



The Nelson Thomlinson School
Wigton
Cumbria
CA7 9PX
...still "outstanding"
(Ofsted, May 2013)

Founded 1714

Headmaster:
Mr DS Northwood, M.A., M.Ed.

Tel: 016973 42160
Fax: 016973 49160
Email: admin@nts.cumbria.sch.uk
www.nts.cumbria.sch.uk

Solar Eclipse this Friday (20th March 2015)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

You may have heard that there is going to be a 90% solar eclipse on Friday of this week (20th March).

This is obviously a significant event; the last similar eclipse was in 1999 and the next one will be in 2026. I am keen for the whole school to witness this event, safely, for the ten-minute period when the eclipse will be at its maximum (about 9.30-9.40am on Friday).

Weather permitting, the school will gather outside as per fire drill arrangements, just for the ten-minute period and will return to lessons at 9.40am.

IMPORTANT

With safety being of paramount importance, **it is vital that your child does not look directly at the sun before, during or after the eclipse.** I have included with this letter some guidance that will enable your child to observe the event safely. Essentially, they have 3 options:

1. Use a colander (as per the attached instructions), which they will need to bring into school on Friday
2. Use a pin-hole viewer (as per the attached instructions), which they could make at home before Friday
3. Buy an official pair of 'Eclipse Viewers' (available online)

Pupils will be reminded of these instructions in Tutor periods this week and if they do wish to observe the event as per the options above, they will need to organise themselves in advance. Pupils can obviously share equipment – and they can make arrangements themselves for this – **but they will not be able to observe the eclipse in any other way.**

I am aware that it is technically possible to project the image onto white paper using optical equipment but I would rather they did not bring in expensive binoculars/telescopes for obvious reasons.

Whilst we will be reminding your child of the safety issues, I should be grateful if you would reinforce this message at home. **Essentially, they must not look directly at the sun.** It is also

important to note that **normal sunglasses will not protect your child's eyes** if he/she chooses to look directly at the sun. The school will not be held responsible for any eye damage that occurs as a result of your child not following these instructions.

Please be aware that the build up to the eclipse will start at approximately 8.30am whilst children are travelling into school and they should therefore be encouraged, even then, not to look directly at the sun.

If the skies are not clear on Friday morning, I am afraid that we will have to cancel the event and lessons will take place as normal.

Kind regards,

Mr DS Northwood
Headmaster

Notice to Tutors:

- 1. Hand out the letter to Tutees on Tuesday morning**
- 2. Reinforce the key messages contained in the letter at least twice before Friday
(Announcements will be made outside by a member of senior staff, during the eclipse, reminding pupils not to look directly at the sun)**
- 3. An email will be sent round at 9am on Friday to announce whether or not the event has been cancelled because of the weather**
- 4. If the event does go ahead, a short bell will be sounded at 9.30am, at which point all members of the school should file out and line up as per fire drill arrangements**
- 5. Register your Tutor group as per a normal fire drill**
- 6. Confiscate any normal sunglasses or inappropriate equipment, and return them to pupils at afternoon registration**
- 7. Please help to ensure that pupils return to lessons promptly after the event**