

NEWSLETTER

December 2022

Dear Parents and Friends

Welcome to the December Newsletter. It has been a long and action packed half term but the recent snowy weather has certainly given us that Christmassy feel despite breaking up for the holidays being so late.

It has been fantastic that for the first time since pre-covid we have eventually been able to run our Christmas events as normal; I know how much you all appreciate the opportunity to see your children in their Christmas performances. We tried to get a balance between putting on performances and not losing the whole of learning time in December to rehearse.

Sporting updates

At the beginning of Autumn 2, Year 3 took part in a skipping festival at Blyth Sports Centre, run by Skip4Fit in association with Northumberland School Games. The children took part in various fitness and multi-skills styled activities with skipping ropes.

All classes in KS2 have taken part in the Northumberland School Games Virtual Multi-Skills Competition. Each class was required to take part in six activities that tested their agility, balance and coordination. The top two classes in each year group from across Blyth and Bedlington will be invited to take part in the County finals after Christmas. We have qualified for the County finals in all year groups! With two classes in Years 3, 4 & 5 and 1 class in year 6. GO TEAM HORTON!

As a school, Horton Grange took part in the School Games Santa Dash on the 9th December. This was a session based around active travel at break and lunchtime in Christmas attire.

Recently, the Year 6 Sports Leaders and Captains were selected for 2022/23. After Christmas, they will be taking part in training before delivering sports sessions to another year group later in the year. In addition to this, they will also be supporting the smooth running of sports day in summer term.



Developing responsibility

We are delighted to announce that Head Prefect roles have been awarded to Theya Adair-Mcauley and Cayden Lyall. Deputy Head Prefect roles have been awarded to Lewis Murphy and Tyler Cowie. Sports Captains are Layla Thompson and Adrian Morton while Deputy Sports Captains are Liam Richards and Kadie Aspin.

Clubs in the Community

ROTAKIDS & INTERACT

Blyth Rotary is very proud to have the only two community based groups in the whole of the North East of England. This allows young people from different schools across the town to get involved in community based activities and make a positive difference within the town and globally. Both groups are supported by the Rotary Club of Blyth and are registered with Rotary International and covered by its Safeguarding policies and Insurance. The leader in charge has a full DBS check.

Importantly for parents, there are no fees or uniforms to buy. The groups undertake projects of their choice and they decide how they will achieve them, with support from the leaders. Two service projects are carried out each year, one in the local community and one which furthers International understanding.

The groups only started in September and have attracted young people from different schools in Blyth, allowing them to make new friends and grow their confidence. In October they completed a fundraising sponsored walk and have chosen Bedside Horses as their local charity to support. They are also working very hard on improving the Isabella Heap.

When: Wednesdays Rotakids (7 – 12 years) at 5 -7pm; Interact (12 – 18 years) at 6 – 8pm

Where: Isabella Heap Pavilion (on green area opposite Isabella Community Centre), Ogle Dr, Blyth NE24 5JF

Contact: Rotarian Aileen Barrass (Leader)

After Christmas, we will be raising awareness of clubs children can become involved in in the local community. Some of the older children who already attend will have a role in this.

Celebrating learning from Autumn 2

Two Year Olds

The two year olds have had an exciting half term, celebrating Halloween, Bonfire night, all in the run up to Christmas. The children have enjoyed lots of imaginary play, extending their ideas with their friends, taking on a role and representing their own experiences.

They've had opportunities to develop this in the kitchen role play with a teddy bears picnic, and in the small world area with the cars, animals and characters.



The children accessed the dressing up clothes, picking out their favourite costumes and acting out with each other. The children were also encouraged to attempt to take off and put on their own costumes. The two year olds have continued to bake/cook once a week. They demonstrated their control of different utensils and were encouraged to make choices based on their preferences. There have been lots of festive activities on offer, fake snow, making tree decorations and lots of glitter!

We are saying goodbye to some of our two year olds who are moving up to nursery and we wish them lots of luck. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Next half term staff will look forward to meeting our new starters. There will be lots of sensory activities for the children to explore. They will be encouraged to use all of their senses and language of texture. The children will be developing their pre-writing skills with lots of fine motor activities, snipping with scissors and threading. There will be opportunities for mark making too, both on a small and large scale to develop both fine motor and gross motor movements.

The lending library will continue each week and there will be a book to choose and keep for each child after every five posts on Tapestry to show them enjoying sharing their lending library books at home.

