

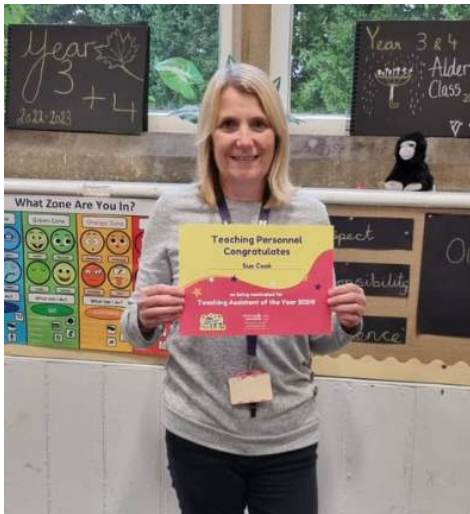


11th October 2024

Headteachers update

We are now 6 weeks in and as one person said to me recently 'That is the length of the summer holiday', shows how time flies when we are having fun!

The weather has certainly been a challenge this week but the spirits have not been dampened and the output is still exemplary, we would expect nothing less at Belsay. One area I always love as we move towards the half term markers is seeing how all of the childrens' hard work is coming together. For example in Alder Class they have been looking at Egyptians and when you look at the various work they are creating, there is passion flowing through the various subjects. Their artwork in particular this week was amazing. Similarly in Maple Class they have been focused on the Great Fire of London, once again they are producing an amazing array of work.



At Belsay, I may be biased, but I believe we don't just have the best staff, we also have truly amazing support staff. Without our Teaching Assistants, the school really would struggle to operate as they are all consistently going above and beyond the expectations to ensure your children are provided with the utmost of care. I can tell you from experience that exceptional Teaching Assistants are hard to get and we are blessed with having 4 of the finest!

This week we were joined in school by a representative from Newcastle based business, Teaching Personnel, who ran a competition looking for TA of the Year. Following our nominations we were super proud that Miss Cook was chosen and recognised for her unwavering efforts - Congratulations!

As always, the week has ended on a high, celebrating some truly brilliant work resulting in the children gaining their Outstanding Achievement Awards and a big congratulations to all our weekly nominations for Hot Chocolate. It is a great opportunity for me to speak with the children and find out all the things they love about school.

I hope you have a great weekend, see you Monday with only 2 weeks to go!

Mr Shaw



Class Email accounts

Following the successful launch of Class Dojo last year we will continue to be using this platform to safely share updates and messages about your children. The class email accounts have now been closed and if you email them it will bounce back to you. Can I please politely ask parents/carers that the messaging service is only used to provide a quick update eg. 'My child is being collected by Uncle Simon'. If you have concerns or issues with your child or the school please could this be sent via email to admin@belsay-school.uk where it can be forwarded to the relevant members of staff.

Safeguarding

Belsay Primary School is committed to keeping all children safe. Our staff regularly participate in safeguarding training and are fully aware of how to keep our pupils safe and what signs to look out for. Our pupils know they can share any concerns and we have robust policies and procedures in place which underpin safeguarding. It is our paramount priority to keep all children healthy and safe.

Remember our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in school are **Mr Shaw and Miss Dixon**.

There are so many really good resources out there for parents/carers about how to help keeping children safe online, but it can quickly become really overwhelming.

Internet Matters has a really great resource for parents called My Family's Digital Toolkit. This is a personalised resource which gives age-specific advice, advice to deal with specific concerns, recommendations for digital tools to support children's interests and more.

The toolkit is free and you can find more details [HERE](#).

Friday Flyer



Safeguarding Update

All The National College, see WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, links and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

ENCOURAGING OPEN CONVERSATIONS AT HOME

With tricky topics and occasional clashes of opinion, it can be challenging to maintain an environment where children feel able to talk candidly and honestly. However, encouraging such conversations helps to develop trust – making it easier to unpack even sensitive subjects as children get older. Here are our top tips for promoting open conversations at home.

