

11 September 2026

Executive Headteacher Update

Welcome back, everyone! I hope you have all had a wonderful summer and are feeling refreshed, recharged and ready for another fantastic academic year at Belsay. It has been absolutely amazing to see the children coming back into school with such enthusiasm. They have been keen, eager and ready to learn, and it has been lovely to share conversations with many of them about what they have been getting up to over the summer holidays.

A particularly warm welcome to all of our new starters across the different year groups and especially to our new Reception children. It honestly feels as though they have been here for much longer than two weeks! They have come through the door, settled straight into school routines and have impressed us all with their confidence and enthusiasm.

It has also been lovely to get straight back into our usual routines, including ClassDojo, which is now up and running. Please remember to keep checking ClassDojo regularly for your updates and messages. If you have a quick message or question for your child's teacher, this is the best way to get in touch. If you have something a little longer to discuss, or there is a particular concern, please contact the school office via our admin email address and we will make sure your message reaches the appropriate staff.

There are already a few important dates in the diary, which you will find below, so please do take a moment to have a look and get them in your calendars – including our Harvest Festival and Christmas performances. I know Christmas may feel like a very long way away but apparently there are only 15 weeks to go! It will be here before we know it!

We have also jumped straight back into our Friday Celebration Assemblies and it was wonderful to be part of this morning's celebration. A huge congratulations to all of our Outstanding Achievement Award winners and of course a very special well done to our first Hot Chocolate Award winners of the year! It was fantastic to start the year by celebrating the brilliant things our children are already achieving.

It has been a brilliant start to the new academic year and I would like to say a huge well done to all of our children for the positive way they have returned to school. I hope you all have a wonderful weekend and enjoy some well-earned family time. I look forward to seeing everyone again next week, ready for another great week at Belsay!

Mr Shaw

Next week I am planning to be in school on Monday and Tuesday



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 **Miss Dixon and Miss Houghton**.

Top Tips for

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S RETURN TO ROUTINE

Returning to school after the holidays can be challenging for some children and young people, and both home and education settings can play an important role in helping them readjust. Consistent routines, clear expectations, and supportive communication can support children and young people's wellbeing, self-regulation, and academic success. These practical tips can help make this transition back to school feel more manageable.

1 START EARLY

Consider reintroducing school-day sleep, meals, or a bedtime routine around a week before term begins. In education settings, familiarise yourself and expectations can also be introduced from the start of term to help a child settle back into school and ease the adjustment. Consider the importance of the transition time they need to adjust to the structure of school life.

2 REBUILD ROUTINES TOGETHER

Involve the children and young people in your plans for the rebuilding of familiar routines at home and in education settings. Having a say in their daily schedule can build a sense of predictability for them and give them a greater sense of control. This might include discussing morning routines or having a consistent classroom timetable, expectations, and activities together at the beginning of the school day.

3 ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBILITY

Giving children and young people age-appropriate responsibilities can help foster their autonomy and engagement. For an older child at home, this might include getting dressed independently or checking their school bag. In education settings, children and young people could progress their learning objectives, complete simple classroom tasks, or follow a familiar morning routine. These responsibilities require children to help them feel more involved in the school day with developing social skills.

4 RECONNECT WITH PEERS

Re-establishing friendships can help children and young people feel more at ease and supported when they return to school. Consider group arrangements for their children to appear to be spending time with school friends, with education settings as group activities, buddy systems, or collaborative tasks to help rebuild meaningful connections.

5 SUPPORT HEALTHY NUTRITION

Regular, balanced meals, particularly at breakfast, are linked to improved concentration, behaviour, and academic outcomes. Families can gradually return to regular school-day mealtimes, with education settings providing healthy eating advice at the start of term, and a good breakfast provision where available. Consistent meals to help support children and young people's energy levels and concentration throughout the day.

