



Friday Flyer

22 December 2023

Headteacher Update

Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls... We have done it!!

As I write my final weekly update of the term and indeed 2023, I am proud to look back over the last term and think about how far we have come since September. The children and staff have all worked incredibly hard this term and it is very pleasing to see the amount of progress the children have already made and we still have 2 terms to go.

The beautiful part of life at Belsay is that we don't only challenge ourselves academically but we have also taken part in a wide range of additional activities such as clubs, trips and having visitors into school. In addition we had a wonderful Harvest Festival, Christmas Music Performance and then our Grand Finale of Babuska, our Whole School Christmas Performance.



This week has seen our children (and staff) make the most of the lead in to Christmas as we went on a whole school trip to the Tyne Theatre to watch Peter Pan. What a fantastic performance and made even more special as one of our very own children from Year 5 was involved. On behalf of all the staff and children I would like to congratulate Allegra for an amazing performance - what a star!

Also this week we have had our Key Stage party afternoons. When I saw the amount of treats brought into school for this I had to question if we really did have only 83 children - I think we could have fed the whole Pele Trust!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff for their hard work this term and on behalf of all of the staff we would like to thank you for your commitment and support each and every day. For me, a school functions at its highest level when all stakeholders are fully invested and I have no doubt that here at Belsay this is exactly what we have!

In addition, I would like to also thank Mrs Rodda and Mrs Wilson for all their hard work since joining Belsay. Furthermore, we are bidding farewell to Mr Harvey, who has worked at Belsay for the last 5 years and has taught and supported so many children over his time in Year 5 and 6. He will be a big miss to the team but I know he is excited about his next



steps. Good luck Mr Harvey and thank you for all the support you have given to me this term. As they all move onto new chapters in their lives I am sure you will join me in wishing them all the very best.

Finally, to all our amazing children, I can't thank you enough for the joy and happiness you bring into school each and every day. Your hard work, dedication and commitment to succeed is fantastic and you have impressed me so much. As Headteacher I have high expectations and you are all 'Aiming High, Working Together and therefore Achieving Excellence' Well done Team Belsay!

With only a few days to go until Christmas Day, I hope this festive period is filled with lots of love, kindness and most of all precious family time. This time of year is one to cherish and I wish all of our families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

See you in 2024 for more Belsay fun.

Craig Shaw

A message from Mr Harvey...

Where do I start?

It's been a real privilege to work with our superb children over the past five years. My current Year 6 children were in Reception when I joined Belsay and I have watched them grow and mature over my time here. The amazing classroom discussions I've had have inspired me as a teacher and I learn just as much from the children as they do from all of us. The small nature of our school means that I have got to know all of the children really well, hearing about their amazing lives outside of school and their dreams for the future. I wish them all the very best and I look forward to hearing all about their new adventures.

Our parents and carers are an important keystone to life at Belsay and I have had the pleasure to work with so many of you. I have taught whole families of siblings during my time here and having supportive and encouraging parents has made my role that much easier and so much more rewarding. Thank you for all that you have done for me.

Equally, there are so many members of staff to thank for their support and guidance over the past five years. We are an amazing team at Belsay, looking out for each other's well-being, making each other laugh daily and being the crutch we need when we're having a tough day. I will miss being part of such a great group of staff. Thanks for everything you've done for me and, more importantly, making our children the well-rounded, caring and responsible citizens that they are.

I will be very sad at 1.15pm on Friday when I hand back my pass, school keys and laptop. Mr Shaw wanted my hoodie but I'm keeping it as a gardening top. It's been great to work with you all.

Have an amazing Christmas and all the very best for the New Year.



Class	Attendance
Willow	93.85
Maple	95.05
Alder	100
Oak	90.65

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?

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](#).

Dates for the diary...

Dates will be added to this document as the term progresses.

Spring Term 2024		
Monday 8th January	8.45am	School Reopens for Spring Term
Thursday 11th January	PM	British Sign Language Workshop KS1 & KS2
Friday 16th February		School Closes for Half Term
Monday 26th February	All Day	Teacher Training Day
Tuesday 27th February	8.45am	School Reopens after Half Term
Wednesday 6th March - Friday 8th March		Year 3 - Year 5 Residential to Ford Castle
Monday 11th March - Tuesday 12th March	PM	Parent Evenings
Wednesday 27th March	PM	Oak Class Shakespeare Production
Thursday 28th March		School Closes for Easter Holidays
Monday 15th April	8.45am	School Reopens after the Easter Holidays
All dates may be subject to change		

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:

Please note that the new club list is below for Spring 1 - more clubs may be added once the term starts.

There have been some year group changes for some of the clubs and this is to allow the coaches to work with various age groups.

Click [here](#) to select your preference

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



Keeping children safe online...

