

Friday Flyer

26 January 2024

Headteacher Update

Welcome to the end of Week 3! Another week has flown by at school, you just need to blink and you've missed it. I had thought we had escaped the impacts of the poor weather this week, until Wednesday morning, thank you for your patience and understanding linked to the power cut.

Despite this little problem, it has been a very busy week with all the children working exceptionally hard as always. There is always a hive of energy and excitement as you walk around school with the varied learning activities taking place. I enjoy reading these Friday Flyers as much as you because it just shows how much is happening each week.

Sadly, the playground markings have not been completed this week. I am sure it is no surprise that we had to postpone given the weather conditions of late. Our new date will be Wednesday 31 January so fingers crossed the weather is good on this day.

Over the last few weeks you will have received communication around a new platform we would like to use in school called Class Dojo. This is a fantastic and safe way to share all the wonderful things that occur in school as it is not a public platform and therefore only people we want to be included will be. Please make sure you download the app and follow the sign up details - any issues please speak to your class teacher. There is no cost involved!

In positive news and following on from our Ofsted report, it gave me great pleasure to receive a letter this week from the Minister for Schools. The letter is attached below for you to read yourselves but this truly is a wonderful example of the outstanding work that is occurring here at Belsay. To achieve this level of phonics outcomes is testament to the work of the staff, lead by Miss Houghton but also to you and your amazing children for putting in the hard work. Did you know there are over 16,500 Primary Schools in England, so to be in that top 1% is just remarkable. Well done Team Belsay!!

We ended the week with our celebratory assemblies and our Hot Chocolate, which saw us this week joined by a very special guest - looks like the word is getting out about how good they are! Well done to all our winners and for everybody's hard work every day of the week.

I hope you have an amazing weekend and see you all Monday!

Craig Shaw

Value of the Month - Positivity

Language of the Month - German



Positive phonics news



Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP
Minister for Schools

Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/contactus/dfe

Mr Craig Shaw
Belsay Primary School
Tyne and Wear
Belsay
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE20 0ET

08 January 2024

Dear Mr Shaw,

I am writing to congratulate you on your school's outstanding achievement in the 2023 Phonics Screening Check.

We want to ensure every child develops a firm grasp of phonics as the basis on which to improve standards of reading. As such I was delighted to see your results.

With 100 per cent of pupils in Year 1 at Belsay Primary School meeting the expected standard in the check, your school is in the top 1 per cent of all primary schools in the country.

The latest figures show that 83 per cent of pupils who met the expected standard in the check went on to achieve at least the expected standard in reading at key stage 2 in 2023, which underlines the importance of developing the ability to decode words effectively at an early age.

Your particular success in teaching phonics and early reading so effectively means your pupils are developing a firm foundation, from which they can become increasingly fluent and develop a lifelong love of reading.

I would like to thank you for your commitment and success in this vital area of a child's early education and congratulate you, your staff and pupils again on all you have achieved.

Yours sincerely,

Damian Hinds

Damian Hinds
Minister for Schools

This is a fantastic achievement and doesn't just happen. This has taken a lot of work from the children, teachers and parents to ensure children have access to and are supported in the best way possible with their phonics and reading journey. A big well done to everyone!



Class	Attendance
Willow	88.46
Maple	91.85
Alder	100
Oak	95.56

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.

Dates for the diary...

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

Spring Term 2024		
Friday 3rd February	All Day	NSPCC Number Day
Tuesday 6th February		Safer Internet Day
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...

Although this week's online safety relates to smartphones a lot of this information can also be related to tablets and iPads as well. Please share this with your child.

SMARTPHONE SAFETY TIPS

for young people

You may have been lucky enough to have unwrapped a smartphone at Christmas, or you might be eagerly anticipating getting a new one at some point during this year. Whether it'll be your first ever phone or an upgrade on your old model, it's always useful to have a refresher about how to set it up and adjust the settings to keep yourself – and your valuable personal info – safe and secure. We've collected some expert tips to help you enjoy your smartphone in the healthiest way possible.

- ### NEVER SHARE YOUR PASSCODE

Alongside face or fingerprint recognition, your passcode is crucial to unlocking your phone and accessing your apps and personal information. You shouldn't give it out, even to close friends – after all, you wouldn't hand them a key to your house and let them go in for a nosy around! If a friend wants to use your phone, ask them why and make sure you can see what they're doing with it.
- ### RESPECT PARENTAL CONTROLS

If you're allowed to have a smartphone, it's because your parents or carers feel that you're mature and responsible enough to use it safely. They might set controls and boundaries on your device – not to spoil your fun but to help you avoid hazards like too much screen time or costly in-app purchases. Following these rules means you can enjoy using your phone while respecting their wishes.
- ### TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT

