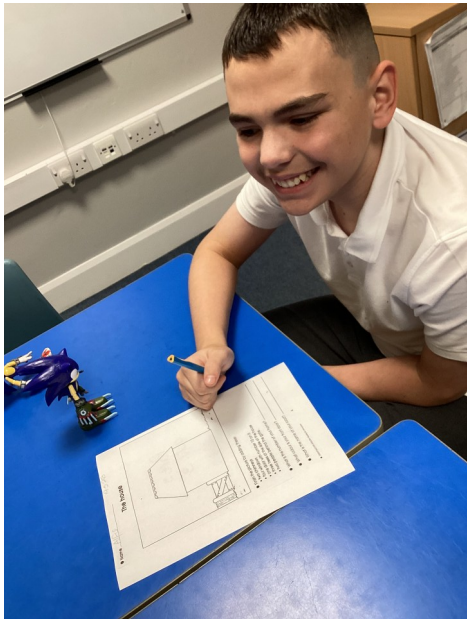
Holistic View of Achievement

At Cleaswell Hill School, we recognise that achievement extends far beyond academic progress and formal accreditation. Our approach focuses on destination, readiness and the "so what" of achievement.

For some pupils, achievement is being ready for the next class, phase or pathway. For others, it is being prepared for college, adult services, community provision, employment-related opportunities or adulthood. This means that progress is understood in the broadest sense and is always considered in relation to pupils' individual starting points, EHCP outcomes and future destinations.

Our holistic approach ensures that every pupil's progress is recognised and valued, regardless of pathway. It also supports leaders to evidence the impact of the curricu-

lum, personal development, therapeutic input and wider provision on pupils' readiness for the next stage.



Assessment

The summer term has seen class teams begin to collate a wider range of evidence on our online assessment platform, Earwig, to support assessment across core and foundation subjects within the Extended Pathway. The breadth of evidence being captured is increasingly strong and the quality of written annotations continues to improve. This demonstrates that staff are implementing training strategies and agreed approaches more consistently, using evidence not only to record progress but to inform next steps in learning.

Subject	Last Year	Autumn	Spring	Summer
English		83 14%	133 23%	173 30%
Mathematics		24 7%	64 18%	79 22%
Science		22 15%	39 27%	47 32%

Data analysis for PLIM targets is also becoming more robust. Phase leaders are now

use the previous term's data to create focused action plans and review cycles. This increased level of scrutiny is having a direct impact on provision, with adaptations made to curriculum content, timetables and support arrangements in response to the changing needs of pupils within each phase.

Action Plan for areas of development

What specific interventions/strategies will you implement to address the areas identified above? Who is responsible?

- Ensure intervention requests are placed for children who didn't meet their C&I target. (Class leads – By May Half Term)
- Continue to explore SEMH provision and review impact of new initiatives (RFH/JW – By May half term).
- Class leads to RAG rate concerns for pupils from SEMH perspective (Class leads – Before May half term).
- Class leads to chat to therapy team about current provisions (Class Leads/Therapy team – By June 12th).

As the Ofsted State-funded School Inspection Toolkit notes:

“Inspectors consider pupils' starting points and the progress they make from them; inspectors also want to understand the curriculum pathways of individuals or groups and whether leaders have identified the right priorities for them and are ensuring that they make good progress.”

This reflects the continued focus at Cleaswell Hill on understanding pupils' individual starting points, identifying the right priorities for each pathway and ensuring that assessment information leads to meaningful action.

PLIM Targets

Across the spring term, within the Core and Extended Pathways, 81% of PLIM targets were met. This is an increase from 75% in the autumn term.

The breakdown by EHCP area is as follows:

- Communication and Interaction – 82%
- Cognition and Learning – 79%
- SEMH – 77%
- Sensory and/or Physical – 86%

All four main areas of the EHCP have seen an increase in the proportion of met targets, with particularly notable improvements in SEMH and Sensory and/or Physical development.

This data has been further scrutinised by phase. The main area of strength within



each pathway was:

- Junior Core – Cognition and Learning – 85%
- Senior Core – Communication and Interaction – 76%
- Extended – Sensory and/or Physical – 94%
- Appleby Centre – Sensory and/or Physical – 90%

The main area for development within each phase was:

- Junior Core – SEMH – 70%
- Senior Core – SEMH – 53%
- Extended – Cognition and Learning – 83%
- Appleby Centre – SEMH – 80%

A teacher meeting is taking place to baseline pupils against the PSHEE framework on Earwig. This will be followed by a further moderation meeting focused on a specific curriculum area before the end of the academic year. The focus will be on the foundational knowledge pupils need in order to progress to the next stage of learning, with particular emphasis on reading, writing and spelling.



Pupil Premium

Ofsted places particular emphasis on gathering evidence about the progress over time of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils who are known or previously known to children's social care and those who may face other barriers to learning and wellbeing.

Our ability to extract and compare data for pupil premium and cared for pupils supports this focus. The pupil premium cohort achieved 83.25% of their PLIM targets, which is slightly above the whole-school cohort.

The breakdown is as follows:

- Communication and Interaction – 85%
- Cognition and Learning – 80%
- SEMH – 82%
- Sensory and/or Physical – 86%

This indicates that disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress from their individual starting points and that provision is being adapted effectively to meet their needs.

Cared For Children

Our cared for children cohort achieved 85.75% of their PLIM targets, again slightly above the whole-school cohort.

The breakdown is as follows:

- Communication and Interaction – 83%
- Cognition and Learning – 80%
- SEMH – 80%
- Sensory and/or Physical – 100%

There are two cared for pupils within the Extended Pathway. Both have made progress across the Key Stage 2 curriculum in line with the wider cohort in their respective groups.

Subject Data

Within the Extended Pathway, 100% of pupils assessed at Key Stage 1 level made progress from their autumn data starting point in core subjects.

For pupils accessing the Key Stage 2 curriculum, 86% made progress in English and 89% made progress in maths. Pupils who have not yet made expected progress have been identified and triangulation paperwork has been completed to support

further analysis and agree next steps.

This ensures that underachievement is identified early and that leaders and class teams can respond through targeted adaptation, additional support or further curriculum review.

Exam Entries

There are 26 GCSE exam entries this year. These include:

- 11 in English Language
- 5 in maths
- 5 in PE
- 4 in biology
- 1 in statistics

Further maths entries include:

- 2 at Level 1
- 7 at Entry Level 3
- 12 for the AQA Entry Level Certificate

Further English entries include:

- 1 at Level 1
- 9 for AQA Entry Level 3
- 7 for AQA Entry Level 1/2
- 8 for Pearson Entry Level 1

In addition, 9 pupils have been entered for the Entry Level Certificate in Science.

