



Newsletter



September 2026 – No2

Welcome Back!

It's been lovely to see everyone back in school. They've made a great start and we look forward to positive and busy term ahead.

Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM) – Centre of Excellence

We are delighted to have received confirmation that our school continues to hold IQM Centre of Excellence status. Our assessor spent a day in school in June, last term, speaking with children, parents, staff and governors, and reviewing progress against our targets. Thank you to those who contributed to discussions. We're very proud of all our children and are lucky to be part of such a supportive community.

The following is a quote from the report summary.

Witton Gilbert Primary has an ethos of "mutual respect, and an understanding of the needs of others." The focus on respectful relationships is evident throughout school, as children interact kindly and politely with staff, and with each other. Parents appreciate the compassionate and caring support given to their children. As one parent put it; "they see every child as a bundle of potential."

Parent Governor Vacancies

We have 2 vacancies for Parent Governors this term. If you are interested in becoming a governor or would like more information about the role, please let the school office know by Monday 14th September.

If there are more candidates than the number of vacancies, then a ballot will be held.

Acceptable Use Agreement

We regularly teach children about staying safe online, in a world where technology is rapidly evolving. Part of this is asking children to ensure they use technology responsibly in school. They will bring home an Acceptable Use Agreement, which should be signed by both children and parents and returned to school. We would appreciate if you could discuss the agreement with your child/children.

Late Arrivals/Appointments

If children arrive late for school on a morning, could parents/carers please come into school when dropping off and sign them in.

Children leaving for and returning from appointments will also need to be signed in and out by parents or carers. Many thanks.

Key Stage 2 Performance Assemblies

This year, we are increasing opportunities for speaking and performing across KS2. Each class will present a mini performance assembly for parents, linked to a class topic or area of study. This will also help to reinforce their learning. At the end of the year, Year 6 will present their Leavers' Assembly to parents and carers, but there will not be a separate summer term performance. Instead, elements of performance will be incorporated into the Leavers' Assembly.

All assemblies start at 9.30am; parents and carers are warmly invited to come along. Dates are as follows:

Year 3	Wednesday 21 st October	The Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages
Year 4	Wednesday 24 th March	Volcanoes and Earthquakes
Year 5	Tuesday 29 th June	Coal mining
Year 6	Tuesday 24 th November Thursday 15 th July	Victorians Leavers' Assembly

Green Power Pioneers Project – Year 6

We're excited that Year 6 will be taking part in the Green Power Pioneers Project over the next 2 terms. We will be working with OASES who have been awarded funding from the Reece Foundation to deliver the project.

The project aims to inspire and educate young people across the North East by giving them hands-on experience with cutting-edge sustainable technologies — from solar and wind power to geothermal energy, hydrogen, and carbon capture.

 Pupils will:

- Explore climate change and its real-world impacts
- Discover exciting careers in the growing green energy sector
- Share their learning through pupil-led assemblies
- Visit the Durham University Energy Institute for a hands-on STEM experience

Space Explorers Programme – Years 5 and 6

We're delighted that Years 5 and 6 will be taking part in the Life Centre's 'Space Explorers Programme' this year, which involves the following opportunities:

-  A full day visit to the Life Science Centre, including participating in a Destination Space workshop
-  Attending an online 'I'm a Scientist' session
-  Learning from an outreach visit to our school where Life Centre staff will bring along an inflatable planetarium

'Connecting County Durham'

[Connecting County Durham](#) has now been launched, replacing the old Families Information Service. It is an easy-to-use online directory of local organisations, activities, and support services for families and professionals. The Directory includes:

- Care and support organisations
- Activities and social groups
- Mental and physical wellbeing services
- Childcare and family support
- Special educational needs and disabilities services

The site also offers easy links to further information and support on key topics such as mental health, care services and the SEND Local Offer. Families are encouraged to have a look at the support available.

Wellies

Could children please bring in a pair of wellies as soon as possible so that they can access the field on the wetter days. Many thanks.

Key Dates 2026-2027

We aim to give advance notice of key events in our school calendar. Whilst we do our best not to change dates, this can sometimes be unavoidable. Where changes are made, we will give as much notice as possible.