Whether it's to listen to music, play games, create content or chat with friends, using a smartphone should be fun. If you're ever feeling anxious, worried or scared about going on your phone, then something isn't right. It's important not to ignore these feelings. Instead, talk to a trusted adult about what's happening and how it's making you feel.
- ### STAY ALERT

Two words: look up. It might sound obvious, but it's so easy to get immersed in what we're looking at or listening to on our phones that we can become unaware of our surroundings – or who might be around us. People often walk with their head down, focusing on their phone, and forget to check for obstacles in their path, cars or other pedestrians coming towards them, which is clearly dangerous.
- ### DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS

Phones offer a vast amount of content and the chance to chat with friends whenever we feel like it, which can make it difficult to take time away from the screen. If that's something you struggle with, you could try setting time limits on certain apps. Putting our phones down for a while gives us more time to interact with others or do something physical that helps keep us fit and healthy.
- ### IGNORE UNKNOWN NUMBERS

There are some scammers who might call or text asking you to share personal data or to click on a link and provide your details. Some may claim to be from a genuine company, but trustworthy businesses don't spontaneously call or message to ask for your information. It's safest to ignore calls or texts from unknown numbers, and never give your personal details out over the phone.
- ### ONLY USE AGE-APPROPRIATE APPS

Before downloading a new app or game, check what age rating it has. Don't feel pressured into getting a particular game or app just because your friends are using it. If it's intended for older people, there's a definite risk that it could include content (which is violent or frightening, for instance) or language which isn't suitable and may leave you feeling upset or disturbed.
- ### REMOVE TEMPTATION

A good night's sleep is so important for concentration, mood and overall health. Unwinding properly before going to bed – which means not staring at a screen late at night – can often improve sleep quality. Put your phone on charge overnight, but not in your room. This means you'll have a lot less temptation to check any notifications, reply to messages or get caught up scrolling on social media.
- ### THINK ABOUT OTHERS

Watching videos, listening to music or calling someone can all help to pass the time while we're on the bus, waiting in a queue or walking down the street. It's important to remain mindful of other people, though: they might not want to hear your tunes or your conversation. Likewise, if you're calling from a public place then don't forget that anyone could overhear something personal about you.
- ### SWITCH OFF GEOLOCATION

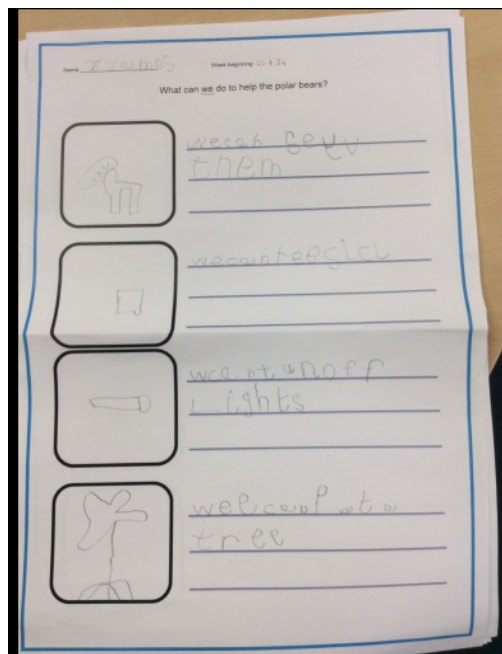
In your phone's settings, you'll be able to disable geolocation for individual apps and photos: this means that people online (including strangers) can't see information about where you are when you share or post a pic. On the subject of images, it's also important to ask permission before taking or sharing a photo of someone – and don't share embarrassing images of your friends with others.



The week in Willow Class

This week has been fantastic! The children have worked hard with all of the tasks they have been set, but also with helping to transform the classroom. On Monday we decided to change the home corner area of the classroom. It felt a little cramped and while it is one of the children's favourite areas to play in, we knew we needed to make a few changes. Magnus requested a fireplace so we worked together to make this, it looks really effective with the added flames Ella added in. Rory, Ella, Daisy, James and Jensen made marshmallows and added them on to sticks to 'toast on the fire'. It was brilliant to hear the children working together and at times being great leaders to tell each other how they wanted it to look. Laurie decided we should add marbles to the home corner so that we can use our imagination to make different types of food. All children have accessed this area this week and it has made such a big difference to their learning. We have more ideas that we want to add over the next few weeks.

We have continued our work on the story 'The Polar Bear's home'. I have been really impressed with the children and their ability to retain knowledge about polar bears. We decided to put this knowledge into our writing and it was wonderful to see the children applying their learning to helping others. We thought about what we could do to help polar bears and the children came up with some great ideas such as 'turn off the lights when leaving a room'. Willow class are brilliant at remembering to do this, recycle as much as possible, plant a tree and make sure you tell other people how we can help too. Well done everyone!



The children were a little bit disappointed to see one of their first pieces of artwork come down from the display this week, however we have worked very hard to make our own polar bear artwork. The children loved adding their art work to the wall and being able to see everyone's individual artwork. I think it looks incredible!