This range of accreditations demonstrates the school's commitment to ensuring that pupils access appropriate qualifications that reflect their pathway, starting point and next stage of learning.

Next Steps

The key next steps are to:

- baseline pupils against the PSHEE framework on Earwig

- create an Engagement Pathway triangulation form
- collate three-year trend data across a range of key achievement measures
- continue to strengthen the use of assessment evidence to inform adaptation, intervention and curriculum planning

Jamie Wheadon



Assessment of Phonics and Spelling

Phonics and Spelling Provision – Whole School Overview

Phonics and spelling are delivered systematically across the school, with phonics sessions taking place four times a week and spelling three times a week. Groupings are informed by termly assessment data to ensure targeted and effective teaching. Children transition to their classrooms at 9:20am in preparation for their sessions. All staff delivering phonics and spelling are fully trained in the ELS (Essential Letters and Sounds) programme, Y2 ELS spelling and Y3-6 Essential spelling and word knowledge, ensuring consistency and pace across all groups.

Currently, the school runs seven phonics groups and seven spelling groups alongside a few individuals in the engagement pathway who have shown interests or spikes in reading. The ELS spelling programme covers content from the Year 2 National Curriculum, while the *Essential Spelling and Word Knowledge* programme is used to deliver content from Years 3 to 6. We are currently delivering the Year 3 and the Year 4 programme.

Four classes in junior core trialled an adapted version of the SSP during the spring

term using a range of multisensory approaches, an adapted pace and lesson structure. This was an astute decision to adapt how the programme should look based on insight from staff and phonic data. Feedback from staff shows an increased engagement in the sessions and the children are given the opportunity to practice a range of skills. Data has shown that the majority of these children have made progress in phonemes and blending. Sessions are planned and resourced to deliver an immersive experience with each day focused upon different skills e.g. recognition, oral blending, blending, reading etc. Written output sessions in the afternoon link key skills e.g. auditory and visual perception, finger isolation, eye tracking, etc. to the phonics skill in the morning with the same sounds to support application. This demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the differences between adaptive teaching approaches so that learning can be shaped carefully with teachers and leaders making highly effective choices about how to teach the subject. Exceptionally high standards in the phonic curriculum have been sustained – the subject is well planned, effective and highly responsive teaching develops the knowledge and skills pupils need to be successful.



Assessment of Phonics and Spelling

Phonics and spelling assessments continue to take place in the fifth week of each second half term. Staff are confident in using this data accurately to identify and address gaps in learning before the holidays, ensuring that no gaps are left in learning. The assessment data informs planning and for teachers to make highly effective choices about what to teach and when to teach it. It also ensures that teachers maintain a strong pace of learning across all groups. Highly effective teaching is embedded across phonics in school. Staff are making effective choices about what, when and how to teach in order to sustain their attention and focus on the intended learning. They present information clearly for the children, check their understanding and identify gaps in their knowledge; children have frequent opportunities to practice and consolidate their learning.

In addition to guiding planning, the data is used to inform and adjust groupings, ensuring children are placed where they are most likely to make academic progress—while still considering their age, developmental stage, and behaviours for learning. Assessment outcomes are also used to identify children in need of targeted interventions, including support for grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC), oral blending, and blending for reading.

68 children accessed daily phonics last term. 25 of these children trialled the adapted ELS SSP multisensory approach across 4 groups and 43 children followed the ELS (School SSP) succinctly as a full teaching session. Out of the 25 children who trialled the adapted ELS SSP multisensory phonics approach 22 of the children made progress in at least 1 area (phonemes, blending or HRSW). 18 of the children made progress in 2 or more areas and 12 of these children made progress in all 3 areas which were assessed. The data showing three child who did not make progress at all, one was currently attending school until after phonics sessions due to a part time timetable and staff tried to implement at other parts of the day, he is now attending full time in school and engaging in phonics sessions. The other 2 children are starting to look at phase 1 phonics activities. Out of the 43 children who are accessing the structures SSP ELS teaching sessions 41 children made progress shown through the phonics assessment data. The two children who did not make progress in any area have been placed on a phonics intervention with our intervention teaching assistant.

22 children this term accessed the ELS year 2 spelling programme, 19 pupils made progress. 48 pupils working within the Year 3 *Essential Spelling and Word Knowledge* Programme. 42 made progress on the spelling programme, although progress varied among individuals and retention for some children is varied. Those who made only a little progress are currently receiving additional support through a spelling intervention delivered by our intervention TA throughout the summer term. Pupils are achieving consistently well and are prepared for the next steps in learning, any gaps are closed quickly.

Currently, 60 children across the school are accessing the ELS Phonics Programme (37 structured ELS sessions and 26 adapted SSP incorporating multisensory approach-

es with ELS), 32 are using the ELS Year 2 Spelling Programme, and 51 pupils are working within the Year 3 and 4 *Essential Spelling and Word Knowledge* Programme.

Helen Moulton

Academic Interventions – Summer 2025 and Autumn Term 2025

During the spring term, we successfully delivered 9 academic interventions to a total of 24 pupils. These sessions were facilitated by our in-house intervention teaching assistant and took place in the therapy cabin. Each intervention was delivered on a one-to-one basis or within a small group, with pupils receiving between two and four sessions per week, based on their individual needs. Out of these 24 children, 22 have made progress. Of the two children who did not make progress, a deep dive has been performed and a change of intervention required and implemented.

During the Summer term, we will be delivering 5 different Interventions to 24 children.

Helen Moulton

Early Career Teacher (ECT) Programme at Cleaswell Hill School

Cleaswell Hill School is proud to offer an outstanding Early Career Teacher (ECT) programme, consistently recognised through lesson observations, School Improvement Partner (SIP) feedback and quality assurance visits from our appropriate body, *The Three Rivers*. Our programme is designed to build a resilient, highly skilled teaching workforce capable of delivering exceptional teaching and learning.

We currently have five ECTs on roll—two in their first year and three in their second—each benefiting from a rich and varied development experience. ECTs are encouraged to engage with a wide range of approaches and are supported in taking informed, reflective risks that develop their confidence, capacity and teaching expertise.

This term we had our annual quality assurance visit from *The Three Rivers* teaching School. The following comments were made:

- Cleaswell Hill School continues to demonstrate an exemplary commitment to the Early Career Teacher Entitlement (ECTE). The induction process is characterised by a culture of high expectations paired with a nurturing, "people-first" approach. Leadership has successfully integrated statutory requirements with the bespoke needs of a complex specialist setting, ensuring ECTs are both supported and professionally challenged.
- A strength of Cleaswell Hill is their use of the high-impact Instructional Coaching model supported by the Ambition Institute provision. Mentors provide hands-on support through team teaching, live modeling and co-planning. This reduces the isolation often felt by ECTs and accelerates their understanding of complex SEND pedagogy. Weekly observations are constructive and data-informed,

utilising ECF readings to ground developmental conversations. The school ensures all mentors are highly trained via the Ambition Institute, maintaining a consistent standard of coaching across the cohort.

