

Friday Flyer

2 February 2024

Headteacher Update

We have made it... to February! It feels like we have been back at school longer than 4 weeks but that is because of just how much goes on everyday. The myth of a quiet rural lifestyle certainly doesn't exist at Belsay.

The most exciting news this week has to be the new Playground markings. I can honestly say the new tarmac and then the markings have totally transformed the look of the school. None of this would be possible without the financial backing of Pele Trust so I would like to thank the finance team for making this possible.

In addition, I am also delighted to announce that thanks to your constant support and generous support at PTA events, it has been agreed that we can have brand new equipment to use at recreational times but also to enhance our PE provision. I will share pictures of all the equipment once it has arrived but the sum of money given is over £1,200 so on behalf of the school and the wider Trust - thank you, we are very grateful!

In other news this week we have now launched Class Dojo and a large majority of parents have been added. If you are not yet on the app then please do speak to your class teacher as our aim is to have everyone active by half term. This has already proved a hit with the children and I am certain it will improve our overall communication pathways. Please remember this is a free app so please ignore any adverts that may pop up.

Next week is a busy week (no surprise) which consists of our Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness Week for children. Miss Cruse has been working hard to look at the planning and delivery of lessons across school to share information to support our children if required.

Finally, we have our customary close to the week which has included Outstanding Achievement Awards and Hot Chocolate in recognition for all the outstanding work we our children do on a weekly basis. Well done to all of this week's winners!

I hope you have a great weekend, I for one am looking forward to the Six Nations starting.

Craig Shaw

Value of the Month - Responsibility

Language of the Month - Chinese

This week has seen a large number of illnesses in school which may be impacting your class figures. Thank you for keeping in contact with us during this time and fingers crossed by Monday we are back to full capacity.

Class	Attendance
Willow	50.96
Maple	92.39
Alder	89.84
Oak	96.37

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](#).



Nut Free School...

Please can I remind all parents and carers that we are a Nut Free School here at Belsay as we do have children with severe allergies to them. If you send your child to school with a snack or pack lunch please ensure that the products do not contain nuts.

Thank you for your cooperation with this.

School Uniform...

I would just like to ask for your support around uniforms as we are beginning to notice a few choice items that are not part of our expectations. Please can children come to school wearing their blue polo shirts with school jumpers, not hoodies as these are to be worn on PE days only with their dark blue t-shirts.

Also, to make you aware, I am currently looking at new uniform suppliers for September, which I will tell you about once finalised. I am not looking to change the main school uniform itself but I am looking into a new PE uniform that will be both practical and smart. More details to follow...

Ponteland United Football Club

Have Fun!

LOL

WILD CATS

ENGLAND FOOTBALL

P.U.

WILD CATS

Girls' Football

TIME AND DATE
Every Saturday from 6th April to 31st August 2024 - 10.00am - 11.00am

LOCATION
Ponteland Community Primary School, Ponteland, NE20 9EY

NEXT STEPS
Email us at femalepathway@pontelandunitedffc.com or contact our Girls Phase Lead, Darren on 07837 379447

Dates for the diary...

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

Spring Term 2024		
Tuesday 6th February		Safer Internet Day
Friday 9th February	1.45pm-2.45pm	Maple Class Grandparents Tea Party
Monday 12th February	3.30pm	Ford Castle meeting
Thursday 15th February	9.00-9.45am	Oak Class Reading Cafe (Parents/Carers welcome)
Thursday 15th February	12.45 - 4.30pm	Oak Class Shakespeare Workshop in School
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
Tuesday 5th March	All Day	World Book Day
Wednesday 6th March - Friday 8th March		Year 3 - Year 5 Residential to Ford Castle
Monday 11th March - Tuesday 12th March	PM	Parent Evenings
Friday 15th March	All Day	Red Nose Day
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.



Keeping children safe online...

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about PERSUASIVE DESIGN ONLINE

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

'Persuasive design' refers to the techniques that companies employ to influence our thoughts and behaviours when we're on the internet. These approaches can be spotted on websites, in apps and even as part of some video games. Persuasive design means that this content has been deliberately presented in a way that's intended to encourage you to spend your time or money (or both). These methods often prove highly effective at keeping people engaged and invested for longer than we might expect.

POTENTIAL ADDICTION

In the digital world, persuasive design can make certain activities more addictive and harder to walk away from: some people may begin to feel anxious or irritated without access to their device or their favourite app, for example. It can also often leave users feeling isolated, as – if they spend most of their time on social media – they may start to find it difficult to talk to other people in real life.

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Scrolling online or gaming without regular breaks is proven to be harmful to our mental health. The constant bombardment of news stories (many of them negative), images and influencers' posts can create sensations of unease, uncertainty and FOMO (fear of missing out). Young people can get so immersed in this environment that they become less likely to spot misleading posts.

