



**27th June 2025**

## Headteachers update

What a wonderfully busy and joy-filled week it has been at Belsay!

A large number of our Year 6 pupils have spent the week on residential in France with children from other Pele Trust primary schools. From the updates on ClassDojo, it's clear they've had an unforgettable adventure - full of sunshine, smiles, sharks, snails and special memories. A huge thank you must go to Mr McLeod and Mr Atkinson who generously gave up their time (and sleep!) to make the trip possible. Their dedication to our children and their willingness to go above and beyond is truly appreciated by us all.



Back at school, the rest of our children have enjoyed a fantastic week focused on transition. Our theme has been *All About Me* - exploring what makes us unique and celebrating the many wonderful differences that make up our school community. The children have embraced the activities with enthusiasm and creativity. The staff have loved the opportunity to really get to know their new classes and I know it has given them a great insight, ready to hit the ground running in September - can't believe I am talking about that month already!!

A real highlight in the middle of the week was our whole school trip to Belsay Hall and Castle. We are incredibly lucky to have such a stunning historical site right on our doorstep and the children loved exploring the grounds and soaking up the stories of the past. The traditional games by the castle were a particular hit and great fun to watch. I think we had some tired people by the end of the day, that was just the staff.

We also welcomed our final group of Year 5 parents for our *Come Dine with Us* lunches. It's been lovely having so many of you join us across the year - we really hope you've enjoyed the experience and had a little insight into life in the Belsay dining hall! Thank you for your continued support.

To round off the week, we gathered together this afternoon for our celebration assembly and awarded our Friday Hot Chocolate Friday. It's always such a pleasure to see the pride on the children's faces as they are recognised for their efforts and kindness.

Wishing you all a restful and sunny weekend and please remember the classes are back to normal from Monday.

**Mr Shaw**



## 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**.

### What Parents & Educators Need to Know about LEGO FORTNITE

Epic Games have recently introduced three new game modes to Fortnite: Rocket Racing, Fortnite Festival and, finally, LEGO Fortnite: a survival game using official Lego characters. There are lots of great mechanics that encourage creativity in children, but – as with any online game – it's important to stay aware of the potential risks.

#### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

##### MONETISATION

LEGO Fortnite utilizes a similar online item shop to the main Fortnite game. When this title was released, the makers introduced thousands of Lego versions of the original game's character skins. Owning an original Fortnite cosmetic means you also own the LEGO version at no extra cost, but the addition of these extra versions could potentially spark new interest in young players, making it more tempting to pay real money for these in-game accessories.

##### FEAR FACTOR

There is no explicit violence in LEGO Fortnite, but there is a lot of combat. While the battles in LEGO Fortnite remain very cartoonish and child friendly, a lot of the action unfolds inside dark caves, with spiders, skeletons or scary-looking monsters. The game can get a little spooky at times, which could potentially scare younger players.

##### COMPLEX GAMEPLAY

LEGO Fortnite is a survival game, though it's not as simple as something like Minecraft. There are lots of different crafting stations and loads of items to use or combine (including various rarities to seek out and harvest). The gathering and crafting elements of the game can get quite complicated and confusing, which could be a source of frustration for some younger players.

##### ONLINE PLAY

LEGO Fortnite can be played online, as with the base game. While a player's LEGO world is private when it's first created, they can then invite anyone on their in-game friends list to play with them. If any strangers are on this friends list, they can be invited onto their server. Thankfully, Epic Games has implemented a solid reporting system, as well as tools to kick other players from the game.

### Advice for Parents & Educators

#### LEGO IS FRIENDLY

Much like real Lego, this game is incredibly inviting, it's friendly, fun and accessible: a younger player could still enjoy this title even if they'd never played Fortnite before. With sanitized violence, it's a far more family-friendly gaming experience all round – worth bearing in mind if you're concerned about children and young people being exposed to violent or frightening content.