- The school contextualises the ITTECF to fit its unique context (pupils aged 2–19 with complex needs). ECTs receive specific guidance on high-stakes areas, such as complex risk assessments and sensory communication strategies. Professional development is triangulated with whole-school priorities, utilising resources like the Fusion Learning Hub to ensure ECTs have access to a wide breadth of expertise.

Our commitment to mentoring, regular observations and bespoke support is central to our mission of delivering high-quality education. By investing in the development of early career teachers, we are embedding a culture of continuous improvement, innovation and educational excellence across the school.

Helen Moulton

Section 3- Staffing and Finance

Pupil Statistics

	F	M	Total		F	M	Total
Alnwick - Junior Extended	6	6	12	Year 1	3	5	8
Berwick - Junior Extended	7	7	14	Year 2	2	6	8
Blossom - Junior Core	2	8	10	Year 3	2	5	7
Bluebell - Senior Core	3	7	10	Year 4	6	13	19
Bramble - Senior Core	10	2	12	Year 5	5	15	20
Clover - Senior Core	4	6	10	Year 6	6	12	18
Corbridge - Senior Extended	3	12	15	Year 7	10	27	37
Doves - Junior Engagement+	1	3	4	Year 8	10	30	40
Hexham - Senior Extended	5	9	14	Year 9	7	20	27
Juniper - Junior Core	1	6	7	Year 10	4	27	31
Kielder - Junior Extended	0	11	11	Year 11	9	18	27
Ladybirds - Junior Engagement	1	6	7	Year 12	1	10	11
Lapwing - Senior Engagement	2	5	7	Year 13	6	3	9
Maple - Junior Core	3	7	10	Total	71	191	262
Montane - Senior Extended	1	12	13				
Morpeth - Junior Extended	0	11	11				
Oak - Junior Core	3	7	10				
Otters - Junior Engagement	1	5	6				
Owls - Junior Engagement	3	4	7				
Phoenix - Senior Extended	6	11	17				
Puffins - Junior Engagement	1	6	7				
Riverside - Senior Core	2	9	11				
Sanderling - Senior Engagement	1	7	8				
Starlings - Senior Engagement+	0	9	9				
Thistle - Senior Core	1	10	11				
Willow - Junior Core	4	5	9				
Total	71	191	262				



Staffing

As of 1 June, Cleaswell Hill School employs 184 staff, comprising 175 permanent and 9 fixed-term contracts. Recently, one member of staff has left and two new staff members have been successfully recruited.

Staff absence has improved significantly since last term, with 15 days lost for class leads and 134 days for support staff. This has contributed to a notable reduction in the use of supply staff, supporting greater consistency for pupils.

The school continues to develop its internal 'bank' of agency staff, strengthening capacity to manage absence effectively while maintaining continuity of provision and high-quality support for pupils.

Julie Brown

Budget Overview

The budget meeting for the 2026-2027 financial year was held on 25 March 2026 with the NCC Principal Accountant and NCC Accounting Assistant at County Hall. Following the meeting, the budget was reviewed and approved by the Governor Resource Management Committee and a summary circulated to the Full Governing Body. The final approved budget was submitted to Northumberland County Council on 28 April 2026.

The Department for Education has published its pay award recommendations to the School Teacher's Review Body, proposing a 6.5% cumulative pay rise to be implemented over the 2026-2027, 2027-2028 and 2028-2029 academic years. No additional funding has been announced; the department forecasts that schools will be able to afford an overall pay increase of 2.7% over the next two years from existing budgets. The teacher pay award was 5.5% for 2024-2025 and 4% for 2025-2026. If accepted, the pay award would take effect from September 2026.

The National Employers have made a full and final one year pay offer to support staff unions of an increase of 3.3% to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition to all NJC spinal points and allowances. The final support staff pay award for 2024-2025 was £1,290 per annum for points 2-43 and an increase of 2.5% for pay points 44 and above. The 2025-2026 pay award for support staff featured an increase of 3.2%. Support staff unions are currently consulting with their members and considering their response to the offer. If accepted, the pay award would be backdated to April 2026.

The current Cleaswell Hill School staffing structure and proposed staffing structure for the 2026-2027 academic year were reviewed by the resource management committee on 12 June 2026.

A recent school report summary sheet and budget summary sheet have been circulated with the additional papers for the summer term full governing body meeting.

Lauren Caisley

Fundraising



Following the last report to Governors, Cleaswell Hill Foundation (registered charity number 1000697) has continued to initiate and promote fundraising opportunities whilst developing strong links with parents, carers, pupils, staff and members of the local community.

During the month of February, Kielder Class completed a sponsored 3.26 mile walk around the QE II Lake; they raised an amazing £541.00 in aid of Cleaswell Hill Foundation to be utilised towards exciting new toys, games and experiences for their class. Cleaswell Hill School staff and pupils celebrated NSPCC Number Day on 6 February and raised £63.50 in aid of NSPCC (registered charity number 216401) whilst participating in lots of fun number themed activities and 'dressing up in digits'. A non-uniform day held by Cleaswell Hill School pupils on 13 February raised £59.60 in aid of Cleaswell Hill Foundation.

Staff members from Piramal Pharma Solutions Morpeth kindly volunteered at Cleaswell Hill School for the day on 3 March to enhance one of the outdoor areas. Their generous donation of £2,423.71 and support from the volunteers was greatly appreciated. Cleaswell Hill School pupils held a non-uniform day to celebrate 'red nose day' on 20 March and raised a fantastic £91.00 in aid of Comic Relief (registered charity number 326568). Our charity cabaret evening hosted by Cleaswell Hill School pupils on 26 March was a fantastic event and generated a phenomenal £2,279.70 in aid of Cleaswell Hill Foundation to be utilised towards performing arts resources, equipment and experiences. A Cleaswell Hill Foundation supporter raised £172.00 by completing a sponsored challenge and we gratefully received a thoughtful legacy donation of £315.00 during the month of March. Cleaswell Hill Foundation also received a grant of £500.00 from the Co-op Local Community Fund supported by parents, carers, pupils, staff and members of the

local community.

Cleaswell Hill School pupils were delighted to receive a delivery of a chocolate Easter egg for every child from the Foresters Arms Bikers and the Bedlington Masonic Halls on 1 April. We also greatly appreciated a donation of Easter gifts from PURPLE CIC this month. A non uniform day held by Cleaswell Hill School pupils on 2 April raised £44.71 in aid of Cleaswell Hill Foundation.