A big thank you to those parents who continue to share your weekend news or show and tell on Tapestry. The children really do love sharing this with their friends and it is an important part of our week, seeing and hearing what the children have been up to or any new items they want to show us. We are looking forward to seeing some animal bones from Ruairidh soon! Please continue to keep checking Tapestry and adding in any posts you can. Thank you and have a lovely weekend.

Miss Houghton



This week in Maple Class

In Geography, Maple Class discussed what maps are and why we use them. We looked at lots of different types of maps and talked about the meaning of an aerial view. We looked at an aerial map of Belsay and identified different symbols used on the map to represent landmarks in the village. We went on a walk around our school grounds to establish compass directions and the location of our classroom. We identified human features of our playground and surrounding areas and drew a map locating them.



In Art, we investigated sky colour during different weather by blending coloured paints using careful and controlled brush strokes



Miss Dixon



The week in Alder Class

Another week of Alder Class showing amazing positivity and resilience!

Last Friday was an amazing day for Alder Class. Year 4 competed in the Year 4 Northumberland School Games Multiskills Final and it was brilliant to see all the children cheering each other along and striving to be their best. The children were so brave when being interviewed and showing off the Belsay team spirit. We were all beyond proud to be awarded 1st place during this competition which made everything even more exciting. The children's reaction definitely showed everyone what Belsay were about and I couldn't be prouder! Whilst this was happening, Year 3 were working in the invention shed to create some gorgeous mountains using different materials. The work the children produced was amazing and you could see how proud they were when they got to display and show off their work during assembly. It was great to celebrate so many amazing achievements in just one afternoon.



During English this week we have been learning about Matthew Henson and how he was eventually awarded for being the first person to reach the North Pole. We started off by creating a story map about his life and then later on in the week worked with partners to organise facts into subtitles to support us with our cold write this week. We worked independently to write our own non-chronological report about Matthew Henson with less support now that we are confident with this style of writing. The children produced some gorgeous work and all challenged themselves with different targets for their individual writing.

During Art this week we have continued our work around natural disasters and used



different painting styles to create our own waves. This week we focused on using the pallet knife technique and blending colours together to create more detailed waves and next week we will be looking at expanding this and using methods such as marbling. Some beautiful work produced by everyone this week!



With the powercut presenting us with a few challenges, the children were brilliant at using their creativity and teamwork skills to come together. We were able to work on our team building skills by taking part in some fun challenges during the morning before setting ourselves different goals we will aim to achieve. During this PSHE session we considered long term goals, early adulthood goals, goals to complete before we move to High School and then a goal we wanted to achieve this year both inside and outside of school. It was amazing to hear how ambitious all the children were and some of the goals they would like to achieve and places they would love to visit. It was lovely to listen to each other's ideas and encourage each other to always aim high and dream big.

Well done for this week Alder Class, as always I am very proud of you all. Not only for your fantastic work but also for the amazing little humans you are becoming! Have a fun weekend everyone!

Miss Cruse



This week in Oak Class

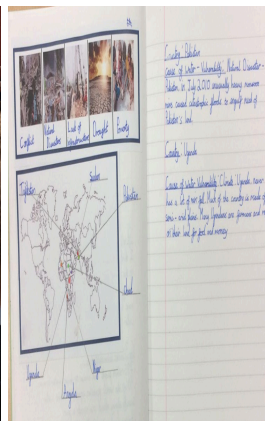
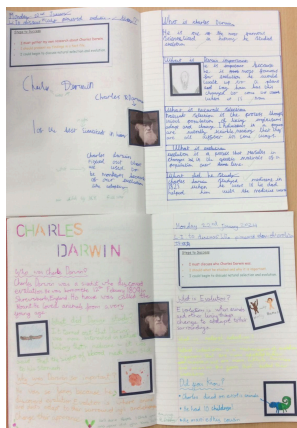
A great range of learning has been going on in Oak Class this week as we have delved even deeper into our understanding of Shakespeare's writing techniques. This week, we focussed on Prince's anger at all of the goings on in the fair city of Verona and picked out evidence and vocabulary showing how sick and tired he is of those pesky Montagues and Capulets!

It has been fantastic to have Year 5 and Year 6 together for our Maths sessions this week. We have seen some fantastic examples of our older guys acting as wonderful peer mentors to our younger ones (and vice versa!) as we have battled through some tricky work on fractions and percentages, topped off with some reasoning and problem solving on Friday.

Our foundation subjects are going from strength to strength as we have delved into the life and works of Chales Darwin in Science and touched on the much discussed and relevant subject of water vulnerability.

The power cut brought a challenging day to our class but our guys took it right into their stride and even had time to do some fantastic art work for our new display based on our dreams and aspirations.

Week 3 goes down as another tremendous week of achievement in our class. Awesome stuff!



Mr. McLeod