#### SET LITTLE CHALLENGES

As we've noted, the game is a lot more difficult than it may seem, which could be frustrating or upsetting for some younger players. While the game does a good job of setting realistic targets for players, it can still feel overwhelming. If parents suggest smaller challenges – such as building a house – children can flex their creativity, express themselves with their builds and feel a real sense of accomplishment.

#### PLAY TOGETHER

Take some time to play the game together. Not only will that help with some of the complicated tasks, but it's also just a fun pastime. Playing with family members also reduces the potential for younger players to invite strangers to enjoy the game with – if any are on their friends list. Furthermore, playing with children will let you more effectively limit their time spent on the game. Instead of "switch it off", you can now say "let's play some more later".

#### MONITOR SPENDING

If a child has provided their parents' email address and been given consent to make in-game purchases, it's worth keeping an eye on how much gets spent on the in-game currency, V-Bucks. It's very tempting to buy character skins in LEGO form, as a way of expressing yourself and looking cool and unique. As you may know already, the average skin costs between £6-16, which can add up very quickly if not tracked and limited. Keep in mind that you can make it necessary to enter a PIN code to validate every purchase using the game's parental controls, and you can prevent the game from saving your payment information whenever you make a purchase. Furthermore, players under-13 automatically have their spending limited to \$300 (£78.95) per day.



## Attendance

As parents and carers we want to share our attendance figures because it is you who can make the big difference. Our children are entitled to a full and balanced education and at Belsay we feel we provide one of the best experiences possible.

**Current Whole School attendance is 96.27%** Our **NEW** target for Whole School Attendance is 97%.

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Willow	93%	96.88%
Maple	99.17%	96.45%
Alder	98.18%	95.87%
Oak	98.46%	96.17%

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.



## Classroom updates - Maple Class- Reception & Year 1

Reception and Year 1 had a brilliant week of transition, full of fun, learning, and discovery. Our theme for the week was *Everyone Belongs*, and we explored identity, community, and belonging through a range of exciting activities. In PSHE, we played circle games and had thoughtful discussions about our visible and invisible similarities and differences. We learnt about ourselves, our families, and how every family is unique in its own special way. In geography, we explored where we and our families come from, locating different countries on the world map and celebrating the wonderful diversity in our class.

Our creative sides shone through in English and Art. We wrote fantastic *All About Me* pieces, sharing what makes each of us special, and created beautiful artwork inspired by the story *Incredible You*. In RE, we learnt about the Hindu festival of Diwali as a celebration of new beginnings, making colourful rangoli patterns and crafting our own diya lamps. Midweek, we had a wonderful trip to Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens, where we explored the castle grounds, spotted features we've learned about in class, and had lots of fun playing with friends. Thank you for an amazing week, Maple Class 2025-2026! I'm so excited to start our new learning journey together in September.



Miss Dixon



## Classroom updates- Alder class- Year 2 and Year 3



What a fantastic week in Alder Class. It has been absolutely lovely to get to know our new Year 3s. They have taken it all in their stride and joined in with enthusiasm and confidence. Our new Year 4s have shown so much care and support, they have been wonderful role models.

Each day this week has focussed on a different PSHE theme. We began by looking at 'Identity and Belonging', as well as exploring our expectations and routines. We played some getting to know you games and did an 'All About Me' writing task. The children created some artistic posters that showed the 'voice-o-meter' we use in lower Key Stage 2, I wonder if they can remember the four different animals? On Tuesday we looked at 'Love and Family'. We explored some interesting ideas and enjoyed listening to each other share the things that are important to them when they think about their families.

Wednesday's trip was an absolute treat. From the tiny frog we saved, to climbing the castle and exploring the gardens. We all entered the hall as detectives, looking for clues about the history of the building. There was some interesting graffiti, this included a game of hangman and a poem, all written by soldiers that stayed there during World War 2. Of course the children may admit to the park and garden games as being the highlight for them.