Our links with Just Giving, Your School Lottery, Stikins, Paypal Giving, Easy Fundraising, our onsite clothing bank and local community collection boxes continue to generate essential funds for our charity. Our local community collection box at The Cherry Tree Bar and Grill raised £164.44, our link with Easyfundraising generated £82.21, our link with Fundraise and Recycle raised £84.00 and our lottery generated £613.15 from January – May 2026.

Our future planned fundraising events for this term include a summer family picnic and fundraising event on 10 July and a non-uniform day on 17 July in aid of Cleaswell Hill Foundation.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Lauren Caisley

Section 4 - Specific Issues

Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains at the heart of school practice and procedures and is one of the most important responsibilities shared by every member of staff. Designated Safeguarding Leads have worked hard to develop and embed a whole-school safeguarding culture that is proactive, positive and extends beyond compliance. We look beyond policies and procedures to understand how effectively safeguarding is embedded across the culture of school.

Designated Safeguarding Leads want to see how concerns are recognised and acted upon, how our vulnerable learners are supported and how safeguarding influences everyday practice across attendance, behaviour, inclusion and staff culture.

For school, the challenge goes beyond understanding safeguarding expectations. It is knowing, without a doubt, that safeguarding is embedded, effective and making a measurable difference to our vulnerable cohort of pupils.

With safeguarding continuing to be a limited judgement for Ofsted and influencing inspection outcomes, school must be ready to evidence impact, articulate our approaches and demonstrate a strong culture of vigilance across the whole setting.

We are confident that our practice will stand up to inspection scrutiny. From September, school will have a new Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The transition of this role has been well considered; and Helen McIntyre and I have met weekly over this academic year to discuss and share best practice, in addition to our ongoing conversations and decision-making.

Helen has been an active participant in our termly Link Governor monitoring visits, along with monitoring discussions with Lynn Watson, School Improvement Partner. Helen has prioritised developing her knowledge and skills across the broad range needed for the role and attended meetings with Northumberland Children and Adults Safeguarding Partnership (NCASP), training sessions provided by the Northumberland Safeguarding Team, in addition to those facilitated by our Safeguarding Consultants Clennell Education Solutions.

There is also a change to the Safeguarding Link Governor Team. Gill Finch has been an insightful and informative critical friend. We have worked in close collaboration over many years to establish and sustain our safeguarding ethos and practice, helping to align priorities within the ever-changing safeguarding landscape.



Gill has been curious, analytical and committed. She has dedicated many hours each term to understanding the broader impact of her voluntary role, ensuring decisions made support the safety and welfare of vulnerable children and young people.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Gill for her scrutiny, strategic oversight and assurance.

Helen, along with support from Link Safeguarding Governors Maureen Spence and Cathryn Hill will ensure the continuation of strong safeguarding leadership and governance.

A summative safeguarding report to the Governing Body is provided in the pack of information.

Karyn McMahon

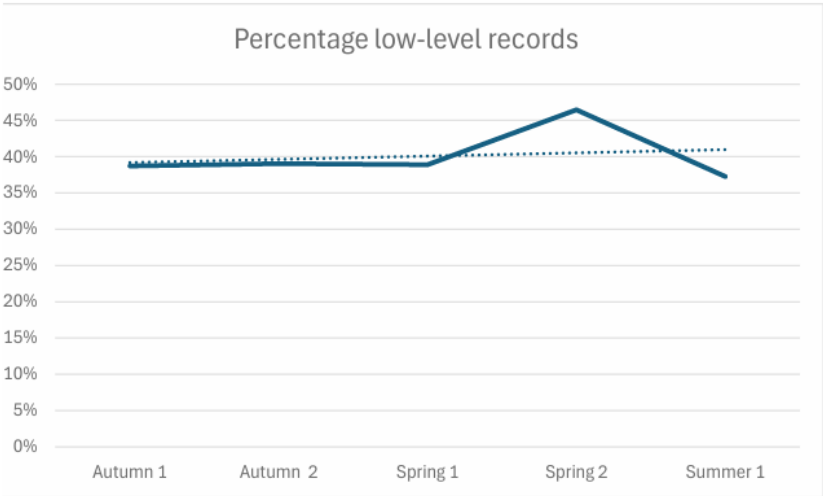


Behaviour and Attendance

The school's current overall attendance is 89.3%, showing a gradual improvement since autumn 2024. This places us above the national average for state funded special schools (approximately 87%), reflecting the positive impact of our strategies to improve attendance.

Behaviour data shows a similarly positive trend. So far, 2,969 incidents have been recorded across the academic year, with a steady reduction from 723 incidents in Autumn 1 to 475 in Summer 1. This reduction indicates that our trauma-informed, relational approach and early intervention strategies are making an impact.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Totals / Combined Average
Total No. Incidents	723	658	491	622	475	2969
No. low-level records	280	257	191	289	177	1194
Percentage low-level records	39%	39%	39%	46%	37%	40%



Low-level incidents account for around 40% of all behaviour records (1,290 incidents) and remain broadly consistent across the year. Consistent recording reflects strong staff practice and vigilance

Analysis of Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPIs) across the autumn, spring and summer terms also shows a reduction over time.

This suggests that:

- Pupils are increasingly able to self-regulate or respond to early support strategies.
- Staff are effectively using de-escalation and preventative approaches.
- The need for higher-level interventions is reducing as behaviour improves.





The drop in RPIs alongside fewer incidents overall suggests that:

- Early intervention strategies are effective
- Pupils are developing stronger regulation skills

- Staff responses are increasingly preventative rather than reactive



Attendance and behaviour are underpinned by a shared culture of belonging, safety, and consistency. These areas are closely linked and central to safeguarding, wellbeing and positive outcomes.

- Attendance is a shared responsibility, supported through strong partnerships with families and external agencies
- Behaviour is managed through consistent, trauma-informed and SEND-aware practice
- RPIs are used only as a last resort, with a clear focus on reduction through preventative strategies.

Leaders ensure robust oversight through regular data analysis:

- Attendance data is shared with phase leaders to enable early identification and targeted intervention
- Behaviour patterns are monitored to identify trends and prevent escalation
- RPI data is reviewed to ensure appropriateness, proportionality, and continued reduction over time.

