

# NENDRUM COLLEGE COMBER



# NEWSLETTER APRIL 2026



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April 2026

## PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE



As we approach the end of the second term and look ahead to the Easter break, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on what has been an extremely busy, productive and rewarding period for our school community. Since returning in January after the Christmas break, pupils and staff have shown exceptional commitment, enthusiasm and resilience qualities that continue to define our College.

Our Open Night in January was a tremendous success, giving prospective families the chance to experience firsthand the energy, talent, and spirit that make our College such a vibrant and welcoming place. It was wonderful to showcase the achievements of our pupils and the dedication of our staff.

For our Year 12 pupils, the past number of weeks have centred on the completion of their mock examinations. Their determination has been admirable, and this now marks the beginning of the crucial final phase in their journey towards GCSE success. We cannot emphasise enough that attendance is absolutely key at every stage of education, but never more so than in the lead-up to GCSE examinations. Being present, prepared, and engaged each day will make a significant difference to outcomes in the summer.

### Educational Experiences

This year's Ski Trip was highly successful, providing pupils with unforgettable memories both on and off the slopes. Planning is already underway for the 2027 Ski Trip, with further details set to be released in the coming weeks.

Additionally, our History Trip to Poland offered pupils a profound and moving educational experience, including a visit to Auschwitz. This trip remains one of the most impactful opportunities we provide, and we are hopeful that we will be able to offer it again next year to our incoming Year 11 cohort.

As we draw this term to a close, I would like to thank you for your continued support. The strong partnership between home and school is vital in helping every young person thrive, and we are grateful for the encouragement you provide daily.



I wish you and your families a restful and enjoyable Easter break.

## KEY DATES FOR NEXT TERM



### Important Dates

- April 13<sup>th</sup> - Baker Day (No pupils in school)
- April 15<sup>th</sup> - Business Studies Unit 3 Exam
- April 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> - GCSE Art Exam
- April 22<sup>nd</sup> - School Nurse Years 9 & 10
- May 4<sup>th</sup> - Bank Holiday (College Closed)
- May 25<sup>th</sup> - Bank Holiday (College Closed)
- May 26<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> - Yrs 8, 9, 10 & 11 Summer Exams
- May 29<sup>th</sup> - Staff Development Day (No pupils in school)
- June 26<sup>th</sup> - End of school year
- June 29<sup>th</sup> / 30<sup>th</sup> - Staff Development (No pupils in school)



North Down Cup Final

April 17<sup>th</sup> - Boys' Senior Team Final at Clandyboye Park



Internal Mock Exams

14-17 April - Yr 11 pupils only



GCSE Exam Season

5<sup>th</sup> May - 15<sup>th</sup> June

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## Celebrating Our Reward Winners This Term

As we wrap up a busy and successful term, we are delighted to recognise pupils who have gone above and beyond in demonstrating our core values of Nurture, Commitment, and Community.

### Pupil of the Month

Congratulations to our Pupils of the Month across all year groups! These students have shown kindness, resilience, and a positive attitude, inspiring others and contributing actively to school life. They truly embody our core values.

- Year 8 Winner - Layla Holmes
- Year 9 Winner - Alison Kirton
- Year 10 Winner - Tom Rodgers
- Year 11 Winner - Katie-Rose Andrews
- Year 12 Winner - Vicky Morrison

### Top Merit Winners for this term

Our top merit winners have displayed outstanding effort, positivity, and commitment to excellence. Their strong sense of community and support for others make them fantastic role models.

- Year 8 Winners - Layla Holmes/Lyla McCann
- Year 9 Winners - Kali Rose/Maddie Nelson
- Year 10 Winners - Madison McCabe/Katie Weir
- Year 11 Winners - Maisie Bell/Hannah Thompson
- Year 12 Winners - Tam'mia Bradley/Fiona Wright

### Nurture Award

Awarded to pupils who consistently show empathy and kindness, making our school a welcoming and supportive place for everyone.

To be announced after the Easter Break

### Commitment Award

Presented to pupils who demonstrate exceptional dedication to learning and school life through resilience, punctuality, and active participation.

To be announced after the Easter Break

### Community Award

Recognising pupils who go the extra mile to create an inclusive environment, welcome others, and promote fairness and cooperation.

To be announced after the Easter Break

We are proud of all our award winners and thank them for making our school community stronger.