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12 Top Tips for Children and Young People to Enjoy a TECH-FREE CHRISTMAS

The Christmas holidays are tailor-made for families to enjoy relaxed quality time in each other's company – but with distractions like ringing phone notifications, the lure of games consoles and online trading day sales, that can be more difficult than it sounds. Putting off our phones, laptops and tablets, however, can really help us to appreciate the things that genuinely matter of this special time of year. Follow our 12 top tips for a tech-free festive season – Yuletide glad you did! Merry Christmas!

CHRISTMAS CRAFTING

Get out the paper, glue and scissors and have a go at hand-making cards or gift tags. You could even create your own decorations to add a uniquely personal touch to the Christmas tree.

NATURE QUEST

Try a scavenger hunt in the garden or your local park. Challenge yourself and your family to find natural treasures that are symbols of this time of year – like holly or pinecones, say.

CAROL KARAOKE

Bring your hearts out with a Christmas carol karaoke night. Pick out your favourite tunes and enjoy a musical collaboration with family and friends.

WANDER DOWN MEMORY LANE

Have about making a scrapbook filled with your favourite memories from Christmas past. Get the kids to draw or write about your happy holiday moments.

TRY REFLECTIVE JOURNALLING

Get down your thoughts, feelings and reflections on the holiday in a notebook or diary – you could also list some of your main goals for the new year.

WRAP IT UP

Take time to get inventive with some luxurious gift wrapping. Break out the wrapping paper, ribbons and bows to make packaging up those presents into a creative adventure.

WALK IN A WINTER WONDERLAND

Delight in the great outdoors with some gentle walks over the holiday. The family can all wrap up warm as you add to your step count and discover that it's still fun to be active.

BE A SEASONAL CHEF

Get the whole family working together in the kitchen for some Christmas cooking. Choose a recipe and whip up a festive feast that all of you can enjoy.

ENJOY A CHRISTMAS STORY

Christmas is a perfect time for spending stories. Get cosy and have yourself a bedtime story from books to be read or a movie version favourite by Chris van Allsburg or Tom Fletcher.

SNOWY SCULPTURES

If you're fortunate enough to get a white Christmas this year, make the most of the opportunity by having a family snowman-building competition.

GAMES NIGHT GALA

Give kids some old-school fun with a tech-free games night. Classic board games and card games have stood the test of time for a reason.

GOODWILL TO ALL

You and your family could spend a day volunteering – perhaps at a food bank or helping a local charity. After all, kindness and thinking of others are part of what Christmas is all about.

Meet Our Expert

Mark MacIntyre is a senior teacher and experienced professional with over 20 years' experience in education. He is a passionate advocate for digital literacy and has worked with many schools and organisations to help them make the most of their digital resources.

The National College

National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

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The week in Willow Class

Another fantastic week in Willow class and what a way to end the term! It has been amazing to see how excited the children are for Christmas.

This week we visited the Tyne Theatre and I was so impressed with the children. As far as first school trips go, they managed incredibly well. We laughed, danced and sang from start to finish and it was very inspiring to see Allegra on the stage. Lots of the children in Willow class commented on how amazing she was, and how they would like to do what she has done one day.

When we returned from the visit to the theatre we were very surprised to see Mr Shaw appear with a real elf! We could not believe our eyes. The children were amazing at remembering their manners and saying thank you to the elf. A BIG thank you has to go to the amazing PTA who made this possible (and Mr Mcleod- what a way to start life at Belsay!)



You would think there wouldn't be time to do much else this week, however we have made the most of every minute. We were lucky enough to be invited to pre-school for the morning and we had a great time singing Christmas songs, making a craft and even seeing our younger friends. Belsay pre-school and Willow class have done lots together already this year and we are very excited to spend more time together. All of the children and staff have loved how much more we have worked together since September and this will only be strengthened further.

After all of this we were lucky enough to have a Christmas party! A massive thank you to everyone who brought in food for this, I think the children might still be eating it in the New Year of 2025 at this rate! It was a lovely way to end the term with the children and it was great to see so much singing and dancing! More photos will be posted on Tapestry!

A special mention must go to Mrs Moffat who has completed her first year working with Team Belsay, even though you would think she had been here for years. I feel very lucky to work with someone who is as passionate about Early Years as myself.

Finally a big thank you to EVERYONE who is part of Team Willow! Without you the success of the first term would not have been possible. I hope everyone has a well deserved rest and enjoys family time.

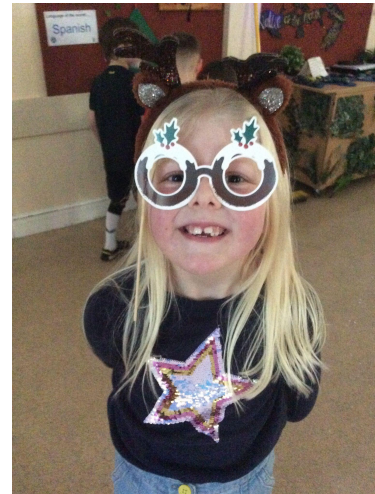
Have a lovely Christmas break!