This combined approach is leading to improved outcomes for pupils, including:

- Improved engagement and access to learning through Increased at-

tendance

- Reduction in more serious behaviour incidents
- Reduction in restrictive interventions, reflecting improved regulation and support
- No fixed-term suspensions this term, demonstrating the effectiveness of inclusive practice
- Robust monitoring of vulnerable groups, including pupils categorised as CME

Our approach is proactive and centred on removing barriers through practical and personalised support, such as arranging alternative transport for pupils who find taxi journeys challenging. Pupils who are unable to attend due to health needs access flexible, high-quality alternative provision, supported by close multi-agency working. Graduated responses ensure that support for both attendance and behaviour is timely, proportionate, responsive and effective. Strong partnerships with families, health professionals and the local authority enable a coordinated and holistic approach, leading to sustained improvements in attendance and consistently positive behaviour outcomes. As a result, pupils are better able to engage in learning, develop self-regulation, and achieve improved long-term outcomes.

Julie Brown

Personal Development

Personal Development provision during the summer term demonstrates a sustained, strategically embedded approach, with clear evidence of strong practice and transformational impact on pupils' wellbeing, engagement and readiness for future pathways.

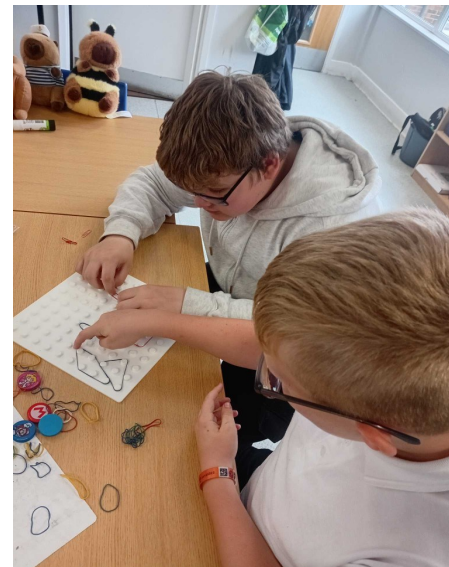
A key development is our targeted approach to supporting wellbeing, through the introduction of the 'Wellbeing Team'. A system is in place within extended daily registration and informed by wellbeing scale data, ensuring support is responsive and targeted. In classrooms there is the use of 'The Talking Table' with the addition of the 'Library Lounge', co-constructed through democratic engagement with the pupils. This fosters a strong sense of belonging, with pupils actively accessing support. I have completed the core training to become an Emotion Coaching Practitioner trainer with Emotion Coaching UK. This will involve the delivery of the Emotion Coaching approach to teams in school, supporting both the Behaviour is Communication Policy aims and continued prioritisation of pupil wellbeing.

The annual digital pupil survey is imminent, the data from which will be used to highlight both achievement, sustained impact and inform future strategic priorities as part of a reflective and adaptive approach to provision.

Partnership with the Northumberland Youth Participation Team continues to be valuable to the experience of core and extended cohorts. Pupils joined other SEND schools online to engage in a Careers and Work focus group, using Mentimeter to explore ca-

reer awareness, barriers and support needs, demonstrating a strong commitment to future readiness. Next, pupils will be involved in sharing their views for a 'Co production Charter' to gather the views and opinions of young people to help design and evaluate services in Northumberland.

Assemblies continue to provide meaningful, collective experiences, celebrating events such as National Outdoor Learning Day and Mental Health Awareness Week, contributing to a cohesive, values-driven culture.



Lunch and after-school provision remains broad, inclusive and well-attended, further strengthened through the introduction of 'Job Club'. A committed group of pupils respond to requests for roles within the school community, modelling excellent attitudes, responsibility and willingness to contribute. Promoted through Helper HQ by the central photocopier, this reflects high levels of pupil ownership and active citizenship.

The school has undertaken a parent curriculum consultation on the RHSE curriculum changes in line with the DfE's updated statutory guidance to schools; the curriculum has been updated to reflect these changes. There were 30 parents who responded to attend this event.

Finally, the findings of the class based action research will be shared this term. A further strength is the integration of metacognitive research projects, where nine projects (28%) have a strong personal development and wellbeing focus. This reflects a strong culture of professional enquiry, with findings set to shape the 2026/27 whole-school priority, ensuring provision remains evidence-informed and impactful.

Rachael Ford Hutchinson

Integrated Therapy

The integrated therapy model and wider inclusion strategy focuses on breaking down barriers to learning. This includes the early identification of needs and the formulation of personalised provision to support progress. The therapy team plays a strong role in staff training to ensure that staff are skilled and confident to support pupils and families. The therapy model is continually evaluated and modified to ensure the greatest positive impact.

Effective Partnerships with External Professionals

Speech and Language Therapy

Strong collaboration with NHS therapists improves pupil outcomes. NHS SaLT targets are embedded within school-based therapy and reinforced through joint sessions, ensuring consistent, integrated support and increased opportunities for practice within the school setting.

A particular success has been the collaborative assessment of a bilingual child in school, where the NHS team completed the English language assessment and Rachael (Integrated Therapy Team) assessed the child's home language. This collaborative approach resulted in more focused and positive outcomes for the child, alongside a clear and coordinated plan of support.

Occupational Therapy and Sensory Support Service

The third cohort of pupils successfully completed a targeted block of a visual impairment (VI) intervention, positively impacting on independence. This provision reflects effective collaborative working between CHS Occupational Therapy and the Qualified Teacher for Visual Impairment (QTVI) from the Sensory Support Service.

Pupils made clear progress across key functional areas, particularly in developing greater independence and increased confidence when using adaptive and specialist equipment to support their visual needs. Therapy assistants are delivering a targeted keyboard skills intervention for pupils with visual impairment, further promoting independence, pupil voice and access to learning.

High-Priority Pupils

The therapy team continues to play a key role for pupils with high levels of need, including those who are on bespoke timetables. Supporting these children continues to require strong relationships in staff teams, with parents/carers and external services

including CYPS and the Disabled Children's Team (DCT).

Physical Development

Physical development, including both fine and gross motor skills, is embedded across the wider school curriculum and is not limited to discrete PE lessons. Opportunities to develop physical skills are intentionally integrated throughout teaching and learning, including classroom-based activities, therapeutic interventions and wider curriculum experiences. This whole-school approach ensures that pupils are supported to develop their physical abilities in meaningful, functional contexts, alongside accessing a broad range of sporting opportunities within the PE curriculum.

Sensory Integration and Processing Intervention

Direct sensory integration interventions are being systematically evaluated through individual case studies to assess impact. Positive outcomes include pupils' emotional wellbeing and communication, which supports their ability to engage in learning and meaningful interactions with staff and peers. When room availability allows, the intervention will be available for a greater number of children.

Therapeutic Horticulture

Danielle Forsyth is nearing the completion of her Social and Therapeutic Horticulture (STH) training and will shortly qualify as an STH practitioner. Leaders are proactively planning to further develop the horticulture provision, integrating evidence-informed therapeutic approaches acquired through training. This includes strengthening staff expertise in assessing pupils' needs, implementing targeted interven-



tion programmes and robustly evaluating progress and impact.

