

# Friday Flyer

1 December 2023

## Headteacher Update

Happy December! Yes it has finally arrived and if you can't tell I am very excited. A superb week in school once again with everyone working to the best of their ability. I was not anticipating the snow arriving so soon but as I have come to realise, anything is possible at Belsay! Could I please ask that children be sent to school in appropriate clothing, including hats and gloves as we have some very cold children this week.

Maple Class have had their trip to Seven Stories this week which I hear was a great success. It was a joy to see the children walk back into school with big smiles on their faces and so many telling me 'It was fantastic' or 'That was the best trip ever!'. Thank you to our parent helpers and to all our families who contributed to the trip - they really do create everlasting memories.

As we enter the month of December please keep a close eye on the calendar as we have lots coming up and we don't want you to miss out. If in doubt please ask a member of staff as the last thing we want is any confusion. Please note that next Friday will be non-uniform and the 'cost' of this privilege would be to provide a festive goody for the PTA Christmas Jingle Tombola on Wednesday 20th at 3.15pm.

At Belsay we have an incredible PTA who work closely with the school and without their generosity certain items wouldn't be possible. On Monday, we have a craft class coming into school which the PTA has funded. Each child will create their own wooden decoration and add it to our Belsay Christmas Tree to ensure we have a truly unique and personalised tree in school. The children will then be handed these back to take home in the final days of term so make sure you leave a space when you put your trees up!





Keep an eye on the yard over the coming weeks to see one exciting purchase recently agreed. Furthermore, it was great to see the annual wreath making class take place on Tuesday night. A fabulous turnout from parents, pre-school and the community!

Finally, I would like to say well done to all our amazing children this week who have received Hot Chocolate, Outstanding Achievement or Reading Plus Certificates. I sometimes wish we could record them in class because I know you would be so proud of them.

We are looking forward to another busy week from Monday but for now we hope you can all find time to get the decorations out, find a warm spot and watch the first Christmas Movie of the year as a family.

**Craig Shaw**

### **Reception Admission Gateway...**

For any parents, carers or friends that you know, who would like to apply for Reception places for September 2024, please note that the Northumberland portal is now open and is available [here](#). All applications must be received by the Local Authority by the closing date of Monday 15th January 2024.

### **Ford Castle Residential...**



The payments for this are now live so please make every effort to have the deposit paid as soon as possible. If you would like your child to go but need to speak to someone then please contact the school.

No question is a silly question, we want you to be happy but most importantly we want the children to be happy.

### **Birthdays...**

I am a big believer that birthdays should be marked and made special for our children, which often includes children bringing in food to share.

Please could I ask if food is being brought in that these are either pre-cut cakes or cupcakes only. You may also be best notifying the teacher so they can make sure they are aware due to allergies within a class. We really appreciate your support with this.



Class	Attendance
Willow	95.38
Maple	98.26
Alder	98.13
Oak	97.10

Please refer to the graphic below which shows the significant impact of absence over time.

Attendance	Description
98 -100%	Excellent
95-97.9%	Good
92-94.9%	Caution (below national)
90- 91.9%	Cause for concern
89.9 or below	Persistent Absence Serious Concern

### Did you know?

**A child who misses school just twice per month will lose out on 18 days' education across the school year – that's nearly four weeks.**

The NHS has recently published a really useful document to refer to when your child has a suspected illness and you are not sure if they could come to school. It can be found [here](#).

### **Action for Children...**

Please remember that we are supporting the Action for Children charity this year and to do this we would love as many wrapped shoe boxes as possible containing gifts suitable for children aged 0-19. These are being collected on **Thursday 7th December** so please do help us to make Christmas special for those less fortunate than ourselves.


**Dates for the diary...**

<b>Autumn Term 2023</b>		
Thursday 7th December		Christmas Jumper Day
Thursday 7th December	1.45pm	Joint Choir Concert Performance @ St Mary's Church, Ponteland (Parents/Carers Welcome)
Friday 8th December		Non-Uniform (Donate a prize for the PTA Christmas Jingle)
Wednesday 13th December	AM	Y6 @ Ponteland High School for Footloose Production and Lunch
Thursday 14th December		Christmas Lunch
Friday 15th December	AM	Whole School Christmas Nativity Performance (Parents/Carers Welcome)
Tuesday 19th December	10.00am	Christmas Pantomime at Tyne Theatre
Wednesday 20th December	Afternoon	KS2 Christmas Party
Thursday 21st December	Afternoon	Reception/KS1 Christmas Party
Friday 22nd December		School Closes for Christmas
Monday 8th January		School Reopens for Spring Term
<b>All dates may be subject to change</b>		

Remember you can track our key school events through our website by clicking on the News and Events tab and then School Calendar.