PROLONGED SCROLLING

Social media can draw any of us – regardless of age – into a continuous pattern of refreshing our screen, following posts and links down rabbit holes or reading countless comments made by others. This aimless scrolling can eat up time which could have been spent on more productive activities. It could also lead younger users into areas of the online world which aren't age appropriate.

SENSORY OVERLOAD

Repetitively scrolling, clicking on links or playing games can create an unending stream of new information and visual stimuli. Put it this way: social media isn't exactly renowned as a carefree, chilled-out environment. Such overstimulation can become too much for young people to handle, resulting in sensory overload and causing them to feel stressed, overwhelmed and exhausted.

COSTLY ADDITIONS

Video games sometimes display offers for downloadable content or loot boxes which can be bought with real money. While these 'microtransactions' temptingly promise to improve a player's gaming experience, most of the time they are money sinks. Young people in particular, excited by the chance of enhancing their game, could spend quite a sizeable sum very quickly indeed.

PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES

Hours spent sitting and scrolling means far less time moving around and getting exercise: hardly ideal for a young person's physical health. Additionally, prolonged exposure to the light given off by a phone's screen can lead to eye fatigue and discomfort, especially if viewing it in the dark. Extended phone use before bed can also impact on sleep quality, affecting mood and energy levels over the following days.

Advice for Parents & Carers

ESTABLISH LIMITS

Talk to your child about setting some time limits on how long they can use their phone, tablet or console in the evenings or at weekends – or perhaps how often they can go on a specific app, game or website. You could also decide to involve the whole family in creating this shared screen time agreement, making things fair (and healthier) for everyone.

ENCOURAGE MINDFULNESS

Acknowledging any addiction is key in overcoming it – and compulsive scrolling is no different. If anything mentioned in this guide sounds familiar, it could help to have an honest, open chat with your child about how much time they spend online. Get them to think about how often they scroll through social media aimlessly or habitually open it up whenever they have a spare moment.

NIX NOTIFICATIONS

Stop knee-jerk responses at the source by turning off push notifications and alerts. Whether it's a gaming notification or a social media update, these not-so-gentle reminders are designed to catch our attention and lure us back to our device. Switching them off – or even deleting any particularly intrusive apps – can help prevent your child from being reeled back into the online world.

MAKE A CHECKLIST

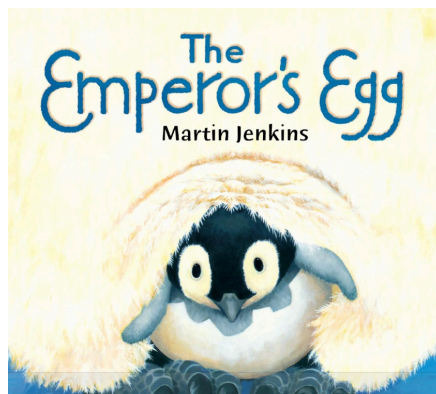
Considering a list of relevant questions can be an effective way of helping children figure out why they're scrolling on certain sites or consuming particular pieces of content. A checklist can prompt young people to ask themselves if they're learning anything or benefiting from this activity – or if they're wasting their time. Taking a step back can sometimes help us to see things more clearly.



The week in Willow Class

What a very different week we have had in Willow class this week. It was a big surprise to see only 4 children in our class on Monday and while it improved as the week has gone on, it has made the week very different to the one we had planned. It is good to see everyone is getting better and managing to fight off the illness they have had. I am very thankful to all families who kept their children at home as this is the only way we will stop things from spreading! Here's hoping the weekend brings a time to rest and fully recover ready for a new week, where we will hopefully have a full class again!

This week we have been focusing on the story 'The Emperor's Egg' by Martin Jenkins. This is a book that provides us with information about penguins and we have been very surprised at some of the facts. Did you know that penguin eggs have to stay warm? A bit of a challenge when you are living in a very cold part of the world. We also found it rather disgusting to learn that the Mother penguin is sick in the baby penguins mouth when she returns from her long winter of swimming in the sea and catching fish. The children have been brilliant at remembering important facts from the book and we are looking forward to continuing with this book next week.



We have thought about what it is like to be part of Willow class. We want to show this off to everyone who comes into our classroom, and we have started to make a new display together. Some of the ideas the children had were to tell people that we are respectful, kind, we try our best, we are positive, we have empathy for others and we work together. It is clear to see that they have some fantastic ideas considering we are the youngest children in school. They really are a credit to their families. It also shows clearly the importance of the school values we focus on, as they are shining through. We will share the display with you as soon as it is completed.

A big thank you to everyone who has managed to connect on Class Dojo and is now using this to communicate. I have found it a much quicker tool for communication and it really was very valuable this week to report illnesses and update everyone very quickly. Please continue to keep using Tapestry to share photos and Class Dojo as a communication tool.