Progression through the Royal Horticulture Society (RHS) award reflects a structured and ambitious approach to provision, moving from establishing accessible practice (Level 1), to promoting pupil voice, wellbeing and skill development (Level 2) and the current focus on sustainable, environmentally responsible practice and plant health (Level 3).

Danielle Forsyth and Charlotte Calcutt are contributing to the development of entry-level horticulture qualification, demonstrating recognition of the quality and innovation of the school's practice.

This horticulture provision has been recognised locally through shortlisting for the Love Northumberland Awards, which celebrate environmental and community contributions. Two staff members and two pupils will attend the awards ceremony on 24th June at Alnwick Gardens, where they will meet the Duchess of Northumberland and the winner of the competition will be announced. Pupils' involvement in these projects makes a strong contribution to their personal development, fostering pride in achievement, environmental awareness and active participation within the wider community. It also gives pupils valuable work experience in preparation for their future destinations.

Rebound Therapy

An additional referral pathway for Rebound Therapy has been introduced, with David Manners (PE Lead) supporting the identification of Extended Pathway pupils who may be experiencing difficulties engaging in physical activities during PE lessons. These children may be struggling due to factors such as low self-esteem, reduced stamina, low exercise tolerance, reduced confidence or anxiety. Through this system, up to five pupils will be referred each half term. Ongoing collaboration will inform priorities and assess positive impact/outcomes. This joined-up approach aims to ensure targeted support and improved outcomes for more extended pathway pupils.

Hydrotherapy

The pool continues to be widely used across all age groups within the school, demonstrating its value as a shared resource.

The addition of Sine Rossin to the hydrotherapy team has strengthened collaboration with physiotherapists, occupational therapists, teachers and pathway leaders. This has further strengthened planning and influenced a reduction in missed sessions, enhancing overall provision.

The after-school club, focused on wellbeing activities, is currently making regular use of the pool. This provision is proving to be very popular with pupils and having a positive impact on their engagement and wellbeing.



Income generated from pool hires during 2025/26 totalled £17,291, highlighting the pool's contribution as a valuable financial asset.

Looking ahead, with health and safety considerations in mind, future pool hire will prioritise healthcare professionals and qualified swimming teachers.

Speech, Language and Communication Initiatives and Approaches

Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) interventions continue to demonstrate measurable positive impact across the school. The narrative intervention, Chatterbugs, is now well embedded within practice, with post-therapy assessments indicating clear improvements in pupils' ability to construct more coherent narratives, alongside developing problem-solving skills. Staff awareness and understanding of the intervention have been strengthened through targeted training, supporting more effective identification and referrals.

Lego Therapy remains a well-established and valued element of the school's social communication provision, with four groups currently operating across the Core and Extended Pathways. The intervention continues to successfully promote key skills including communication, collaboration and problem-solving, while also fostering high levels of engagement and motivation among pupils.

Professional collaboration and development are strong, supported through the termly Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Special Interest Group meetings. These sessions provide ongoing opportunities for shared learning and reflective practice across therapy disciplines, with recent focus on developing neuro-affirming approaches to assessment. In addition, continued specialist training, including SCERTS, is further enhancing staff expertise in assessing and planning effective, pupil-centred interventions for autistic learners.

Whole-school communication practice has been further strengthened through targeted staff training, including the use of visual supports to promote consistency, improve comprehension and support pupil regulation and engagement. Training on therapeutic inclusion has reinforced how therapeutic principles are embedded within everyday teaching and learning, ensuring a consistent and supportive approach across the school.

Contribution to the annual review process remains a priority for the therapy team. Ongoing assessment and close multi-disciplinary working ensure that EHC plans accurately reflect pupils' current needs and the provision required to support progress. The team is also continuing to develop more robust approaches to evidencing impact, including the use of pre- and post-intervention assessments and where appropriate, capturing pupil voice to better understand confidence and application of skills.

Juilet Ruddick



Admission, Placement and Transition Update

Pupil numbers continue to grow year on year, with projected numbers reaching approximately **265 pupils by September 2026**. This sustained growth reflects both the increasing demand for specialist provision and the confidence that families and professionals place in the school's ability to meet a wide range of complex needs.

Our relationship with the Local Authority remains positive and constructive.



We are awaiting an opportunity for Local Authority leaders to visit the school and gain a deeper understanding of the complexities associated with our current provision, the increasingly diverse and complex profiles of pupils being referred and the challenges involved in balancing admissions across our pathway structure.

Admissions continue to present a complex picture. There have been several occasions where the school has indicated that it is able to meet the needs of prospective pupils and has held places accordingly, only to be informed later, following our own proactive enquiry, that alternative placements have been identified by the Local Authority. This can create challenges for planning and capacity management, as spaces must then be carefully matched to the needs of pupils and the structure of individual classes. As Governors will be aware, available places cannot simply be filled by any pupil. Placements must be considered within the context of pathway appropriateness, communication needs, learning profile and class composition. For example, a vacancy within a Core Pathway class cannot necessarily be filled by a pupil whose needs would be best met within the Engagement Pathway. Ensuring the right pupil is placed in the right provision remains essential to maintaining the quality and effectiveness of our educational offer.

Despite these challenges, leaders remain confident in the school's ability to fill available places appropriately, given the consistently high number of placement requests received. The Admissions Team continues to meet on a fortnightly basis, with

agendas typically involving discussions relating to around 15 pupils at each meeting. This reflects both the demand for places and the significant amount of planning required to ensure admissions decisions remain pupil-centred and sustainable.

Tribunal activity continues to be a significant feature of the admissions landscape. The school's most recent tribunal resulted in a decision in favour of Cleaswell Hill School, an outcome that is relatively uncommon and reflects the strength of the evidence presented regarding the school's provision and the needs of the pupil concerned. The next tribunal involves a pupil for whom the school has advised that it can meet need, while the Local Authority's preferred placement is a mainstream school. Notably, the mainstream school identified has expressed concerns regarding its ability to meet the pupil's need. Both the family and the young person believe that Cleaswell Hill School would provide the most appropriate placement. A similar situation is developing for another pupil where the school has confirmed it can meet need, but the Local Authority is pursuing a mainstream placement. At present, a further four tribunals are anticipated during the coming academic year and leaders continue to monitor these cases closely.

Alongside admissions activity, transition planning for September 2026 is well underway. The school is currently preparing for the arrival of 14 new pupils, with personalised transition arrangements being coordinated by Phase Leaders to ensure pupils and families are well supported. As part of the school's commitment to partnership working, Helen McIntyre is leading on engagement with new families through introductory visits helping parents and carers to become familiar with the school, build relationships with staff and contribute to transition planning. This work is already supporting a positive start for pupils joining the school community in September.