Miss Houghton



This week in Maple Class

Maple Class ended the term with a wonderful week filled with festive fun! We really enjoyed our whole school trip to the pantomime to see Peter Pan. We had a great time singing along and laughing with our friends. When we returned to school we were surprised to be visited by a mischievous elf who brought us a chocolatey treat for Christmas. Thank you Mr Elf!



We worked hard to make creative Christmas cards on the chromebooks using our digital painting computing skills. We really hope you like them! We also had a fantastic party afternoon with Willow class and enjoyed lots of dancing, games and delicious party food. Thank you parents and carers for your kind donations.

Finally, thank you Year 1 and 2 for all of your hard work and efforts this term. I'm so proud of the progress you have all made! Wishing you a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year with your families.

Miss Dixon

The week in Alder Class

What a brilliant end to an amazing first term! I am so so proud of every single child and how hard working and resilient they have been over this term and they have created such a lovely, positive classroom environment that I look forward to everyday. All the children have settled so well and are already showing fantastic progress and achievement throughout all areas of school life. This week brought lots of fun festivities and they are all so excited for Christmas and a very well deserved break.

This week we finished off our Art project based around equality and the Civil Rights Movement. The children have used their knowledge and skills to create collages to show impact using images and pastel oils. The finished pieces were amazing and I was so so impressed with the childrens work.



It wouldn't be Christmas without lots of crafts and glitter. The children are very creative which meant that they were happy to take the lead with their crafts and come up with their own ideas which is great and shows amazing maturity. We created our own baubles a couple of weeks ago and spent this week making them feel more Christmassy. We then spent a lot of time this week creating calendars and Christmas cards. I tried to challenge the children by creating 3D cards and this proved to be very tricky but they all put lots of effort into incorporating an element of 3D which is brilliant.



The highlight of this week was definitely our KS2 Christmas Party! We had an amazing time filled with lots of dancing, karaoke, treats and games and the children were buzzing with excitement and energy the whole afternoon. It was so lovely to join with the older students and catch up with old classmates in such a fun setting and the children enjoyed being DJs and picking their favourite songs. Thank you to everyone for kindly donating treats for our party, there was so much we have had to have a few snack times since.



We had a brilliant start to the week with our whole school trip to the Tyne Theatre to watch Peter Pan on Tuesday. All the children were so well behaved and represented the school amazingly and were all very supportive audience members. It was great to see familiar faces in the performance and we found the whole show very funny. Harper was lucky enough to be chosen to go onstage and take part in a mini interview about her Christmas wishes and she was so brave to speak so clearly and confidently. We had amazing seats



for the performance and some of us were even squirted with the water pistol which we enjoyed.



Well done on a brilliant term, Alder Class! I feel so proud to be your teacher and get to know what amazing people you really are! I hope you all have an amazing Christmas, New Year and break and I can't wait to see you all in January (ready for Swimming on the 1st day back). Thank you again for all my gorgeous presents and cards and MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Miss Cruse



This week in Oak Class

Panto

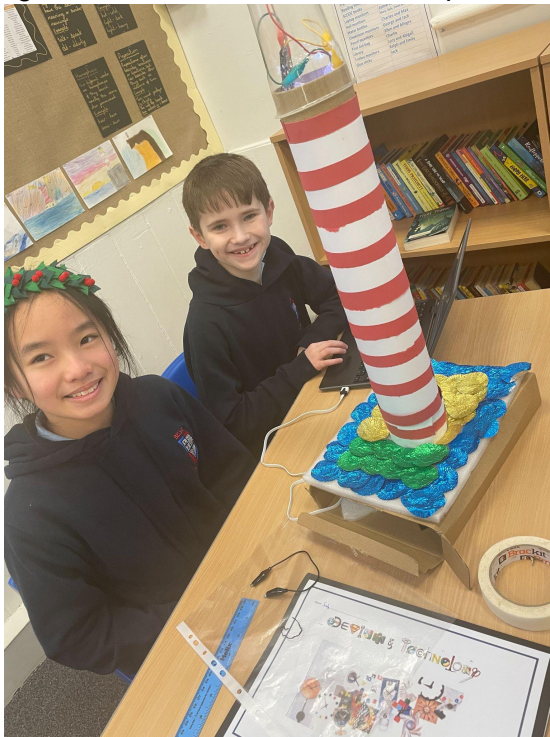


The children in Oak Class thoroughly enjoyed their morning at the panto; a great Belsay tradition. Oh no they didn't..... oh yes they did!

It was a great way to round off the term, particularly after all of the hard work and commitment the whole class has shown over the past few weeks. It was wonderful to see one of our own in the show - well done Allegra - we all want an autographed picture.

Design Technology

We have produced some amazing lighthouses, made using materials from home and the invention shed. We have some very talented children in our class! We used our science crumble kits to help programme the lighthouses to light up, warning the nearby ships of dangers. I think Max and Sam were particularly excited about their design...



Christmas Party (aka Pringle Party)

A well-deserved afternoon of partying, dancing, games and eating was had on Wednesday. We don't think the local shops have any Pringles left! Of course, there were some amazing party outfits too!



Mr Harvey