Thursday's theme was belief, culture and tradition. We began with a short writing task, where we identified our favourite things. The children created some wonderful world maps, showing where their families come from. We learnt about Rangoli designs, which are a tradition in Hinduism to welcome the new year in. Everyone has made and decorated their own Rangoli design to welcome us into our classroom next year. On Friday, our topic was Together We Are Strong. We have drawn our journey through this year, complete with our highlights and challenges we overcame and made a class flag highlighting the unique strengths and qualities that Alder Class will have next year!

New Year 4s - you have been fantastic this week - showing our new Year 3s life in Alder Class. There is always a big step up from KS1 to KS2, we are confident all our new Year 3s are more than ready for this adventure and the next step in their school journeys. We can't wait to have you all together again in September!

**Mrs Aynsley & Mrs Rutter**



## Classroom updates - Oak Class- Year 4 and Year 5

What a fantastic week we've had in Oak Class! This week has been all about *transition*, and we've loved welcoming our future Year 4s and 5s to join us for a series of exciting and thoughtful activities. It was good fun to try and guess the truth when we played two truths and a lie to break the ice and get to know each other. We ended the week getting to know each other with some brilliant 'All About Me' writing. The children shared their personalities, interests and aspirations with pride – what a wonderful way to celebrate individuality!

We also explored important themes around stereotypes, looking at how we can challenge assumptions and celebrate diversity. The children had some really mature and insightful discussions, showing a great deal of empathy and understanding. Sebastian's contributions during this discussion were phenomenal and it was a pleasure to hear his opinion on how we can challenge stereotypical views that people have.

Our creative sides were out in full force as we created beautiful mandalas – a calm, focused activity that also allowed for lots of personal expression. The results were stunning and showed just how unique and imaginative our class is.



As part of our learning about equality and standing up for what's right, we explored the inspiring story of Rosa Parks. The children showed brilliant maturity as we talked about civil rights and the importance of fairness and courage. We used our knowledge of this topic to create a mind map all about Rosa Parks. It was great to see the children so interested in this topic and the research that went into it was outstanding.

A huge well done to all the children for their enthusiasm, kindness and maturity throughout the week. I have thoroughly enjoyed spending the week with you and Mr Mcleod is going to feel very lucky come September. I think I might have some serious competition come September for which class is the best class in school! Thank you for a great week Team Oak. You should all be very proud of yourselves!

**Miss Houghton**



## Dates for your Diary

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

Date	Time	
Tuesday 1st July	All day	Year 6 Beamish Trip
3rd and 4th July	All day	Year 6 Transition Days
Friday 4th July	All day	Close House Golf event for Yr 3&4
Tuesday 8th July	Morning	Whole School visit to Kaleidoscope Project @ PHS
Friday 11th July	9am	Band performance for parents of those in Band
Tuesday 15th July	9am	Year 6 Leavers Assembly
Wednesday 16th July	Afternoon	Alder and Oak class end of year party
Wednesday 16th July	3:15pm	PTA Summer Fair
Thursday 17th July	Afternoon	Willow and Maple class end of year party
Friday 18th July	1:15pm	School Closes for summer



**Happy Birthday to all those celebrating this week  
Lucas (Oak)**



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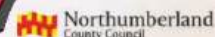


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# JUNIOR AQUATHLON

**SUNDAY 29TH**  
**JUNE**

8AM START

- BASED AT PONTELAND LEISURE CENTRE
- POOL BASED SWIM FOLLOWED BY RUN
- AGE APPROPRIATE DISTANCE
- MEDALS AND ICECREAM FOR ALL FINISHERS

**AGES 8-16**

[HTTPS://WWW.BRITISHTRIATHLON.ORG/EVENTS/PONTELAND-TRI-JUNIOR-AQUATHLON\\_16143](https://www.britishtriathlon.org/events/ponteland-tri-junior-aquathlon_16143)