Emma Dunn

Appleby Centre

Students at The Appleby Centre continue to demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning and are working diligently towards the successful completion of a range of qualifications, including GCSE, Level 1 and Entry Level courses. Across the provision, staff report that students are increasingly focused, resilient and motivated, particularly in preparation for their final examinations.

GCSE students have made strong use of additional after-school revision sessions. They show a clear understanding of their individual targets and the entry requirements for their next stage of education, reflecting well-developed aspirations and a growing sense of personal responsibility. This contributes strongly to their readiness for the next phase of education, employment or training.

Alongside their academic work, students have actively contributed to wider

school life. Preparations for the Leavers' Assembly and Prom have provided meaningful opportunities for student voice, with learners taking an active role in decision making around themes, music and organisation. As the academic year draws to a close, there is a strong sense of community within the centre. Students demonstrate mutual respect and support, particularly in welcoming new students from the main school and supporting those preparing to leave.



Destinations and Transition

Transition arrangements for all students are comprehensive, well-coordinated and highly effective. All students due to leave this academic year have secured appropriate post-16 destinations, demonstrating the success of the centre's personalised guidance and careers provision.

Students will be progressing to a wide range of providers including Newcastle College, Northumberland College, Kirkley Hall, Northumberland Skills and Azure. They will undertake courses spanning Entry Level to Level 3 in areas such as Catering, Uniformed Services, Performing Arts, Automotive Engineering, Animal Care, Electrical Installation, Music Production, Communication for Life, Carousel Programmes and Promoting Independence.

The curriculum effectively prepares students for their next steps and transition visits are carefully planned to support confidence and familiarity with new environments. Where students are moving into Adult Social Care provision, there is strong multi-agency collaboration. Assigned social workers work closely with school staff and families to ensure that transitions are person-centred, with the voices of both students and parents clearly informing decision-making. Where placements have been agreed, structured transition visits are in place.

Looking ahead, 16 students will be joining The Appleby Centre in September. A well-planned induction process includes a parental welcome meeting and a series of transition days for students. This ensures that both students and families feel informed, supported and confident ahead of the move, reflecting the centre's inclusive ethos.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award continues to have a highly positive impact on students' personal development. Students are working towards Bronze, Silver and for the first time Gold awards, demonstrating strong commitment and ambition.

The programme provides carefully structured opportunities for challenge and independence. Students have undertaken expeditions ranging from two-day to five-day residential experiences, requiring resilience, teamwork and problem-solving. Notably, the completion of the Gold award this year represents a significant milestone for the provision.

Ongoing volunteering work at Woodhorn Grange Narrow Gauge Railway has enabled students to develop practical skills in areas such as woodwork, horticulture and basic electrical work. Feedback consistently highlights students' positive attitudes, determination and pride in their achievements. Many have overcome personal barriers, including managing time away from home, and have developed strong teamwork and communication skills.

Performing Arts

Performing Arts continues to be a significant strength within The Appleby Centre, making a valuable contribution to students' personal development. Students involved in the programme have demonstrated sustained commitment and enthusiasm throughout the year, participating in a range of high-quality performance opportunities, including a Christmas production and a Spring cabaret evening. They are currently working towards their end-of-year performance of *of & Juliet*.

Students in the group have taken on lead roles, confidently showcasing the skills, knowledge and performance techniques they have developed over time. Importantly, these students act as positive role models, supporting and

mentoring newer members of the group. This reflects the centre's strong ethos of collaboration, inclusion and peer support.

New students joining the provision have made rapid gains in confidence and self-expression. Staff report that students who were initially reluctant performers are now participating willingly and demonstrating increased resilience, communication skills and stage presence.



The Performing Arts curriculum provides a highly effective outlet for creativity and self-expression. It plays a key role in developing students' confidence, communication and social interaction skills, which are essential for their future pathways. Overall, engagement in Performing Arts contributes strongly to students' broader personal development and aligns closely with the centre's commitment to preparing students for adulthood.

Personal Development and Preparation for Adulthood

The centre provides a rich and varied programme of personal development opportunities, which are carefully aligned with the four PfA strands. Students regularly engage in meaningful, curriculum-linked visits that enhance their understanding of the wider world and support independence.

Experiences this year have included visits to Newcastle United Football Stadium, the Greggs factory and a range of local community facilities such as leisure centres. Students have developed independence through carefully supported opportunities to access public spaces, including shopping in Newcastle city centre, where they have practised decision-making, money management and independent travel skills.

Student voice is a notable strength. Learners actively influence decision-making, including the selection of a whole-phase enrichment activity. This year, students have chosen a water sports experience at Druridge Bay, where they will participate in team-building activities such as canoeing and paddleboarding. These opportunities further enhance confidence, resilience and social development.

Conclusion

The Appleby Centre continues to provide a nurturing, aspirational and highly supportive environment in which students thrive. Across all areas, students demonstrate positive attitudes, strong engagement and increasing independence.

Outcomes for students are strong, with all leavers securing appropriate next steps and making well-informed transitions. The curriculum is broad, balanced and responsive, with particular strengths in personal development, enrichment and preparation for adulthood.

Charlotte Calcut

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

Careers education is highly valued at Cleaswell Hill School and remains a key priority in preparing students for their next stages of education, employment and adulthood. The provision is well embedded across the curriculum and is delivered through the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) framework, with dedicated timetabled sessions in Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. In the junior years, careers education is thoughtfully integrated into the curriculum, ensuring that pupils begin to develop early awareness of the world of work in meaningful and age-appropriate ways.

The school continues to provide a comprehensive and progressive careers programme which supports all students to develop the knowledge, skills and aspirations required for their future pathways. Staff ensure that careers learning is personalised and responsive to individual needs, enabling all learners to make informed decisions about their next steps.

Leaders have demonstrated a strong commitment to continuous improvement through the completion of an Internal Leadership Review, designed by the Careers and Enterprise Company. This process involved all members of the Senior Leadership Team evaluating current careers provision across six key themes:

- Careers leadership, vision, intent and planning for development
- Addressing the needs of all learners and evaluating impact
- Understanding of labour market information and future pathways
- Linking curriculum learning to careers
- Encounters with employers and experiences of the workplace

Personal Guidance

The outcomes of the review were positive overall, indicating a secure and con-

sistent understanding of careers provision across the school. The process also provided valuable opportunities for professional dialogue, enabling leaders to offer constructive feedback, ask questions and further refine the strategic approach. Findings were uploaded to Compass+, which identified priority areas for development. These have directly informed a clear and focused careers action plan, ensuring that future developments are targeted to achieve the greatest impact for students.