### Extra-Curricular Clubs:

Contact the office if you wish to join a club and check availability.

Day	Activity	Time	Age
<b>Monday</b>	Dance	3.20 - 4.15pm	Reception - Y2
<b>Monday</b>	Rugby	3.20 - 4.15pm	Year 5 - 6
<b>Tuesday</b>	NUF Multi-Sport	3.20 - 4.20pm	Years 1 - 3
<b>Wednesday</b>	Pele Trust Multi-Sport	3.20 - 4.20pm	Years 4 - 6
<b>Thursday</b>	Badminton	3.15 - 4.00pm	Years 5 - 6 (cost)
<b>Thursday</b>	Art	3.15 - 4.00pm	Years 1 - 2
<b>Friday</b>	Band	8.30 - 9.00am	All band members from last year and children who can play an entire scale are welcome
<b>Friday</b>	Choir	11.45 - 12.15pm	KS2

Would you or someone you know like to run a club? If so please don't hesitate to contact the school office.





## Keeping children safe online...

All text and online links are subject to ongoing review. Where we do update links, we will ensure that all links are relevant and up to date. We do not accept any liability for any loss or damage, or for any consequences arising from the use of the information on this page. The information on this page is for general information only and does not constitute an offer of any financial product or service. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any investment decision. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any investment decision. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any investment decision.

# Tips for Encouraging Open Discussions about DIGITAL LIVES

The online world is an entirely familiar and commonplace part of life for today's children and young people. For more so than for previous generations, there are many positives to children being able to access online materials, so it's important not to demonise the Internet, games and apps, and limit the benefits of their positive aspects. At the same time, we do have a responsibility to educate children about the hazards they may encounter online (just as we would about real-world dangers) so that we can help them to stay away from talking to them about the complex – and often sensitive – subject of what they do and what they see when they're online.

Here are some suggestions for kicking off conversations with your child about their digital life...

### MAKE YOUR INTEREST CLEAR

Showing enthusiasm when you teach the subject signals to your child that you're keen to learn about the positives of their online world. Most children enjoy educating adults and will happily chat about what they use the Internet for, or what games and apps they're into and how these work. Asking to see their favourite games and apps in action could help you spot any aspects that may need your attention – such as chat functions, which might require a settings adjustment to limit contact with strangers. Keep listening even if your child pauses for a long time; they could be considering how to phrase something specific, or they may be gauging your reaction.

### BE OPEN AND HONEST, APPROPRIATE TO THEIR AGE

At various stages, children and young people become curious about puberty and how their body changes, about relationships, about how babies are made, and about sexual health. If your child knows that they can discuss these sensitive subjects with you, they tend to be less likely to go looking online for answers – which can often provide them with misleading information and, in some cases, lead to them consuming harmful content. Don't worry if you don't immediately know the answers to their questions – just find out for yourself and go back to them once you have the facts.

### REMINDE YOUR CHILD THEY CAN ALWAYS TALK TO YOU

It's not easy to work with many children and young people who admit being reluctant to talk to a trusted adult about harmful content they've viewed online, in case it leads to having their device confiscated. Emphasise to your child that you're always there to listen and help. Reassure them that if they do view harmful content, then they are not to blame – but talking about it openly will help. Children shouldn't be expected to be resilient against abuse or feel that it's their job to prevent it.

### KEEP TALKING!

The most valuable advice we can give is to keep talking with your child about their digital lives. You could try using everyday situations to ask questions about their online experiences.

### DISCUSS THAT NOT EVERYTHING WE SEE ONLINE IS REAL

Here, you could give examples from your own digital life of the online world versus reality – for example, those Instagram posts which show the perfect house, spotlessly clean, newer money and immaculately decorated. Explain to your child that there are many other aspects of the online world which are also dangerously presented in an unrealistic way for effect – such as someone's relationship, their body, having perfect skin and so on.

### TRY TO REMAIN CALM

As much as possible, try to stay calm even if your child tells you about an online experience that makes you feel angry or fearful. Our immediate emotions frequently influence the way we talk, so it's possible that your initial reaction as a parent or carer could deter a child from speaking openly about what they've seen. Give yourself time to consider the right approach, and perhaps speak with other family members at school start while you are considering your next steps.