I hope everyone has a lovely weekend and manages to get some rest. It is hard work being a rockstar! A big thank you to Ruairidh for providing us with a fantastic playlist of rock songs, we had a great time listening and rocking out to these.

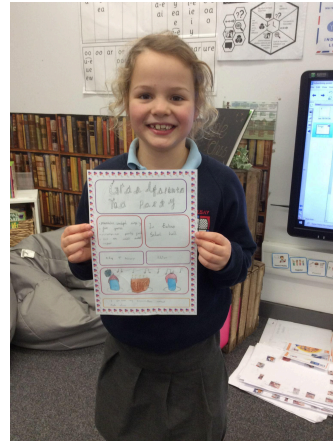
Miss Houghton



This week in Maple Class

Maple Class worked creatively in English to retell the story of UP. We made a story map by sequencing the key events that occur in the narrative and discussed how stories are structured with a beginning, a middle and an ending. We thought carefully about vocabulary choices to make our writing interesting to read.

In preparation for party planning, we talked about the purpose of posters and identified their features. We then used our knowledge to make our own posters to advertise our Grandparents tea party. We used the chromebooks to make invitations and have been practising songs especially for the event! We're very excited to welcome our Grandparents into school next week to showcase all our hard work and spend time with them.



We're thrilled with the new markings on the school yard and had lots of fun playing all kinds of games and taking part in activities during our playtimes.

Miss Dixon

The week in Alder Class

A very busy week in Alder Class this week with lots of exciting things happening! Lots of highlights this week and it has been great to start sharing them on Class Dojo so that you can keep up to date with what we are doing each day. I will try my best to post daily and any updates or messages I will upload to that so make sure to keep an eye out.

In English we started our class text 'Flood' and I have been amazed by everyone's creativity when writing a story. We were challenged with using speech as well as personification and the children have produced amazing work that they are all very proud of. It has been lovely for some of the children to share their work with others which has improved everyone's writing. This week we also started peer assessing each other's work to ensure we are all maintaining the foundations and basics of writing.

In Art we continued our work on natural disasters and used different coloured paints and different pallet knife's to create a stormy water in our books. Next week we will be looking at marbling in Art which I think the children will love and it will be great to explore different techniques.

In PSHE we started to look at mental health and what this means ahead of children's mental health week next week. It was great for the children to consider what they are in control of and see how their actions and words can influence others feelings. The children also had lots of amazing ideas on how we can cope with these feelings especially if something is out of our control.

A highlight this week has definitely been seeing our new yard. We were so impressed with all the different stations and felt inspired to try playing new games with different people. We can't wait to start using this more in PE as well as we approach the sunnier weather.

Number Day was another amazing highlight this week and everyone looked amazing! We competed in the NSPCC TTRS competition which ran all over the country and it was great to show off our progress with our multiplications. We then worked with the rest of KS2 to compete and participate in a number of outside Maths challenges!



Well done on an amazing week this week everyone and I am excited for another busy but fun week next week! Have a lovely weekend!

Miss Cruse



This week in Oak Class

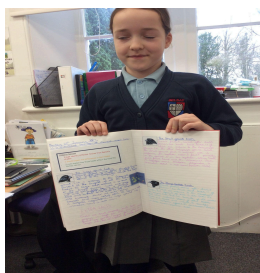
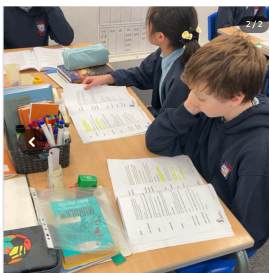
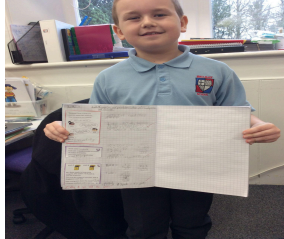
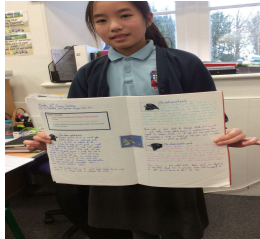
The weeks keep tumbling here in Oak Class and what a week this one has been. We have been WOW-ing Mr Mc. and Mr A. with our English, demonstrating an understanding of the seven stages of tension and where we might find them all within Romeo and Juliet. As we gear up to a big piece of writing, we have been looking at the features of newspaper articles including headlines, subheadings and opening paragraphs focussing on the 'who?', 'what?', 'why?', 'when?' and 'where?' of the story of Mercutio's death.

Our research skills have been fantastic. We have delved further into the studies of Charles Darwin, looking into his studies in the Galapagos Islands and his findings around different finches and their conditions on different islands. We used our chromebooks and our note taking skills to produce some fantastic fact files

Today is number day and we are itching to get outside with our friends in Alder Class to get stuck into some outdoor learning.

Keep an eye on Class Dojo as there will be plenty of pictures to keep up with.

Have a great weekend everyone!



Mr. McLeod