It would also be great to see what your children are enjoying doing at home when they are not in two year olds, any photos of the children can be shared on Tapestry.

The following 10 texts are used continuously in two year olds. They inform a lot of the planning with links across the whole EYFS, and most importantly, repeating these texts impacts hugely on language development.

Pip and Posy series (6 titles) - Axel Scheffler

The Tiger Who Came to Tea - Judith Kerr

Whatever Next - Jill Murphy

Peace at Last - Jill Murphy

The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Eric Carle

Could you ensure that your child has spare clothing each day in case they need to be changed for any reason.

Also as the weather is getting colder, could you please make sure your child has suitable warm outdoor clothing as we still access outdoors in all weathers.

Nursery

As the seasons began to change, the Nursery children started to observe the natural environment as we moved into Autumn. The children enjoyed exploring the topic by investigating the natural world around them with many Autumn walks around forest school! They were brilliant at spotting how the leaves change colour and identifying some of the Autumnal natural objects they found. The children focused very hard on vocabulary and learned many new and interesting words relating to their topic.

Before they knew it, Christmas was here! The children have explored the festivities in a range of ways; from tree decorating to writing letters for Santa, Nursery did it all! While it is always exciting to get festive, the children also began to learn the reason we celebrate Christmas. They learned that the story began a long time ago and all because a special baby was born, and performed in their first nativity.



Next half term, keeping a close eye on the natural environment, the Nursery children will begin to explore their next topic of Wonderful Winter. They will continue to observe the changes and begin to investigate how to use these changes creatively, such as ice painting!

The children in Nursery will also be welcoming some new friends into their groups in January where they will continue to focus on how to be kind to others. They are always very caring and considerate so we are confident they will embrace the new starters with open arms!

Reception

This half-term Reception got ready for a party with the Let's Celebrate topic. The children learned why Christmas is important to Christians and enjoyed dressing up and acting out the story of the Nativity. They also learned about Diwali, the festival of light celebrated by Hindus and Sikhs, they enjoyed making Rangoli patterns and Diya lamps. The children learned the story of Hanukkah and had lots of fun learning how to play with the dreidels. This half-term the children also had the opportunity to visit Blyth beach, where they worked collaboratively to create a giant sandcastle, made some beach art and used their senses to explore the beach further. It was fantastic to have parents and carers in for the maths workshop; everyone had fun while developing core maths skills such as counting, composition and comparison. The children have really enjoyed attending the extra-curricular clubs on offer at lunchtime; these have included Christmas craft club, Yoga club and Music and Movement club. At the end of the year it was lovely to share the Christmas production and demonstrate our singing and speaking skills.

with families



A Look Back in Time will be the focus for next half term's learning. The children will be developing their understanding of timelines, including a timeline of how they have developed since birth, and looking closely at pictures from older stories to identify how objects, clothes and décor have changed over time. Using artefacts from

museums, Reception will be able to explore old fashioned toys and compare them to what they play with at home. They will be focusing on stories such as Peepo by - Janet and Allan Ahlberg, The Tiger Who Came to Tea and Each Peach, Pear, Plum, as they look at the details and discuss what they notice and make comparisons with what they own. The children will delve deeper into traditional nursery rhymes when they visit Seven Stories and take part in a workshop called the case of the missing nursery rhymes.

Year 1

This half term the children have been marvellous mathematicians. They have been practising addition and subtraction using a numberline. The children have explored 3D and 2D shapes. They had great fun spotting the 3D shapes in the classroom around them. We even learned a poem to help us remember the names of the 3D shapes. In Geography lessons the children have been exploring the world around them and learning all about where they live. Ask your child to show you where Blyth is on a map of the UK. You will be impressed! The children had a fantastic time exploring different maps of the local area. They used their knowledge of maps to create their own 3D map of our school. Don't they look great?



In Design and Technology this term the children have designed, made, tested and evaluated a boat. They carefully selected which materials would be suitable for a boat by thinking which material would be strong and waterproof. The best part was testing their models in water, many of the children were successful in making a boat which floated!

The children have learned lots about materials in Science this half term. They are now experts at looking at an object and describing which material it is made from. They were super scientists during the experiment to find out which material would be the best for making an umbrella for Ted.

Year 1 have been paying close attention to their handwriting, and now make sure every letter is sitting on the line.

They have been working very hard to practise their Christmas performance. They spent lots of time learning the songs and their speaking parts and we were really excited to share the story of the first Christmas with you. We hope you all enjoyed it!