### CREATE A 'FAMILY AGREEMENT'

Preventing your whole household in coming up with a family agreement about device use can be incredibly powerful. You could discuss when (and how long) it's OK to use phones, tablets, consoles and so on at home, what parental controls can be used and why they're important, and why it's good to talk to each other about things we've seen or experienced online (both good and bad). Top thing your agreement will help children to understand that, as trusted adults, we want to make sure they are well informed and kept safe. Allowing children to have their say when coming up with your family agreement also makes them far more likely to stick to it in the long term.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Sarah J. Young is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Edinburgh. She is also a member of the National Online Safety Advisory Board. She has been involved in a number of projects to improve digital literacy and online safety for children and young people. She is also a member of the National Online Safety Advisory Board. She has been involved in a number of projects to improve digital literacy and online safety for children and young people.

**National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com @natonsafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

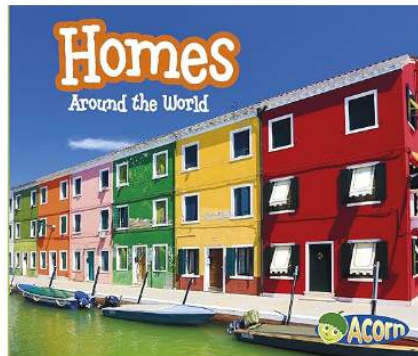
Views of this guide do not reflect the views of the Department for Education. Correct as of the date of revision: 01.02.2023



## The week in Willow Class

What a week Willow class has had! We have loved being together. It has been amazing to see just how hard the children are working and I really am very proud of them all. The writing that is taking place every day in Willow class really does amaze me. This week the children have been working on writing words and letters. For some children they are working on the initial letter sound, some are working on writing simple words using their phonics skills and some children are able to write a short sentence or caption. It really is amazing to see where everyone is with their learning journey. The important message in all of this, is that every child has made progress from when they started school in September.

This week we have looked at the book 'Homes around the world'. This is a fantastic book to link with diversity around the world. We have looked closely at the different types of houses and thought about which one we would like. Lots of the children thought they would like to live in a mud house, but when we discussed how they would stay warm they changed their mind. Some people like the idea of living in a flat as they think it would be good to live so close to other people as they could show kindness by helping each other and some children said they would like to live in a big house. It was such a lovely discussion with the children and it was great to hear the reasons why they wanted to choose a particular house. Next week we will focus on different homes around the world and we will plan, make and evaluate a model of a house.



The children have loved playing with playdough this week and have asked me to share the recipe with you. The recipe I use is: 2 cups of flour, half a cup of salt, 1 cup of water, 1 sachet of cream of tartar then add colouring if you would like to. It makes approximately 4 small balls of playdough and it lasts a short while. You could also add some seasoning to it, if you wanted to make it smell differently.

We have had a fantastic Christmas morning with the children decorating our classroom, setting up the tree and listening to Christmas songs. Please see Tapestry for photos of this. Have a lovely weekend.

**Miss Houghton**





## This week in Maple Class

Maple Class had a fantastic visit to the Seven Stories to view the magnificent galleries and learn about the four seasons through performance poetry. When we arrived at the building, Rosie, our guide, needed our help as a naughty elf had mixed up her storytelling props! We managed to successfully sort the props and match them with the correct season. We used our knowledge of the four seasons and the props to help us write and perform our own poems in groups in the beautifully festive story attic.



We ended the week by enjoying a special breakfast reward to celebrate a member of our class winning the Design a Geordie Banger competition! Congratulations to Arthur for his fantastic Wild Wonder design, delicious!

**Miss Dixon**





## The week in Alder Class

What a magical week in Alder Class. We have all been so excited by the snow this week and were eager to go out and explore our yard in the snow which was so much fun. We are also so excited to have our classroom ready for Christmas and can't wait to decorate our classroom with our own creations to add a personal touch.

In English we began learning about Rugby Bridges and we all have a brilliant understanding about her life, upbringing and struggles she faced. We even considered which of our school values she shows and represents and began to use this month's value of empathy to try to understand her life further. We created our own knowledge sheets about Ruby Bridges in partners and could remember lots of key dates, places and events.

In Science we began looking at what a classification key is and how we could create one to compare animals. We began by organising different monsters according to their features to gain a secure understanding before then trying to organise different types of animals with a partner.

In History, we loved learning about Abraham Lincoln and the impact he had on slavery. We discussed the American Revolution to gain a clearer understanding of the USA before exploring past presidents and seeing the impact they had on slavery. We had lots of mature discussions whilst also trying to link all our learning together to gain a clear understanding.