Friday 4 th September (Meetings held in classrooms)	3.30pm Year 1 'Meet the Teacher' 4.30pm Year 3 'Meet the Teacher'
7 th September – 11 th September	Year 6 Residential visit to France
Tuesday 15 th September – 3.30pm	Reception Parents Reading Information Session
Friday 25 th September	Year 4 Bikeability
Monday 28 th September	Y6 Green Power Pioneer session
28 th September – 2 nd October	Year 5 Residential visit to Weardale
Tuesday 13 th October	School Photograph Day
Wednesday 14 th October	NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe workshops for Years 2, 5 and 6
Thursday 15 th October	Flu Vaccinations
Friday 16 th October	Clothes Swap
Monday 19 th October	Year 5 & 6 visit to the Life Science Centre
Monday 19 th October	Reception class Halloween family event
Wednesday 21 st October 9.30am	Year 3 Performance Assembly for parents and carers
Thursday 22 nd October	Halloween Discos Reception, Y1, Y2 3.30pm-4.30pm Y3,Y4,Y5,Y6 4.45pm-6.00pm
HALF TERM 26 th October – 1 st November Return to school – Monday 2 nd November	
Monday 9 th and Tuesday 10 th November	Parents' Evenings
Friday 13 th November	Children in Need Non-uniform – wear something spotty
Friday 20 th November 3.00pm – 4.15pm	Toy Swap
Tuesday 24 th November 9.30am	Y6 Performance Assembly for parents and carers
Thursday 26 th & Friday 27 th November	Christmas Markets
Monday 30th November	PD Day – School closed to pupils
Tuesday 8 th December (AM)	Reception Christmas Performance
Tuesday 8 th December (PM)	Nursery Christmas Performance
Wednesday 9 th December	Christmas lunch and Christmas jumpers
Thursday 10 th December – 2.15pm	Y1/2 Nativity Performance
Friday 11 th December – 9.30am	Y1/2 Nativity Performance
Monday 14 th December (PM)	Year 5 & 6 Christmas Party (Bring clothes to change into at lunchtime)
Tuesday 15 th December - morning	Whole School Pantomime – 'Beauty and the Beast' at Consett Theatre
Wednesday 16 th December (PM)	Year 3 & 4 Christmas Party (Bring clothes to change into at lunchtime)
Thursday 17 th December (AM)	Year 1 & 2 Christmas Party (Come to school in party clothes)
Friday 18 th December (AM)	Reception and Nursery Christmas Party (Come to school in party clothes)
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS 21 st December – 3 rd January Return to school – Monday 4 th January	
Thursday 11 th February	School Discos Reception, Y1, Y2 3.30pm-4.30pm Y3,Y4,Y5,Y6 4.45pm-6.00pm

HALF TERM 15th February – 21 st February Return to school – Monday 22 nd February	
Friday 5 th March	Witton World Book Day
Monday 8 th March & Tuesday 9 th March	Parents' Evenings
Friday 19 th March	Red Nose Day
Friday 19 th March	Spring Fair and Raffle – from 2pm
Wednesday 24 th March 9.30am	Year 4 Performance Assembly for parents and carers
Wednesday 24 th March	Easter Egg decorating with families (Rec/KS1 only) KS2 decorate eggs in classrooms
Easter Holidays 26 th March – 11 th April Return to school – Monday 12 th April	
Monday 3rd May	BANK HOLIDAY
Week beginning 10 th May	Year 6 SATs week
Monday 17 th May	Sports Day Option 1 (weather dependent)
Tuesday 18 th May	Sports Day Option 2
HALF TERM 31 st May – 6 th June PD Days: 7 th , 8 th , 9 th June (school closed to pupils) Return to school – Thursday 10 th June	
2 week window beginning 7 th June	Y4 Multiplication check
Week beginning 14 th June	Y1 Phonics screening check
Monday 14 th June	Reception Family Event
Tuesday 29 th June 9.30am	Year 5 Performance Assembly for parents and carers
Thursday 15 th July	Y6 Leavers' Performance for Parents followed by camping overnight

School holidays 2026-2027

There are 5 days each year allocated for teacher training (PD days). In 2025-2026, schools will close for 5 of these days in term time. In 2026-2027, the term time PD/INSET days are:

Tuesday 1st September 2026

Monday 30th November 2026

Monday 7th June 2027

Tuesday 8th June 2027

Wednesday 9th June 2027

The 3 INSET days in June follow the summer half term – we hope this helps families with holiday planning!

Holiday	Closing date	Date re-open for teaching purposes
Summer 2026	Friday 17 th July 2026	Wednesday 2 nd September 2026
Autumn Half Term 2026	Friday 23 rd October 2026	Monday 2 nd November 2026
PD Day Monday 30 th November	Friday 27 th November 2026	Tuesday 1 st December 2026
Christmas 2026	Friday 18 th December 2026	Monday 4 th January 2027
Spring Half Term 2027	Friday 12 th February 2027	Monday 22 nd February 2027
Easter 2027	Thursday 25 th March 2027	Monday 12 th April 2027
May Day 2027	Friday 30 th April 2027	Tuesday 4 th May 2027
Summer Half Term 2027 (includes 3 PD days)	Friday 28 th May 2027	Thursday 10 th June
Summer 2027	Wednesday 21 st July 2027	TBC