Next half term the children will be learning about toys from the past. They will be exploring how toys have changed through time and considering which toys they would prefer to play with. The children will also be studying the artist Wassily Kandinsky who used printing to create his artwork. The children will be exploring how to use different objects to create a print. In PE, the children will be learning the basic skills of gymnastics including balance, turning and rolling.



Please continue to read with your child at home. Remember, if your child reads four times in a week they will receive a sticker on their bookmark and once full they can choose a special prize! Reading folders should be in school every day. Please return school library books so the children can swap them. Thank you for your support.

Year 2

Well what a half term it was for Year 2! In English, the focus has been to improve handwriting across the year group. The children loved reading *The Owl Who Was Afraid of The Dark* by Jill Tomlinson and they went on to develop their own stories written in a similar style. They loved the text *Traction Man* by Minni Grey. The children explored character and went on to describe heroes and villains. They created their own superhero and wrote a new adventure story. Just before Christmas, the children read a variety of acrostic poems and went on to write their own acrostic poems inspired by the seasons.

In Maths, the children continued to work on number bonds and facts to 10 and 20. They continued to develop their knowledge of place value and went on to further develop their understanding of addition and subtraction. It has been really wonderful to see so many children accessing Numbots at home. Well done!

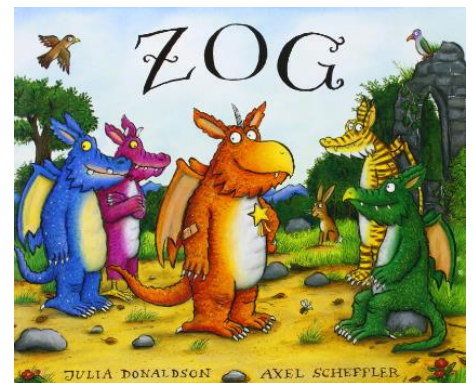


In Science, the children explored different types of materials and investigated their properties. They worked scientifically, carrying out a



range of experiments. They made predictions, carried out simple tests and recorded their findings.

Next half term, in English, the children will begin the Spring term by reading the brilliant text Zog by Julia Donaldson. They will continue to improve their writing by using adjectives to describe and by extending their sentences using and, but and because. Later, they will go on to write a new adventure story for Zog, who suddenly arrives at Horton Grange!



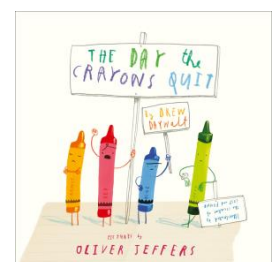
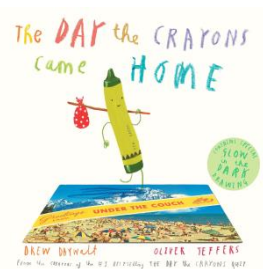
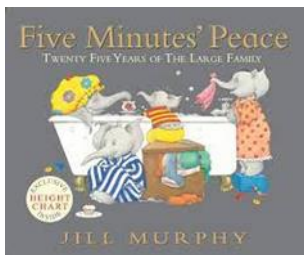
In Maths, the emphasis on basic skills will continue. Number bonds and facts are the foundation to future maths works so it is essential that children secure their understanding and have quick mental recall of these. Children can practise these skills at home by using Numbots for 15 minutes each day.

<https://numbots.com/>



In class, the children will continue their work on addition and subtraction and apply this to problem solving. They will explore shape and money, developing reasoning and problem solving skills throughout. Later they will explore multiplication and division. By the end of Year 2 the children must be secure in their 2, 5 and 10 times tables and related division facts.

This half term Year 2 will be reading a selection of classic stories by some wonderful authors



During Spring 2 Year 2 will about the life of Henry the Eighth and Queen Elizabeth the First and Queen Elizabeth the Second. They will also find out about our new King, King Charles the Third.

begin their topic on Kings and Queens. They will learn



In Science, children will find out about animals and their habitats. They will explore UK habitats as well as habitats further afield. They will also investigate animal food chains.

All children have been given new personalised spellings and they will continue to work on these each week. Please continue to support children at home with home/school reading, weekly spellings and the relentless teaching of the 2, 5 and 10 times tables and number bonds and facts to 10 and 20.

Year 3

This half term Year 3 ventured into the dystopian world of The Iron Man. Focussing on the introduction to a mystery story the children intrigued the readers through the use of powerful verbs, conjunctions and up levelled vocabulary ending with an intriguing cliff-hanger.