We are looking forward to DT week next week and can't wait to plan, design, create and evaluate our Viking Longships. Well done on a brilliant week Alder Class and I hope you have a brilliant weekend!



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**Miss Cruse**



## This week in Oak Class

We have been very busy again this week, even though Mr Harvey has not been with us. In English we have been continuing to read our book, *The Breadwinner*, and this week we have focused on character descriptions about Pavana (main character) and writing a setting description of an Afghan marketplace to include our 5 senses.



In art we completed our Letters from the Lighthouse pictures and then moved on to preparing our Monoprints, illustrating the scene from our new book.

In our Year 5 maths lessons we have been learning about fractions, to be specific, mixed numbers and improper fractions. In Year 6 we have been continuing our work around fractions with a focus on how to find the common denominators and then how to add and subtract fractions. Mr Shaw has said 'Year 6 are doing very well'.

In music we have been rehearsing our Christmas play, *Babushka* with Mrs Wigham. We are gaining in confidence and with more practice we are sure our families will be super proud of our efforts.

Finally, all of Year 5 and 6 would like to wish Mr Harvey a speedy recovery and we hope he will be back to school on Monday.

**By Charlie and Florrie**

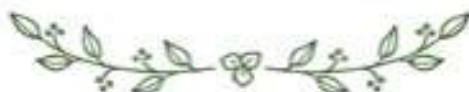
Belsay School



Belsay School



# Christmas Jingle



**WEDNESDAY 20TH DECEMBER**

**3.15PM**



Cake stall, Tombola, Sweets,  
Craft Decorations, Glitter Tattoos,  
Coronation Tea Towels,  
and more...







## Belsay School Christmas Raffle 2023

1. A Google Chromebook laptop donated by the Gent family
2. £25 voucher for 'Frosty's' Mobile Fish and Chip Van
3. Voucher for 'Robson and Cowan' with a mug
4. Voucher for 'Jenny Fozard Photography'
5. A pair of Single vision glasses from 'Specsavers Hexham' worth £99
6. A beautiful door wreath, made and donated by 'Northumbrian Flowers'
7. A voucher for Afternoon Tea for 2 at 'Kirkharle Courtyard'
8. A bottle of Champagne donated by 'Ryder Geotechnical'
9. Lego Tractor and John Deere cap
10. A beautiful bouquet of flowers from 'Bou-Kays' in Ponteland
11. 2 adult tickets for Northumberland County Show donated by 'Tynedale Agricultural Society'
12. A festive bouquet donated by Diane from 'Purple Haze Flowers'
13. 1 family ticket to Northumberland Zoo
14. A voucher from 'Tropic' for a facial
15. Dog photography voucher donated by 'The Dog Log' worth £50
16. A hamper from 'Belsay Shop'
17. £20 taxi voucher from 'Broadway cabs'
18. A valet for a car or van from 'We Buy Cars For More'
19. A dog bath and blow dry from 'The Dog House' at Dobbies
20. Outside tap fitting donated by 'Sam Lennox Plumbing'
21. A visioning and goal setting session for a great 2024, donated by Julie-Ann Scott, R.A.W Coaching and Wellbeing
22. 3 nets of kindling donated by Will Coates
23. Alnwick Castle or Garden voucher





Mr Smith, who is our Primary PE Lead, has been working hard behind the scenes to bring an exciting opportunity our way...



We are excited to share that Pele Trust have teamed up with Junior Park Run to organise a Festive Fun Run.

All Pele Trust Schools are welcome (age 4-14) along with family and friends to the Christmas themed event.

It is super inclusive as you can walk, run or go for a personal best time over the 2K route.

The event is free, and is a great opportunity for our community to come together and get into festive spirit while promoting healthy active lifestyles.

The location is the Town Moor which provides a beautiful and spacious setting for everyone to enjoy.

To register and to get more information:

[www.parkrun.org.uk/townmoor-juniors](https://www.parkrun.org.uk/townmoor-juniors)



## Autism Family Drop In Sessions



Come along for a cuppa and chat. 0-19 years. No  
diagnosis needed!

Join us at:

Blyth Central Family Hub - Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023 9.30am-12pm

Hexham Family Hub - Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023 1pm-3.30pm

Ashington Family Hub - Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 1pm-3.30pm

Berwick Family Hub - Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023 1pm-3.30pm

Facilitator - [robyn.mcgregor@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:robyn.mcgregor@northumberland.gov.uk)

Inclusive Education Services

 Northumberland  
County Council

Our people. The heart of Northumberland



Our vision: One council that works for everyone

Our values: Residents first, Excellence and quality, Respect, Keeping our communities safe and well