6 COMMUNICATE OPENLY

Speak to the children and young people in your care about the challenges of the return to school and give them the opportunity to share any worries or questions. A daily check-in going back to school, particularly when starting a new year group, can be a useful tool. Children and young people may benefit from your lessons with a lot of support. Parents and education settings can help by listening, talking to the children and young people, and all the necessary information with one another where appropriate.

7 RECONNECT WITH LEARNING AND PEERS

Light educational activities before term begins can help children become familiar with learning routines and to return to school with a positive attitude. In education settings, consider using a variety of resources to support learning and peer connections during the first few days back. Reviewing learning progress and achievement can help children feel more confident and motivated. Consider using a variety of resources to support learning and peer connections during the first few days back.

8 PRIORITISE SLEEP

For the children and young people in your care, get a good night's sleep and begin returning to their usual bedtime routine before term starts. Reducing screen time before bedtime may also be a good idea to help them sleep. Education settings can also be a good place to help children with their sleep. Consider using a variety of resources to support learning and peer connections during the first few days back.

9 PREPARE AHEAD

Organising activities, bags, lunches, and other school essentials in advance can reduce the anxiety of the return to school. Consider using a variety of resources to support learning and peer connections during the first few days back. Reviewing learning progress and achievement can help children feel more confident and motivated. Consider using a variety of resources to support learning and peer connections during the first few days back.

10 BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE

It takes time for children to feel more at ease in school. Be patient and flexible with the return to school. Consider using a variety of resources to support learning and peer connections during the first few days back. Reviewing learning progress and achievement can help children feel more confident and motivated. Consider using a variety of resources to support learning and peer connections during the first few days back.

WELCOME BACK!



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 95.1% Our target for Whole School Attendance is 97%

Class	Weekly attendance	Annual attendance
Willow	100%	100%
Maple	97.3%	98.1%
Alder	94.4%	95.1%
Oak	93.3%	94.2%

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 - Willow class

What a fantastic first few days our Reception children have had! I could not be more proud of them. It has been wonderful to see how quickly everyone has settled into school life. There have been lots of happy faces, smiles and laughter as the children have begun their exciting journey in Reception.

This week has been all about getting to know each other, making new friends and learning all about our classroom. We have been busy learning our new school routines, finding out where everything belongs and practising how we do things in Reception. The children have been brilliant at listening, joining in and having a go at all the new experiences that school brings. Most importantly, we have been having LOTS of fun!

We have explored our classroom and outdoor areas, played together, shared stories, enjoyed songs and activities and begun to discover all the exciting things we will be doing this year. It has been lovely to watch the children grow in confidence even over just a few days.

A huge well done to our Reception children for such a fantastic start. We are so excited to see what the rest of the year brings and all the wonderful things they will learn, discover and achieve together. We are already off to a great start.



Have a lovely weekend.

Miss Houghton

Classroom updates - Maple class

We have had the most brilliant first two weeks back at school as we have begun our new academic year! It has been wonderful to see the children settling into their new routines, making new friendships and getting stuck into their learning with such enthusiasm. We are incredibly proud of how positively everyone has started the year!

In Maths, we have been learning all about place value, with a huge focus on forming our numerals carefully and correctly. Our Year 1 children have been busy sorting objects and representing numbers to 10 in lots of different ways, while our Year 2 children have been recognising tens and ones and have begun to partition two-digit numbers. We have been working hard to make sure our numbers are formed neatly and accurately!

In English, we have made predictions about our first class text, *Lost in the Toy Museum* by David Lucas. We have been busy thinking carefully about what might happen in the story and sharing our ideas with one another. We have also been working hard on our handwriting, taking care to form our letters correctly. We have explored the difference between questions and exclamations, learning how to recognise each type of sentence and which punctuation mark should be used at the end.

Our Science learning has been fascinating as we have been finding out all about the human body. We discussed the main parts of the body before extending our learning by exploring the human skeleton. We discovered the important jobs our skeleton does and learnt about the functions of the skull and ribs. We also discovered that our bodies contain organs, learnt where some of these are found and explored what they do. To put our learning into practice, we worked brilliantly as a team to draw around a classmate and carefully drew and labelled the different parts of the human body.