As part of their Rocks topic in Science, Year 3 had a virtual visit from Charlotte Guillain, the author of The Street Beneath my Feet. They loved reading the book, especially how it linked to not only their Rocks topic but Volcanoes too.

The author spoke to the children about being an author, what or who inspired her and the steps to making a non-fiction book.

She told the children her top tips for becoming an author were; always have something to write on; go for an inspirational walk; let your mind wander; keep writing... anything...any time; keep reading as much as you can.



Becoming inquisitive scientists, the children investigated types of rocks and grouped them depending on their properties. The children then planned an investigation to explore the density of rocks and how permeable they were, ensuring it was a fair test.

In Geography Year 3 learned all about settlements and land use. They looked at our local area to see where the local hamlets, villages, towns and nearest city are. The children had the chance to test their fieldwork skills on a trip to their local settlement town, Blyth. Whilst there, they compared human and physical features in both the town centre and coast and drew sketch maps of each place.



Year 3 have been getting their sewing skills up to scratch in DT where they were tasked to create a bookmark. They planned, made a prototype and made their bookmark using various sewing skills. The children had to evaluate and edit their bookmarks as they went along to ensure they were sticking to the brief. We loved seeing the concentration on their faces!

This half term, Year 3 took part in an illustration workshop with the author Ross Collins. As part of the workshop, the children learnt how to draw a character from one of his stories. They had a fantastic time and learnt some top tips



about drawing illustrations.

Year 3 had a fantastic Christmas craft day, where they made seasonal calendars, Christmas cards using stencils and paint and putting their sewing skills to practise by sewing felt owls. The children were so excited and we all definitely got in the festive spirit!

Next half term Year 3 will be venturing back in time to the Ancient Egyptians where they will look at the key achievements and developments of this era and how it impacts life today. They will focus their learning on Tutankhamun, answering the key questions who, what, where, when, why to understand his life. The children will be visiting the Great North Museum to further their historical enquiry - more information to follow.

In Science the children will be investigating light and shadows. This will include getting outside to carry out practical experiments about how shadows are formed and different light sources.

In Maths the children will continue their learning around multiplication and division facts and written methods. The focus times table for this half term is the 4 times table.

Literacy will link to the Egyptian topic through the class text *Marcy and the Riddle of the Sphinx* by Joe Todd Stanton, using this to write their own adventure stories. In non-fiction Year 3 will create non-chronological reports on mythical creatures.

In Art, the children will be learning printing skills. They will design and make their own poly block print taking inspiration from the artist Piet Mondrian.



Marcy and the riddle of the Sphinx by Joe Todd Stanton. A fantastic, beautifully illustrated book full of adventure which will be the inspiration for our own adventure stories.

When Marcy's adventurer father, Arthur, disappears in Egypt, she reluctantly sets off in his footsteps. She soon finds herself standing before the great Sphinx and must answer its riddle before she can enter and find Arthur, who is trapped inside. Her only option is to ask the Egyptian gods for help, but in the end it is up to Marcy to complete the final task. Can she overcome her deepest fears and save her father?

End of the day books - Flat Stanley and the Great Egyptian Grave Robbery by Jeff Brown and The Boy who Grew Dragons by Andy Shepherd.

Year 4

This half term, Year 4 have been learning about states of matter as part of their Science topic. The children explored the differences between solids, liquids and gases and grouped materials according to their state. In Geography, Year 4 linked their understanding of states of matter to the water cycle. The children explored how water is continuously recycled around our planet through the processes of evaporation, condensation and precipitation. Furthermore, the children produced an informative non-chronological report as part of their learning in English lessons to demonstrate their understanding of the water cycle process.

The highlight of this half term for Year 4 has been their DT project. The children were required to design, make and evaluate a healthy ice lolly product. After planning their designs and researching healthy fruits and juices to add to their lollies, the children used their chopping and pouring skills to make their lolly. Once the ice lollies were frozen, the children were able to sample and evaluate their lollies with some interesting results!



Next half term, Year 4 will learn about the Romans in Britain as part of their history topic. This will link to the children's learning in English as they will read historical fiction and participate in a debate about Boudicca's rebellion. In Science, the children will learn about how sounds are made and how they travel.

Year 4's class text will be Decibella and her Six Inch Voice by Julia Cook, which links to their learning in Science about sound.