- #### 1 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Children, blaming or shaming can all prevent children from feeling emotionally safe – while showing affection, gaspive attention and an interest in what a child has to say builds their sense of security. These formative years are when children's opinions and values begin to take shape, so it's important to provide a non-judgmental environment in which to discuss them – especially if their opinions differ from your own.
- #### 2 CONSIDER OTHER OUTLETS

Some children may find it easier to talk while they're participating in another activity such as drawing, writing, walking or sport. If it's possible, taking part in these activities together provides you with an opportunity to communicate while doing something side by side. A child may feel less pressure that way and can be more inclined to open up of their own accord.
- #### 3 NORMALISE CHATS ABOUT FEELINGS

Incorporate mental health and emotional wellbeing into everyday conversations, using age-appropriate language and examples to help children understand their emotions. Ask questions like "How are you feeling today?" "What was the best and worst part of your day?" "If you could start today again, what would you do differently?" and "Is there anything you want to talk about?"
- #### 4 LISTEN ACTIVELY

When children express themselves, make it obvious that you're listening closely and giving them your full attention. Maintain eye contact and let your body language show you're listening. It's not helpful to solve the problem; it's not helpful to address their issues as children or teenage angst – or to assume that they'll simply "get over" whatever they're feeling. Children don't have your life experience, their resilience is still developing as they learn to push through difficulties and handle problems.
- #### 5 ASK OPEN QUESTIONS

Encourage children to share their thoughts by asking open questions about their feelings and experiences. Closed questions (such as "Did you enjoy school today?") are more likely to elicit a simple "yes" or "no" response. Instead, you could ask things like "Who did you spend time with at break?" or "What did you do with all of your time?"
- #### 6 RESPECT THEIR BOUNDARIES

If a child isn't ready to talk to about something yet, respect their boundaries: it's a reassurance that their feelings are important and worthy of consideration. Ideally, you're aiming to let them know you care without smothering them, so just make it clear that you're there for them whenever they're ready to chat. Gentle, regular check-ins can sometimes be the best form of progress.
- #### 7 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Model open, honest and healthy communication in front of children and young people. Try to demonstrate kindness when talking about others and yourself, because if children hear adults being overly harsh, critical or judgemental, or see them having unrealistic expectations of themselves, it makes them more likely to adopt and repeat the behaviour themselves as they grow.
- #### 8 HAVE REGULAR CHECK-INS

Check in with children periodically to discuss how they're feeling and what's going on at their home. This could be a weekly or monthly conversation, where the child has an opportunity to share whatever's on their mind. Use parents and carers, getting away from the house and other distractions might be productive here – you could consider regular time to a coffee shop or a café, or just a weekly walk.
- #### 9 PROVIDE RESOURCES

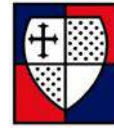
It's often beneficial to let children know about other supports that's available to them if they're struggling to talk to you specifically. Encourage them to talk to school counsellors, trusted adults or even a therapist, if necessary – while normalising this route and dispelling the harmful stigma around seeking help. Older children could engage with resources such as [Teenline](http://www.teenline.org.uk).
- #### 10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

It's beneficial to praise children for expressing their feelings honestly – emphasising how important it is to talk about truly emotions and how proud you are of them for doing so. This can be especially pivotal for boys, who often experience more of a stigma around talking frankly about their feelings and their mental health. A barrier that can be overcome, with enough love and support.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive head, Anne Llewellyn has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also led the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.





Mental Health at Belsay

On Thursday 10th October it was World Mental Health Day. This is an international day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy against social stigma. We celebrated this day in school and raised awareness of mental health and wellbeing at an age appropriate level with the children. All classes looked at ways we can improve our mental health and wellbeing and how we can ensure we look after ourselves and others around us.

Throughout the last year we have been working towards the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools Mental Health Award. I have been working hard with the help of the staff and children to raise awareness of Mental Health and wellbeing in school. I was delighted on Thursday when we received the news we had successfully completed the award at the Bronze level. These are just a few of the stand out comments from the final report:

“As with all schools who have a sustainable commitment to mental health and wellbeing, Belsay Primary School’s commitment starts at the top and feeds through governors, senior leaders and is led by a teacher who is thoroughly committed to mental health and wellbeing.”

“The strategic plan in place and the school’s commitment to mental health and wellbeing mean that the work carried out isn’t a “flash in the pan” but is lived out as part of the culture and ethos of the school.”

“Pupils are very well supported at Belsay with a raft of support and interventions taking place. The school listens to the pupil voice,”

“There is much to celebrate at Belsay in terms of the support for staff, pupils and carers,”

I am sure you will agree these are fantastic comments to receive and go a small way to show the journey we are on with raising awareness of Mental Health and wellbeing within our school and wider community.

Miss Houghton





Attendance

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Willow	100	97.89
Maple	97.58	94.74
Alder	92.40	94.78
Oak	100	96.91

Did you know? Each pupil has 175 non-school days a year to spend however they like. The table below shows the significant impact of absence over time.