The school has robust systems in place to monitor and evaluate careers provision. Work-related learning experiences for all students in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 are systematically tracked. In addition, all PfA activities for classes with students in Year 9 and above are recorded. These are uploaded to Compass+ and mapped against the Gatsby Benchmarks. This rigorous approach ensures that leaders have a clear overview of provision and enables the school to identify strengths and any gaps. As a result, the school can ensure that all students benefit from a broad and balanced range of careers-related activities and experiences, addressing all Gatsby Benchmarks over time.



Transition outcomes for students continue to be very strong. All learners leaving the school this year have secured appropriate and aspirational destinations, reflecting the effectiveness of the school's careers guidance and support.

Careers provision is strengthened through a wide range of enrichment opportunities and employer encounters across the school, including visits to workplaces, engagement with local businesses and the development of employability skills through real-life contexts. These experiences ensure that students develop a realistic understanding of the workplace and are well prepared for life beyond school.

Overall, careers education at Cleaswell Hill School is well planned, inclusive and im-

pactful. It ensures that all students, regardless of need, are supported to achieve positive destinations and are equipped with the skills, confidence and knowledge required for their future lives, reflecting strong alignment with national expectations and best practice.

Charlotte Calcutt

Educational Visits

Educational visits are a planned and integral part of the curriculum, supporting pupils' preparation for adulthood and the development of key life skills. Pupils within the Engagement Pathway access learning beyond the classroom on a regular basis, including opportunities to use public transport, building confidence, independence and real-world understanding through carefully planned experiences.



All visits are purposefully linked to the pathway curriculum, enabling pupils to apply and embed learning in meaningful contexts. This term, visits have included Hexham Abbey, the Angel of the North, Greggs Factory, the Tim Lamb Centre, Adventure Valley, Alnwick Garden and Lilidorei, alongside regular local walks and community visits.

Students from the Appleby Centre have also completed the Duke of Edinburgh Award. They have taken part in activities including volunteering, physical fitness, skill development and expeditions. The programme supports the development of resilience, independence, teamwork, and confidence, while promoting active participation in the community and preparing pupils for their next stage. Outcomes this year reflect strong engagement and commitment, with nine students achieving Bronze, six achieving Silver and two achieving Gold—an outstanding

achievement for all.

Julie Brown

Fusion Learning Hub

Fusion Learning Hub continues to be a significant strength for Cleaswell Hill School and an important part of our outward-facing role within the wider SEND system. At a time when schools and settings are experiencing increasing complexity in pupil need, Fusion enables Cleaswell Hill to share effective, evidence-informed practice and support the development of a more confident and inclusive workforce.

Between March 2025 and May 2026, over **2,200 practitioners and professionals** accessed Fusion training and support through a blend of face-to-face and online delivery. In addition, **1,524 participants completed CPD-certified NEN training**, strengthening knowledge and confidence in neurodiversity, early identification and adaptive practice. This level of engagement demonstrates the reach and credibility of Cleaswell Hill's specialist practice beyond our own school.

Fusion has also had a direct impact within Cleaswell Hill. A whole-school training day supported **150 staff** to further embed adaptive teaching, communication, regulation and inclusive strategies into daily classroom practice. This work supports staff to identify barriers more effectively, make appropriate adaptations and improve engagement, independence and progress from pupils' individual starting points.

The impact of Fusion is also evident through advisory work across **13 external settings**, parent workshops, and strategic partnerships with the Great North Early Years Stronger Practice Hub, Lighthouse SSB, Northumbria University and Northern Lights. These partnerships allow Cleaswell Hill to contribute to regional improvement, master's-level CPD and initial teacher training.

Overall, Fusion strengthens both the quality of provision within Cleaswell Hill and the school's role as a civic leader in inclusive SEND practice. It is a clear example of the school not only responding to increasing complexity, but actively shaping better practice across the wider education system.

Abi McCarthy

School Links

School continues our outward facing approach. Great links with local and regional businesses are being created through our fundraising activities (see Fundraising Report).

Additional links, are outlined below

- Student placements: Sunderland University (PGCE), Newcastle University (PGCE), Northumbria University (B.Ed., PGCE), SaLT, Nursing

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- Work Experience placements for pupils
 - Local FE Colleges
 - Chartered College of Teaching
 - Thinking School Network
 - Great North Early Years Primary Hub
 - The National College
 - Sex Ed Forum
 - Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP)
 - ARFID Champions Programme (NHS England)
 - Schools North EastLinks with local schools; Wise Academy, Central, Bothal and Castle
 - Federation of Special School Leaders (FLSE)
 - Northumberland Mental Health Leads
 - National Network of Special Schools
 - Magic Breakfast

Summer Dates

Value - Determination

Training Day	20 April
School Improvement Visit - Sharon Ballinger	21 April
Governor Resource Management Committee Meeting	23 April
Governor Monitoring Visit - Safeguarding	30 April
Non-Uniform Day - Colour Spectrum Day	1 May
Bank Holiday	4 May
Commuted Hours 5/6	6 May
School Improvement Partner Visit - Lynn Watson	7 May
Governor Monitoring Visit - Integrated Therapy	8 May
Exams Begin	11 May
Governor Resource Management Committee Meeting	12 May
Teaching & Learning Observations Begin	Week beginning 11 May
Governor Visit - Single Central Record	14 May
Daleby House Residential	18-22 May
School Improvement Partner Visit - Lynn Watson	19 May
Non-Uniform Day	22 May
End of Half Term	22 May

Value - Respect

Governor Monitoring Visit - Parent Partnership	1 June
School Improvement Partner Visit - Lynn Watson	9 June
School Improvement Partner Visit - Lynn Watson	10 June

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Assessments	11-12 June
Governor Resource Management Committee Meeting	12 June
Governor Strategic Policy and Direction Committee Meeting	12 June
Duke of Edinburgh Silver Assessments	16-18 June
Exams End	22 June
Duke of Edinburgh Gold Assessments	22-26 June
School Improvement Visit - Sharon Ballinger	
School Improvement Partner Visit - Lynn Watson	23 June
Commuted Hours 6/6	24 June
Corbridge Class End of Year Show	26 June
Phonics Assessment Week	30 June
Summer Term Full Governing Body Meeting	30 June
Summer Performances - Platform One	1 - 2 July
Annual Reports to Parents/Carers	3 July
Sports Week	6 July
Prom - Platform One	6 July
Summer Performance - Platform One	9 July
Family Picnic and Summer Fundraising Event	10 July
Leavers Assembly - Platform One	13 July
Non-Uniform Day	16/17 July
End of Term	17 July