Year 5

This half term in English lessons, children in Year 5 have written their own adventure stories based on the book series Alex Rider. They have also written instructions for a pizza recipe, linked with their work in design technology lessons. At the end of the term, they studied winter poetry and created their own cinquain poems based on the festive season.

In Maths, the children have started learning about multiples and factors. They have also tried hard to improve their times table fluency and increase their score on TT Rockstars. Any help at home with this is greatly appreciated!

In Design Technology, the children put on their chef's hats for a day and created their own homemade pizzas. They were encouraged to think of seasonal ingredients and included mushrooms and sweetcorn on their pizzas. It was a busy (and sometimes messy) but delicious day all round!

As part of the children's RE learning, they visited the Newcastle Central Mosque. Here, they were able to see Islamic artefacts such as a range of different Qur'ans, prayer mats, traditional Muslim clothing and traditional toothbrushes. They heard the call to prayer and learned a lot about the



five pillars of Islam. The children were enthusiastic and asked some fantastic questions while they were there.

In Science, Year 5 started their Chemistry unit on the properties of materials. They planned and set up their own fair tests to answer questions using their scientific understanding. Later in the half term, the children learned about controlling variables to set up fair experiments and started investigating solubility of materials.

During this half term's Geography lessons, children have been introduced to the continent of South America. They have learned about the different country names, investigated the main climate zones and thought about the different plants and animals that live in the various biomes of South America. In their investigations they have used a variety of maps and aerial photographs.

In December, Christmas crafts day was enjoyed by all. The children made paper chain snowmen, a seasonal calendar and a 3D bauble card.

In Maths next half term, the children will build on their knowledge of fractions. They will find equivalent fractions, add and subtract fractions and convert between improper fractions and mixed numbers.

In English, the children will continue to read a wide range of genres, including fairy tales and contemporary fiction. They will write their own stories inspired by these and will write a persuasive leaflet to advertise an outdoor activity centre.

In Art, the focus will be on printing. The children will build on their knowledge of relief printing from Year 4. They will carve and create their own 3 colour lino print, based on the work of Alexandra Buckle and inspired by the Northumberland coastline.

In Science, the children will continue to build on their learning in Chemistry as they continue to explore the properties of materials through lots of exciting enquiries.

Next half term in History, the children will learn about the Victorian era, including learning about the Crimean War and the women who transformed the nursing profession, such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. They will also study the industrial revolution and the effect it had on the lives of the Victorians. Later in the term, they will visit the Great North Museum and then embark on a walking tour of Newcastle to discover some of the rich history from the Victorian era that is in the city centre.

Next half term, the children will read *Street Child* as their class text to help them understand what life was like for some children in the Victorian era

Year 6

Autumn 1 term ended with the action-packed residential stay at Hawse End in the Lake District where the children enjoyed a range of new experiences which challenged them to show resilience and be the best they could be. Feedback from the children on their return was very positive and they had developed an even stronger sense of 'Team Horton'. The staff and instructors from Cumbria Outdoors were impressed with the children's respectful behaviour as well as determination when facing new experiences.





The experience of Hawse End was developed further by studying the Lake District in Geography during Autumn 2. The children learnt about

features of glaciated landscapes, land use in that area and how to read maps using 4/6 figure grid references and scale. In science, children learnt about evolution and the work of Charles Darwin as well as fossils.



At the end of each day, Year 6 enjoyed contemporary fiction when they read *The Last Wild* by Piers Torday and some children have been inspired to read more of this in their own time and even read the sequels: *The Dark Wild* and *The Wild Beyond*. Their final writing journey of this term has proved very popular as children learnt about the Christmas Truce of 1914. They went on to write, as journalists, newspaper reports about this event and how it affected those involved.

In Maths children have been continuing to secure their place value knowledge and then have moved on to developing their fluency and reasoning skills using the four operations.

Next term, Year 6 shall be learning about the ancient civilisation and culture of the Aztecs in History. In Art, the children will be experimenting with different media to improve their mastery of design and printing. Light will be our topic in Science but the children will also be revising their learning on sound from Year 4. We will be reading and writing quest stories and non-chronological reports in English and in Maths, the children will be consolidating their understanding of the four operations before moving on to fractions.

Sky Song by Abi Elphinstone is Y6 class text for next term – it is a fantasy adventure novel which will transport the children to the icy tundra of Erkenwald where whales glide between icebergs and polar bears roam the glaciers.