Days of school add up to lost learning						
Days in school	190	186	180	175	171	170
Percentage attendance	100%	98%	95%	92%	90%	<90%
	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Caution	Cause for concern	Serious concern

Absence Procedures if your child is ill, please keep them at home until they are well enough to return to school. Please notify us by phone call or email before 9.15am if your child is to be absent, and continue to inform us on a daily basis if they continue to be ill.

We have a continual focus on attendance and punctuality and this is of the utmost importance in your child's education. Please remember that our school gate closes at 8.55am as this is when our lessons begin. Anyone arriving after this time is classed as late and will miss valuable learning opportunities which take place immediately after registration, such as phonics.

What are the risks of missing a day of school?

'Being in school is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing and wider development. Pupils with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE results. The higher a pupil's attendance, the more they are likely to learn, and the better they are likely to perform in exams and formal assessments.' The Education Hub - Department for Education



Friday Flyer

Classroom updates - Willow Class

Another busy week in Willow class and one that has made me feel very proud of the children. This week we have been continuing with the story It's okay to be different by Todd Parr. The children are becoming more confident to share their own ideas. We have also been trying hard to remember the role of the author and illustrator. This week we have also completed all of the single set 1 sounds and it is great to see how well the children have remembered the sounds. Lots of the children can now orally blend and are beginning to focus on word reading. Such a lot of progress has been made already this half term.

In Maths we have been focusing on the numbers 1,2 and 3. In Reception we follow the NCETM Maths scheme. This scheme allows us to think deeply about numbers and focus on the children being confident with the number skills before moving on. It has been lovely to see the children being able to subitise, identify more than and less than a number and even begin to use the part, part whole method to show how to make the number.

The children are really enjoying PE with Jamie and Mr Smith. On Monday the children asked if we could use the equipment from the PE shed so that they could create their own PE lesson. Hallie and Flynn were the teachers, Luke was the helper and Ronnie was the driver of the PE train. The children loved playing the games they had been learning in PE with Jamie and Mr Smith and it was lovely to see how much they had remembered from their PE lessons. Miss Whitehouse was on the yard and even she was given a steering wheel so she could drive round the yard.



Have a lovely weekend!
Miss Houghton



Classroom updates - Maple Class

This week we have been looking at properties of materials in Science. We have been discussing why objects are made from particular materials depending on the purpose of the object. We used Scientific vocabulary to describe the materials used for different objects within the classroom- hard, soft, transparent, opaque, flexible, rigid.

Thursday was World Mental Health day and to mark the occasion we read *Master Owl Meets Miss Bunny*. Master Owl taught us the importance of taking the time to be mindful and helped us to understand how all things are connected. We discussed what we can do to look after our mental health and what makes us happy.



Miss Dixon



Classroom updates - Alder Class

In Alder Class we have been continuing our work on Ancient Egypt, we wrote a diary entry to explain what it would have been like to be an Ancient Egyptian. We also had a fact competition which involved us all having a different Pharaoh. We had to write lots of facts about the Pharaohs and whoever wrote the most were the winners. The winners were Dylan, William, Arthur, Jack, Sophie and Daisy.

We have completed our Ancient Egypt Artwork. We painted a sunset background, when dry, we cut out pyramids, palm trees, birds and camels to complete the artwork. It required us to use a range of different skills and Mr A really enjoyed helping us with this.



It was Alder's turn to be responsible for the chickens this week. We have been to see them each day and have taken good care of them. Each day we made sure they had clean water and food as well as collecting their eggs. The eggs are going to be sold and lots of us have already made plans to buy some of them with our own money.

In Science this week we continued to explore shadows and created some fantastic art. We investigated all the ways a shadow can be changed, depending on the location of the light source.

Belsay Primary School

Friday Flyer

Belsay School



In PE we have been focusing on muscle building. We were working on our strength by completing a circuit which included star jumps, tuck jumps, push ups, planks and sit ups. It was hard work but it felt good to know we were using lots of parts of our body to build up our muscles.

We have been working especially hard in Music to remember the Autumn Days song for the Harvest festival. Mrs Wigham has given everyone the music to bring home along with their recorder and has asked that everyone practises over the weekend so that we can be even better! It was lovely to hear everyone singing the Harvest songs this morning as well.

Looking ahead to next week we are going to be sculpting salt dough in preparation for making amulets for our Egyptian day on Tuesday 22nd October. It sounds like some of the children are already preparing their clothes for the day. Please don't go to any trouble, my plan at the moment is to fashion something out of an old sheet.