Mrs Landreth





Classroom updates- Alder class

What a fantastic first two weeks we have had! Our new Year 3s have settled into the rhythms of Alder Class brilliantly, supported by our wonderful Year 4s who are already setting a fantastic example as mature role models.

In Maths, we have kicked off the new school year by recapping our core basic skills with some fun problem solving activities. We particularly enjoyed practising our number bonds by exploring how many animals we would need to make specific numbers of legs! This week, we began our main place value unit by exploring the concept of hundreds and thousands using Base 10 and place value charts.

In English, we have launched our exciting *Stone Age to Iron Age* topic, where we are learning how to craft non-chronological reports. This week, children have been exploring overall report structures and practicing how to organize information using clear headings and sub-headings.

Complementing our English focus, we stepped back in time to explore the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic eras, investigating how human life transformed over these distinct periods.

As we adjust to the new school year, our focus has been on building strong friendships and collaboratively crafting our Class Charter to ensure a welcoming, supportive environment for everyone.

We have been so impressed by the great start everyone has made. Thank you for support from home as the children settle in—it promises to be a memorable year!

Mrs Aynsley and Mrs Rutter



Classroom updates - Oak class

What a fantastic first full week we have had in Oak Class! The children have returned to school with bundles of enthusiasm and have made an amazing start to life in their new class.

In English, we kicked off our Diary Entry unit using *Street Child* by Berlie Doherty. The novel follows Jim Jarvis, a young boy struggling to survive in Victorian London after his family is struck by terrible hardship. The children have already begun exploring Jim's experiences and considering how his thoughts and feelings could be captured through first-person diary writing.

Our Place Value unit is also off to a great start in Maths. The children have adapted brilliantly to our new class format, with two separate teaching inputs taking place to ensure that everybody receives the right level of challenge and support. We have been incredibly impressed by how sensibly and independently they have approached this new way of working.

In Science, Mr McLeod and Mrs Landreth (formerly known as Miss Dixon!) have tag-teamed the opening lessons of our Materials unit. The children have been investigating solubility, exploring what happens when different solids are mixed with liquids and discovering which substances dissolve to form a solution.

The children have also really engaged with our new History topic: the Victorians. We have begun exploring this fascinating period of enormous change, considering what Britain was like when Queen Victoria came to the throne and how everyday life differed between the rich and the poor. There have already been some fantastic questions and discussions, and we are excited to delve deeper into Victorian childhood, schools, work and industry over the coming weeks.

Finally, in RE, we have started exploring who God is in the Bible. The children have examined some of the different words, images and descriptions Christians use when talking about God and have begun thinking carefully about what these reveal about Christian belief.

It has been an absolutely wonderful start to the new school year. The children have impressed us with their positive attitudes, excellent behaviour and willingness to throw themselves into every challenge. What a lovely class we have. We already know that it is going to be a very special year! Have a fantastic and well-earned weekend, everyone!



Mr. McLeod



Dates for your Diary

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

Date	Time	
Thursday 17th September	AM	Eothen care home sign language visit
Wednesday 23rd September	9am	SEND coffee morning
Friday 2nd October	AM	Individual and family photos
Friday 16th October	9am	Harvest festival performance
Thursday 22nd October	3.15pm	School closed for half term
Monday 2nd November	All day	Teacher training day
Tuesday 3rd November	8.45am	School reopens to pupils
Friday 20th November	All day	Flu immunisations for all children
Thursday 10th December		Christmas lunch
Friday 11th December	2pm	Christmas Nativity performance
Wednesday 16th December	9am	Christmas Panto at Tyne Theatre
Friday 18th December	1pm	School closes for Christmas holidays
Monday 4th January	8.45am	School reopens to pupils



BELSAY



BABY & TODDLER GROUP

Every Monday (during term time)
in the school hall • 10am - 11am

Come along to a relaxed
and friendly group

EVERYONE WELCOME

£2.50 PER FAMILY