Clubs

The children, across the school, have had the opportunity to enjoy a range of extra-curricular clubs this half term. In EYFS, the children were able to take part in Christmas crafts club, Yoga club and Music and Movement club. They particularly enjoyed learning new skills in Christmas craft club to create various decorations. In Key Stage 1, the children were able to participate in Book club, Numbots club and Dance club. In Key Stage 2, there was a great variety of clubs on offer, aiming to broaden the children's experiences further and support them in developing their own preferences. The clubs offered included Recorder club, Choir, Forest Club, Basketball club, Football club and Art club. Extra-curricular activities are important in developing children's skills, abilities and confidence. Look out for a text in the near future to let you know what clubs will be available next half term. Book early to secure your child's place!

Reading

As you know we are keen to promote reading; reading to your child and with your child is hugely beneficial to their education progress – not just in reading but across the wider curriculum. Our curriculum strapline is "Learning to read and reading to learn".



We have worked hard to promote reading during the Autumn term with library visits, author visits and our first biscuit and a book event.

Reception had a story telling session. The session with Author Ross Collins was incredibly popular with the children. They loved hearing his story and exploring his books in the classroom. In the final week of this term, the children will take part in a Seven Stories workshop based on Stickman by Julia Donaldson. As one of the children's favourite books, it will certainly be very exciting and bring some festivity in the lead up to Christmas.



Year 6 parents came into school for our first ever Biscuit and a Book session. They were able to share books with their children and read together whilst enjoying a biscuit or two! The children were also proud to show their parents their reading skills using Reading Plus on the computers.

These sessions will take place with other year groups during the year and Year 6 aim to hold another session in the Summer term. Watch out also for our annual Come Dine and Read – coming soon!

School library

Please could any school library books be returned as we are missing a few. Also if anyone has any children's books they would like to donate we would be grateful for them.

Attendance

Well done to all of you who have managed to avoid the many winter bugs and germs that have been around - there have certainly been some horrible illnesses. Our overall attendance in school is 94.6% and this is in line with the National picture. Classes with the best attendance are awarded the attendance trophy in Horton Heroes each week and those in the top three slots get a sticker for their attendance chart. Congratulations to 2KA who are very much in the lead at the moment! The class with the most stickers by the end of the year will receive a whole class treat! All parents received a termly progress report in November and this also highlighted attendance. We all know the importance of good attendance and the effect it has on progress, attainment and ultimately, life chances. We thank you for working with us to support your child's attendance. If you need guidance, advice or are concerned about attendance please contact June Hewes via the school office.

Always Club

Well done to all those children who have been chosen by their teacher this half term for ALWAYS making the right choices. We love celebrating on a Friday and know the importance of recognising those children who come to school every day and follow the golden rules and the Horton Grange values.

School Council & OPAL

The School Council continues to work to represent their class and contribute to the running of the school and share ideas from the other students. A big focus for them this year is OPAL and the development of play at lunchtimes. This half term has seen more exciting developments at lunchtimes with the beach structures now complete. After Christmas these will be up and running and ready to play in. Dressing up is proving to be popular for everyone and it has been amazing to see the confidence of everyone, wearing whatever costume they want regardless of stereotypes. This is so important for the diverse world we live in. We have also introduced the golden welly award! This is awarded for kindness and inclusivity at lunchtimes and is awarded to a class in Key Stage 1 and a class in Key Stage 2 each week. This class each receives an extra playtime!



That just leaves me to say thank you for all your on-going support, have a lovely Christmas and we look forward to welcoming the children back in the new year on **Monday 9th January**.

Best wishes

Nichola Irving
Headteacher



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please note whilst we endeavour to stick to these dates, occasionally amendments have to be made in response to other events in school, which are often out of our control. However, if you are unable to make an event, please contact school and we will discuss how the information can be shared in an alternative way.

Monday 9 th January	School Re-opens at usual time
Wednesday 25 th January	Reception visit to Seven Stories
Thursday 26 th January	Reception visit to Blyth Library
Monday 30 th January	Year 1 Come, Dine and Read
Tuesday 31 st January	Year 2 Come, Dine and Read
Wednesday 1 st February	Year 3 Come, Dine and Read
Thursday 2 nd February	Year 4 Come, Dine and Read
Friday 3 rd February	Year 5 Come, Dine and Read
Monday 6 th February	Year 6 Mock SATs week Year 5 Trip to Great North Museum
Tuesday 7 th February	Safer Internet Day
Friday 10 th February	Year 3 Trip to Great North Museum
Thursday 16 th February	School breaks up for half-term
Friday 17 th February	Teacher Training day