Have a lovely weekend everyone!

Miss Cruse and Mrs Aynsley



Classroom updates - Oak Class

It has been another great week up at the top end of school in UKS2! This group continues to maturely fill their roles as ambassadors for behaviour and attitudes at Belsay.

Curriculum wise, it is more a case of “what haven’t we done?” this week. With our Year 5s and Year 6s both working on addition and subtraction, we have had some great opportunities to pull out the manipulatives in Maths and work with some concrete resources to help us add two 6-digit numbers together.

We continue to make good progress towards expectations in English. As we have been writing some brilliant non-chronological reports on life in the Victorian Workhouse, so many of us have made great strides in creating a greater volume of writing with some fantastic features, including some pretty complicated stuff around the “past perfect” and “past progressive” tenses.

As our school careers drive continues to take shape, we were able to consider what the potential barriers might be to our dream careers and how our skills and attitudes can help us break down those barriers. There has even been enough time for another crazy Science experiment this week with lots of explosions and chemical reactions!

As always, thank you all for your continued support and communication. Have yourselves a great weekend and we will see you on Monday!



Mr. McLeod



Friday Flyer

Dates for your Diary

Date	Time	
22nd October	9:30am	Yr 5/6 Tag Rugby Festival at Morpeth RFC
22nd October	All day	Alder class Ancient Egypt Day
24th October	3:15pm	PTA Halloween Disco
25th October	9am	Harvest Festival
25th October	Afternoon	Flu immunisations
25th October	3:15pm	School closes for half term
4th November	All day	Teacher training day
5th November	8:45am	School opens to all pupils
13th November	11:30am	Come Dine With Us - Willow Class
15th November	9:30am	Willow Class trip to Seven Stories
18th - 19th November	Evening	Parents Evening
5th December	1:45pm	Pele Trust Christmas Music Concert @ St Mary's Church, Ponteland
6th December	TBC	Christmas School Performance
10th December	Lunchtime	Whole school Christmas dinner
12th December	Evening	PTA Belsay Quiz and Chilli night - adult only
13th December	All day	Teacher training day
17th December	TBC	Whole school trip to Tyne Theatre
18th December	3:15pm	PTA Christmas Fair
20th December	Lunch	School closes for Christmas

Events could be subject to change and will be communicated if required.

Belsay Primary School

Friday Flyer

Belsay School



Halloween tickets can be purchased by paying 'Friends of Belsay School' account. Please use your surname as reference when paying.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND, BELSAY PTA BRINGS YOU:

halloween disco

TICKETS £5 PER CHILD

HOT DOG, DRINK & CAKE PROVIDED



BELSAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

THURSDAY 24TH OCTOBER
3.15 - 5PM

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES OR PARTY CLOTHES - GO WILD!

ATTENDANCE/DIETARY FORMS TO FOLLOW, STAFF SUPERVISION, PARENTS COLLECT AT THE END SEE YOU THERE!





Friday Flyer

Letters From Santa!

Share the magic this Christmas with a personalised letter, certificate and sticker direct from Santa at the North Pole.



Order yours now!



Your letter will be personalised by our dedicated team of elves before the final check from Santa.

Once complete, the letter will be posted in a special envelope addressed to your chosen loved one.

£6.50 per letter

Order yours now at: tynedalehospice.com



Raising funds to support services provided by Tynedale Hospice at Home
Charity Number: 1034170 Company Number: 02870776



Belsay Primary School

Belsay School



Friday Flyer

A colorful illustration for a Halloween event. It features a girl in a purple witch hat and red dress holding a basket of candy, a boy in a blue and white striped shirt and blue witch hat holding a bowl of candy, and a pink cat. They are surrounded by several glowing jack-o'-lanterns. In the background, there are silhouettes of haunted houses and flying bats. The text 'BELSAY OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB' is at the top, 'HALLOWEEN' is in large orange letters in the middle, and '3.15 until 4.30 £6.50' is below it. At the bottom, it says 'Join us for Fun' and 'GAMES . SPOOKY PIZZA , CRAFTS' followed by 'Monday 21st October from 3.15pm' and 'Call us 01661 881704'.

BELSAY OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB

HALLOWEEN

3.15 until 4.30 £6.50

Join us for Fun

GAMES . SPOOKY PIZZA , CRAFTS

Monday 21st October from 3.15pm

Call us 01661 881704