# SPORT SPOTLIGHT

From a sporting perspective, our teams have continued to shine. The Boys' Senior Football Team has secured its place in the North Down Cup Final for the second consecutive year. Their semi-final against St. Colemans was a dramatic affair in which the boys found themselves 2-0 down before staging an incredible comeback to win 3-2. A standout performance from James T helped shift the momentum, while Mr Walker stepping in as the coach in Mr Williams' absence was sent to the stands after passionately questioning a few of the refereeing decisions, a moment that has since provided plenty of humour within the squad.



The U14 and U16 Girls' Football Teams both reached the NI Cup quarterfinals, narrowly missing out to large Belfast grammar schools. The U16s retained their league title for a second year and now progress to the Premier Cup. Connie H also represented Northern Ireland internationally, captaining the team against the Republic of Ireland.

Our dance team continue to shine, winning 1st place and Overall Highest Scoring Intermediate Team at Ulster Fusion, plus 2nd place at NICMAC. All solos and duos medalled. Hannah T and Amelie L achieved outstanding success, winning the Overall Intermediate



Duo at Ulster Fusion, the Highest Scoring Duo of the Day, and taking gold at NICMAC. Equestrian: Maisie E excelled in showjumping, winning the 1.10m class at The Meadows, the highest level in schools competition.



Gymnastics: In the school's first ever NI Gymnastics competition, both the U16 team and junior pair achieved impressive bronze medals.

Ice Skating: Ebony W has qualified for the British Championships an incredible achievement.



## Attendance Matters – We Need Your Support

Last year our whole-school attendance was 86%. This year we have improved to 88%, but this still means many pupils are missing valuable learning time.

It's important to remember:

- 90% attendance is not good attendance – it equals almost four weeks of missed school in a year.
- Missing 17 days brings attendance down to 91.1%.
- Missing 34 days drops attendance to 82.1%, which significantly affects progress and confidence.

Research shows that pupils who fall below 90% attendance are more likely to struggle academically and find it harder to keep up.

### Call to Action:

Please ensure your child attends every day unless genuinely unwell. Every day in school builds knowledge, routine, and confidence—and makes a real difference to their success.

If you need support with attendance, please contact the College office. We are here to help.

Your paragraph text



## KEY INFORMATION FOR 2026/27

We would like to share several important updates as we look ahead to the remainder of this year and the 2026/27 academic year.

### 1. Updated Department of Education Guidance – RE & Collective Worship

Parents may now request a full or partial withdrawal of their child from Religious Education and/or Collective Worship.

- No alternative teaching will be provided during this time.
- Pupils will be supervised and may complete homework or engage in quiet reading.
- Parents are asked to complete the online form to confirm their preference for next year.

### 2. PE Uniform Update for 2026/27

A new PE kit provider has been selected following feedback from parents and pupils.

Key points:

- No need to replace the current PE kit, there is no deadline for phasing it out.
- New options include branded, unbranded, and more affordable economy kits.
- From 2026/27, the only compulsory items will be:
  - **Boys: Plain black shorts/track bottoms & plain green T-shirt**
  - **Girls: Plain black leggings, shorts or tracksuit bottoms & plain green T-shirt**
- The existing white PE top may still be worn.
- A new quarter-zip top can be worn under blazers during winter months.
- Further details are available on the linked information page.



### 3. School Holidays for 2026/27

Term dates for the next academic year are now available. Families are encouraged to check these carefully when planning ahead and can access 2026/27 dates by clicking on the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/bde8wz9r>

If you have any questions, please contact the College office. Thank you for your ongoing support.

All of the information above has been sent in more thorough detail in a letter to all parents.

## ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Nendrum College is offering local businesses the chance to promote their brand while supporting youth sport and community development in Comber.

Our football and hockey pitches are used extensively by pupils, community clubs, Comber Rec teams, Ards Hockey Club, and visiting schools — giving sponsors excellent, regular visibility.

Pitch-side advertising boards are now available:

- 1 year: £165
- 2 years: £245
- 3 years: £305

Benefits to your business:

- High-impact advertising to players, parents, supporters, and visiting teams
- Visibility at weekend matches and weekday training
- Positive association with youth sport and community involvement

All funds raised will go toward installing floodlights, helping us extend facility access for pupils, clubs, and the wider community.

Interested?

Contact us at [info@nendrumcollege.comber.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@nendrumcollege.comber.ni.sch.uk) or call 028 9187 2361 and ask for Dawn Thompson.

Join us in supporting local sport while showcasing your business!